

Ever since the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century there have been anti-Catholic books available to the public and the situation has not changed. One of the books available today is *Reasoning from the Scriptures with Catholics*. The purpose of this book is to show Protestants how to take Catholics out of the Catholic Church. The author writes that the “gospel of Rome is a different gospel from that of Scripture.....those who place faith in such doctrines have a false hope for the future....if all goes well, the Lord may bless you with the wonderful privilege of leading some Catholics to faith in Christ alone for salvation.”

We’ve covered some of the Protestant objections to the Catholic teaching that Peter was the first Pope but not all of them. You may be asked some of the following questions by someone who has read Mr. Rhodes book. As St. Peter said “be prepared to make a defense”. His book covers far too many topics to be covered via e-mail but here is a great website that answers all of the books false accusations. Click [HERE](#)

Here I am going to address just a few of the most common objections that you may be asked regarding Peter.

Objection: After giving Peter the keys Jesus calls Peter “Satan.” How could Jesus do that if Peter were the first Pope?

Here is the text in question. Matthew 16:21-23

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!” But He turned and said to Peter, “**Get behind Me, Satan!** You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

Answer: Peter was just told that Jesus was going to suffer and be killed. His reaction is understandably human. He doesn’t want Jesus to suffer and die. The word “Satan” in Greek is “Satanas” and it means “adversary” (one who opposes another in purpose or act). Jesus is not calling Peter the Devil as some suggest.



Objection: At the Council of Jerusalem it was the apostle James and not Peter who was in charge and it was James that declared the infallible dogma. Peter cannot be the Pope.

Answer: This is a very popular charge to suggest that Peter was not the first Pope. A simple reading of the text shows that Peter was in charge of the council and declared the dogma.

The council was called because of certain Jews who were demanding that Christians must be circumcised to be saved. Peter declares the dogma that we are saved by grace.

Acts 15:6-20

“The apostles and elders met to consider this question. 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..... **We** believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. When they finished, James spoke up. “Brothers,” he said, “listen to me. Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles.... “It is **my** judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.”

Answer: After Peter spoke the issue was settled. Notice that in declaring the dogma Peter uses the plural “We”. Peter is speaking for the whole Church, all of the apostles and elders.

James, as bishop of the Jerusalem Church, then speaks and uses the singular “**my** judgment” because he is stating his personal opinion. James then proposes **a discipline** not a dogma: “we should write to them, telling them to abstain from food polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from the meat of strangled animals and from blood.” Peter declared the dogma of saved by grace. James simply added a discipline.



Objection: Paul publicly corrected Peter which shows that Peter was not a Pope. It also shows that Peter was not infallible. He made a mistake in a matter of faith.

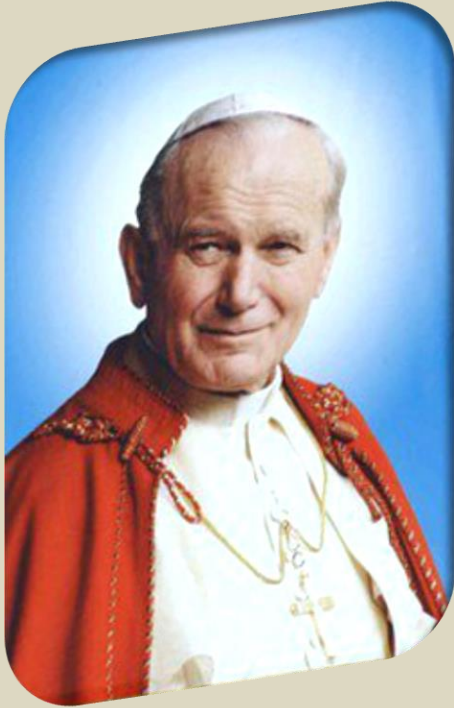
Galatians 2:11-13 “But when Cephas came to Antioch **I opposed him to his face** because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he ate with the Gentiles but when they came he drew back and separated himself.”

Answer: The Council of Jerusalem had decreed that Gentiles could be saved without having to become a Jew first by being circumcised. The Gentiles were to be considered part of the faith community. Peter reverted to the custom of traditional Judaism which discouraged social contact with non-Jews. Peter’s conduct was **improper** and was rightly corrected by Paul. Improper conduct by a Pope has nothing to do with infallibility.

Objection: If Peter was supreme above the other apostles, why did he refer to himself as a “fellow elder.”?

The text in question is 1 Peter 5:1 “So I exhort the elders among you **as a fellow elder** and a witness of the suffering of Christ.”

Answer: You wouldn’t think this text would be a problem for some non-Catholics but it is. The answer is obvious. When the President of the United States says, “My fellow Americans” no one doubts that he is the President. Peter addressing his fellow priests and bishops in this way doesn’t deny that he is the leader of the Church.



Pope John Paul II

Objection: Catholics call the Pope “Holy Father. “ God is our Holy Father!

Answer: In Exodus 2:5 the place God appears to Moses is called "holy" ground. It was a place set apart. Catholics believe that the Pope is set apart by Christ as the head of the Church. The word “Holy” simply means the Pope is set apart it doesn’t refer to the Pope’s personal holiness.

Next Topic: One of the most important events in the life of the Catholic Church occurred In AD 70 when the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman Emperor Titus. Over one million Jews were killed either by the sword or by starvation. Over ninety thousand were taken prisoner and enslaved. Not one Christian was harmed. All of them had left the city.

Jesus predicted this destruction 40 years earlier: “Truly I say to you, there will not be left one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”