

PRIMACY OF PETER



Besides having his name changed from Simon to Peter, receiving the keys to the kingdom of heaven and given the authority to bind and to loose, there is other scriptural evidence showing that Peter held a place of prominence.

Here Luke records that Jesus told all of the apostles that Satan wanted them but He prayed especially for Peter.

Luke 22:31 "Simon, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to have you (plural in the Greek) that he might sift you (plural) like wheat, but I have prayed for **you** (singular in the Greek) that your faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers."

Mark 16:7 - Peter is specifically named apart from the other apostles by an angel. The angel at the tomb tells Mary Magdalene:



He has risen; he is not herego and tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you in Galilee



Peter declares the first Dogma of the Church

By the year AD 49 the early Church found itself in a crisis that was tearing the young Church apart. Ever since the time of Abraham circumcision was required to enter into the Covenant with God. There were very zealous Jews who were teaching that circumcision was still necessary to be saved. They were known as the Judaizers, those who observe the ritual laws of Judaism.

The situation became so serious that the Church found it necessary to call a Council that would take place in Jerusalem. All the apostles returned to Jerusalem along with Paul, Barnabas and numerous Bishops. At the Council of Jerusalem the dogma decreeing that we are saved by grace and not by works of the Mosaic Law was proclaimed by Peter.

Acts 15:7-11 “After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith. Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? No! *We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.*”

Paul, Silas and Timothy delivered the dogma to the churches in various cities:

Acts 16:4: “As they went on their way through the cities, they deliver to them for observance the decisions which had been reached by the apostles and presbyters who were at Jerusalem.”

The word that is translated “decisions” is the Greek word “Dogma” **δογμα**

Please Scroll Down



Peter and the miraculous coin

In Judaism every male Jew above nineteen years of age was obliged to make an annual contribution for the upkeep of the Temple. In Matthew's gospel Jesus tells Peter to take the shekel and give it to the tax collector "For me and for you" signifying that Peter is Christ's representative on earth.

Matthew 17:26-27 "Go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."

Mark 14:37 - at Gethsemane, Jesus asks Peter, and no one else, why he was asleep. Peter is accountable to Jesus for his actions on behalf of the apostles because he has been appointed by Jesus as their leader.

Luke 9:28-33 - Peter is mentioned first as going to mountain of transfiguration and the only one to speak at the transfiguration.

Matt. 10:2; Mark 1:36; 3:16; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:3; 2:37; 5:29 – in these verses Peter is mentioned first among the apostles.

Please Scroll Down



Matt. 14:28-29 Peter walks on water.

As long as Peter had his faith fixed on Christ he could miraculously walk on water but the moment he turns his thoughts on himself he becomes afraid and begins to lose confidence, and begins to sink. Again his faith saves him; he calls upon the Lord, who reaches out and takes Peter the first Pope by the hand.

“And Peter, going down out of the boat, walked upon the water to come to Jesus. But seeing the wind strong he was afraid: and when he began to sink, he cried out, saying: Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretching forth his hand, took hold of him, and said to him: O you of little faith, why did you doubt? And when they were come up into the boat, the wind ceased”.

Luke 24:12, John 20:4-6 - John arrived at the tomb first but stopped and waited for Peter. Peter then arrived and entered the tomb first.

John 6:68 - after the disciples leave, Peter is the first to speak and confess his belief in Christ after the Eucharistic discourse.

John 13:6-9 - Peter speaks out to the Lord in front of the apostles concerning the washing of feet.

Luke 5:4,10 - Jesus instructs Peter to let down the nets for a catch, and the miraculous catch follows. Peter, the Pope, is the "fisher of men."

Luke 8:45 - when Jesus asked who touched His garment, it is Peter who answers on behalf of the disciples.

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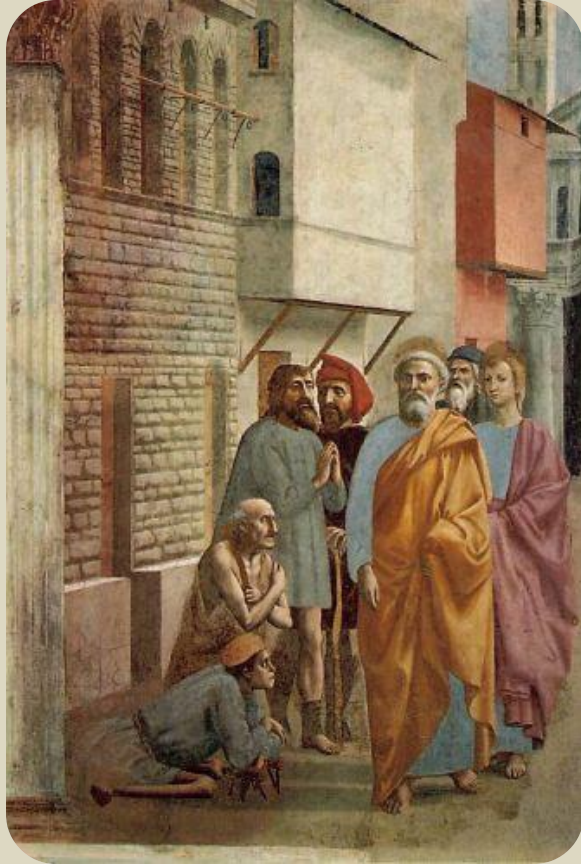


PETER DECLARES THE FIRST EXCOMMUNICATIONS

Acts 5:1-11 - Peter declares the first anathema of Ananias and Sapphira which is ratified by God, and brings about their death. Peter exercises his binding authority.

“Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife’s full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles’ feet. Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God.” When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, “Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?” “Yes,” she said, “that is the price.” Peter said to her, “How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.” At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.”

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Peter's shadow has healing power.

Acts 5:14-15

‘More and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.’

Acts 3:6-7 - Peter works the first healing of the apostles.

Acts 10:5 - Cornelius is told by an angel to call upon Peter. Angels are messengers of God. Peter was granted this divine vision.

Matt. 16:16, Mark 8:29; John 6:69 - Peter is first among the apostles to confess the divinity of Christ.

Please scroll down

Acts 2:38-41 Peter gives the first sermon in the early Church on repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day."

Luke 5:3 – Jesus teaches from Peter's boat which is a metaphor for the Church. Jesus guides Peter and the Church into all truth.

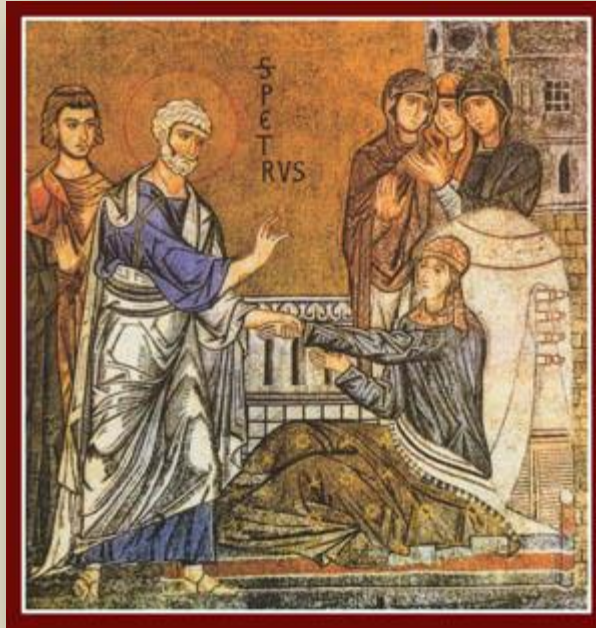
John 21:4-11 - Peter and the apostles go fishing and Peter hauls the net full of fish ashore. The boat (the "barque of Peter") has always been seen by Christians as a metaphor for the Church.

Acts 2:14 - Peter is first to speak for the apostles after the Holy Spirit descended upon them at Pentecost. Peter is the first to preach the Gospel.

Luke 12:41 - Peter seeks clarification of a parable on behalf of the disciples. This is part of Peter's formation as the chief shepherd of the flock after Jesus ascended into heaven.



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Peter raises Tabitha from the dead

Peter was the first person after Jesus to raise a person from the dead.

Acts 9:36-41

“In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha, she was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, “Please come at once!”

Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, “Tabitha, get up.” She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive.”

In John 21:18-19 Jesus tells Peter that he would also die by crucifixion.

Please Scroll Down



Peter was crucified by the Emperor Nero around AD 64. We know from ancient writings that Peter requested to be crucified upside down. He told his executioners that he was, “unworthy to die in the same manner as my Lord.”

Peter's Cross



Next topic: Apostolic Succession