

A PORTRAIT OF PETER

Peter Meets the Master

John 1:29 - 2:12

Lesson 1

- Intro.
1. What was Peter's father's name? His brother's name?
 2. From what village did they come originally?
 3. By what name was Peter known before he met Jesus?

I. At Bethany, Transjordan

1. Were these events before or after the baptism of Jesus?
2. Would it have been before or after the temptations?
3. How did John the Baptist designate Jesus to his two disciples?
4. What experience with Jesus resulted from this introduction?
5. One of the two is named: _____ . Who likely was the other?
6. Whom did Andrew go and find? Was he already in the vicinity? What does this suggest about his connection with John the Baptist?
7. What did Andrew say about Jesus?
8. What new Aramaic name did Jesus give to Andrew's brother? In Greek? What is the meaning of the name?
9. What did Jesus decide to do the next day?
10. What other men did Jesus contact before leaving Jordan?

II. At Cana in Galilee

1. How many days passed between their departure from Bethany and the wedding feast? Try to determine how far they travelled.
2. Who were with Jesus at the wedding feast?
3. How did Jesus solve the problem of insufficient wine at the feast?
4. What was the reaction of the disciples?

III. Subsequent Events

1. Where did Jesus, His family, and His disciples go for a few days?
2. Scan John 2:13 - 4:42 and list experiences the disciples (doubtless including Peter) had with Jesus on His journey to Jerusalem.
 - a. John 2:13-22 (Note vs. 17)
 - b. John 2:23
 - c. John 3:1-21
 - d. John 3:22
 - e. John 4:1-3
 - f. John 4:4-41
3. Upon the return to Galilee, there seems to have been a separation. There is no indication that the disciples were with Jesus when He:
 - a. Returned to Cana and healed over "long distance" the Nobleman's son (John 4:46-54)
 - b. Visited Nazareth and was rejected in the synagogue (Luke 4:16-30).

Concl. Our next lesson finds Jesus moving His residence to Capernaum (Matt. 4:13), probably living in Peter's home. *Note: A house is now shown in Capernaum which is called Peter's house. The home of a fisherman, it was apparently used as a place of worship by early Christians.*

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A Week-end with Jesus

Lesson 2

1. In Lesson 1 we saw Peter meet Jesus and follow Him to Galilee, to Judea and back to Galilee.
2. There was apparently a period of separation when Jesus went home to Nazareth and Peter returned to his fishing near Capernaum.
3. In this lesson Jesus comes to the area of Capernaum and finds Peter and Andrew, early in the morning, washing their nets after an unsuccessful night of fishing.

I. Friday Morning By the Sea (Luke 5:1-11)

1. Where was Peter fishing? Find other names for this body of water.
What was its size?
2. How did Jesus use Simon's boat?
3. What reasons could Peter have given for not launching out to fish again?

What qualities in Peter caused him to do what Jesus said?

The result:

4. How did Peter react to the great catch of fish?
How do you account for this reaction?
List some other men who reacted similarly when they caught a glimpse of divine perfection.
5. What did Jesus say Peter would do from that point on?
What advantage would there be to Peter in the change?
What disadvantages?
Why do you think Peter agreed to it?
Do you see any similarity to this and launching out to fish again?

II. Saturday (Sabbath) Morning (Mark 1:21-31)

1. Where did Jesus go on Sabbath? What did He do there?
2. How was the service interrupted?
3. How did Jesus restore order?
4. What question did the people ask when they saw the power of Jesus over unclean spirits?
5. With whom did Jesus go home for lunch after the synagogue service?
What problem did they find there?
How did Jesus solve this problem?
6. From this episode, what do we learn about Peter's domestic relationships?
What reference did Paul make to this fact?

III. Saturday after 6 p.m. (Mark 1:32-34)

Note: No travel or work were permitted on the Sabbath, but Sabbath ended at sunset.

1. Who were brought to Jesus after sunset?
2. How many gathered before Peter's door?
3. What did Jesus do for them?

IV. Early Sunday Morning (Mark 1:35-39)

1. When did Jesus arise from His night's rest?
Where did He go and why?
2. Who found Him?
3. What did they want Jesus to do?
4. What did Jesus insist that He must do?

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Peter Among the Twelve

Lesson 3

1. Peter first met Jesus near the Jordan and accompanied Him on His earliest journeys.
2. Later, Jesus called Peter from his fishing to follow as a disciple who would be a fisher of men.
3. In this lesson, Peter is chosen to be one of the twelve who would be, in an official way, the apostles or ambassadors of Jesus.

I. The Twelve Apostles Selected (Luke 6:12-16)

1. What did Jesus do before He chose the twelve?
2. What did He call them? What does this word mean?
3. Whose name is first? Find other listings and see if this is always true?
4. Whose name is last?
5. *Thought question:* Would you have chosen Peter for this responsibility? Why or why not?
6. Scanning the remainder of the chapter, tell what Jesus did after selecting these men.

II. Peter Among the Privileged Three (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56)

1. How old was the daughter of Jairus? What was her condition when her father came to Jesus seeking help?
2. What message came before Jesus and His disciples reached the house?
3. What did Jesus promise Jairus?
4. Whom did Jesus permit in the house with Him?
5. What did the mourners affirm about the girl? What did Jesus say?
6. What did Peter see Jesus do for her?

III. Peter Commissioned with the Twelve (Luke 9:1-6)

1. What power and authority did Jesus give the twelve?
2. What did He send them out to do?
3. How much provision were they to take for satisfaction of personal needs? How would those needs be met?
4. What were they to do if rejected by any village?
5. From Matthew 10:5-6, to whom were they to go?
6. What did Jesus predict for these men (Matt. 10:18-28)?

IV. Peter on the Water (Matthew 14:22-33)

Note: According to Mark, the feeding of the 5,000 and the incident of this paragraph occurred immediately after the return of the twelve from the mission described above.

1. After feeding the 5,000 where did Jesus send the disciples? Where did He go?
2. Where were the disciples by the 4th watch (between 3 and 6 a.m.) of the night?
3. What did they think when they saw Jesus walking toward them?
4. How did Jesus calm them?
5. What commendable qualities did Peter's request to Jesus indicate?
6. Did Peter actually walk on water? Did any of the others do so?
7. When did Peter begin to sink?
8. What did Jesus say was his problem?
9. What happened when they were in the boat?
10. How did the disciples react to this miracle?

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Peter's Confessions

Lesson 4

1. Jesus reached the peak of His popularity as he offered bread to the multitude of 5,000.
2. Decline in popularity began the next day as he offered Himself to them as the bread of life. They were not so interested in this as they were in the bread which perishes.

I. In Capernaum (John 6:60-71)

1. What did many of Jesus' disciples say about His claim to be the bread of life?
2. What did Jesus say was spirit and life for them?
3. What did Jesus know from the beginning about His disciples?
4. What did many of His disciples do (vs. 66)?
5. What question did Jesus ask the twelve?
6. Give Peter's reply in full.

II. In Caesarea Philippi (Matthew 16:13-20)

1. What question did Jesus ask His disciples?
2. What were some popular opinions? Give some reasons for each.
3. Who acted as spokesman for the disciples in giving their opinion of Jesus?
4. What conviction did he express?
5. What was the source of this conviction?
6. What was the rock on which Jesus promised to build His church?
Give two or three reasons for rejecting the idea that the church was built on Peter.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. What did Jesus promise to give to Peter? What is the use of such items?
When did Peter use them in a unique way?
8. What relation did Jesus say would exist between Peter's action on earth and action in heaven?

Was Peter the only apostle to whom this promise was made (Matt. 18:18)?

9. What were the apostles not to tell anyone at the time that Jesus was instructing them?

III. Peter's Blunder (Matthew 16:21-28)

1. What did Jesus begin to reveal to the apostles?
2. How did Peter respond?
3. What did Jesus call Peter? What is the meaning of this name?
4. What made Peter an offense to Jesus?
5. Why do you think Peter reacted so negatively to the prediction of Jesus?
6. How would the words of Jesus in verses 24-25 address themselves to Peter's mistake?
7. According to verse 28, when was the Son of Man to come in His kingdom (the kingdom to which Peter was given the keys)?

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Lesson 5

Peter and the Transfiguration

1. Where was Peter with Jesus in our last lesson?
2. How many days intervened between that occasion and this?

Note: It seems probable that they remained in the area near Mt. Hermon and that this mountain was the mountain of the Transfiguration.

I. The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36)

1. According to Luke, for what purpose did Jesus go up into the mountain?
What circumstances may have made this especially needful for Him at this point?
2. Whom did Jesus take with Him?
3. What change took place in Jesus?
4. According to Luke, what were Peter and the other two doing when this change took place?
5. Who appeared in glory with Jesus?
6. What were they discussing with Jesus?
7. How had Peter reacted when Jesus attempted to discuss this with him and the other apostles?
8. What are some significant things about the two men who appeared in glory with Jesus that might account for their being chosen for this great honor?
 - a.
 - b.
9. Which of the three apostles spoke?
10. What did he propose?
11. Why did he say this (Mk. 9:6; Lk. 9:33)?
12. What effect did this have on the conference between Jesus and His guests?
13. What did the voice from heaven say?
What message does this have for us today?
14. How did the disciples respond to the voice?
15. How did Jesus comfort them?
16. What instructions did Jesus give them concerning the vision?
17. What question did this event raise in the minds of the disciples?
18. What Old Testament scripture would account for this question?
19. How did Jesus answer the question?
20. How does Luke 1:17 help to explain the answer of Jesus?

II. Peter's Later Reference to the Transfiguration (II Peter 1:16-19)

1. What does Peter deny about the nature of his reports concerning the power and coming of Christ?
2. What does he affirm in verse 16?
3. From what source did the voice come?
4. Where did Peter say he heard the voice?
5. What is prophecy for us when we take heed to it?

III. The Shekel in the Fish's Mouth (Matthew 17:24-27)

1. Where did this event take place?
2. What question was Peter asked concerning Jesus?
3. According to Exodus 30:11-16 what was the purpose of this tax?
4. What question did Jesus ask Peter?
What application did this have to this situation?
5. Why did Jesus arrange for the tax to be paid anyway?
What lesson should this teach us about our "rights"?
6. How was the tax paid?

For whom was it paid?

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Peter on the Night of the Crucifixion

Lesson 6

1. A period of approximately 9 months separates the transfiguration from the crucifixion.
2. After the transfiguration, Jesus and His disciples made a very deliberate journey toward Jerusalem, teaching and healing along the way. After the triumphal entry on Sunday before the last Passover, events moved rapidly toward the cross.
3. The events of this lesson cover approximately 12 hours (6 p.m. to 6 am) of the night before.

I. Peter at the "Last Supper" (John 13:1-11)

1. What had the devil already put into the heart of Judas?
2. What three things did Jesus know (vs. 3)?
3. What did Jesus do for His disciples?
4. What do you think was Peter's reason for refusing to allow Jesus to wash his feet?
5. How did Peter show his eagerness for a "part with" Jesus?
6. What does verse 10 show about the reason for foot-washing? Was it ritual or practical service?

II. Peter's Commitment (Mark 14:27-31)

1. What prophecy did Jesus quote?
2. What commitment did Peter make?
3. What did Jesus predict?
4. How did Peter react to these words of Jesus?

III. Peter in the Garden (Mark 14:32-42)

1. What three apostles did Jesus take farthest with Him into the garden?
2. What did Jesus say to them?
3. What did He do when He had left them and gone a little farther?
4. When Jesus returned what did He find them doing?
5. Whom did Jesus especially address and what did He say to him?
6. Did His rebuke accomplish any change in their actions?

IV. Peter and the Arrest (John 18:2-12)

1. What did the soldiers and officers have with them when they came to arrest Jesus?
2. How did Jesus show His willingness to be arrested?
3. How did Peter attempt to make good on his promise to go with Jesus even to death?
4. How did Jesus rebuke Peter?
5. *Thought Question:* Try to put yourself in Peter's place. How would you feel about this rebuke?

V. Peter in the High Priest's Courtyard (Mark 14:33-54, 66-72)

1. According to John 18:15-16, how did Peter get into the priest's house?
2. With whom was Peter associating in the courtyard?
3. What reasons can you give for Peter's denials?
4. How did Peter reinforce his denial of Jesus?
5. What caused Peter to realize what he was doing?
Luke suggests another factor in Luke 22:61.
6. How did Peter react when he realized what he had done?

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"Begotten Again" By the Resurrection

Lesson 7

1. The hours following Peter's denial must have been the most difficult of his life. Jesus was crucified and Peter must have been crushed by the thought that the last words Jesus heard him say were words of denial, even though he had boasted that he would go with Him to death.
2. With the rest of the disciples, Peter was entirely disillusioned by the crucifixion. In spite of the predictions by Jesus, they did not think it would happen. Apparently they felt that all was lost; all messianic hopes were dashed. But in I Peter 1:3, Peter tells of the change in him that was wrought by the resurrection: "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*"

I. Resurrection Day (John 20:1-10)

1. What surprise did Mary find at the tomb?
2. Whom did she go to tell? From Mark 16:5-7, tell why she did this.
3. Contrast Peter and John in their approach to the tomb and their action on arrival.
4. Where did the two go when they left the tomb?
5. According to Luke 24:34 and I Corinthians 15:5, what man had a special personal visit from Jesus on that day? Give possible reasons.

Note: Peter also had opportunity to be among the apostles when Jesus appeared to them together on the evening of the resurrection day and again, one week later, when Thomas was also present.

II. By the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-23)

1. What would account for the apostles' return to Galilee (Mark 14:28 and 16:7)?
2. How many were together?
3. What were the circumstances under which they saw Jesus?
4. Who first recognized Jesus? What did Peter do?
5. How certain were they of the identify of Jesus when they actually go to the shore and were near Him?
6. What question did Jesus ask Peter?
How many times was the question asked? How did Peter answer?
7. What three things did Jesus tell Peter to do?
8. What kind of death did Jesus predict for Peter?
9. About whom did Peter ask? What was the reply of Jesus?

III. The Ascension (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-14)

1. Over how long a period did Jesus show Himself alive to His apostles?
2. From what place did He ascend?
3. Where did He tell them to remain?
4. What did Jesus promise the apostles within a few days?
5. What did the two men in white apparel promise?
6. Where did the apostles stay in Jerusalem?
7. With whom did they continue in prayer and supplication?
8. According to Luke, in what place were they continually praising and blessing God?
9. Who led in selecting a successor for Judas (Acts 1:15-26)?

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Peter Using the Keys

Acts 2

Lesson 8

- Intro.
1. From Matthew 16:13-20, answer the following:
 - a. Upon what rock was the church to be built?
 - b. Who was to build it? Whose was it to be?
 - c. Who was to have the keys to open it?
 - d. What was to be its form of government: Democracy, Republic or Monarchy?
 - e. Who was to speak on earth what was spoken in heaven (See also Mt. 18:18)?
 2. The church could not be built until several things were accomplished:
 - a. The truth of Jesus' Divine Sonship (the rock) would have to be proved beyond doubt.
 - b. The king would have to be crowned.
 - c. Christ's spokesmen would have to be enabled to speak on earth what was spoken in heaven. How was this to be accomplished (John 16:12-15)?
 3. When was:
 - a. The truth of Jesus's Sonship proved (Romans 1:4)?
 - b. Jesus crowned king (See Daniel 7:13,14)?
 4. All was now ready except for the enabling of the apostles to speak what was spoken in heaven.

I. The Coming of the Spirit (Acts 2:1-13)

1. Who are the *they* of verse 1?
2. What accompanied the coming of the Spirit?
3. By what power did the apostles begin to speak (vs. 4)?
4. What verses prove that the tongues in which they spoke were actual languages?
5. While most were amazed and marveled, what explanation did some offer?

II. Peter's Sermon (Acts 2:14-36)

1. How did Peter disprove the explanation?
2. How did Peter explain the phenomenon?
3. Having gained their attention what four things did he say about Jesus (22-24)?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
4. Which of these things did Peter need to prove?
5. What four lines of proof did he offer? (Was this laying the foundation?)
 - a. (vss. 25-31)
 - b. (vs. 32)
 - c. (vs. 33)
6. Where did Peter say Jesus was?
6. What conclusion did Peter draw (36)?

III. The Response (Acts 2:37-47)

1. What question was asked by those who believed Peter?
2. What was Peter's answer?

This was using the key to open the door.
3. When they were baptized *in the name of Jesus Christ*, what were they acknowledging?

This was "taking their stand" on the foundation truth.
4. Who added them together (vs. 41 & 47)? So, Who was building the church?

What are those who make up the church called (I Peter 2:5)?

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Peter Healing a Lame Man

Acts 3:1 - 5:42

Lesson 9

- Intro. 1. Lesson 8 found Peter preaching the first gospel sermon in Jerusalem leading to the beginning of the church.
2. The church has apparently had several weeks--even months--of growth without persecution. The events of this lesson spark opposition from Jewish officials, especially Sadducees.

I. The Healing (Acts 3:1-11)

1. What two apostles went to the temple together? Which led in the healing?
2. What verses show that:
 - a. The man's ailment was permanent?
 - b. The man's ailment was paralyzing?
 - c. The man was well known? (See also 3:16)
 - d. The man had no "faith to be healed"?
 - e. The man's healing was instant?
 - f. The man's healing was complete? (See also 3:16)
3. What was the reaction of the people?

II. The Sermon (3:11-26)

1. What verses in Peter's first sermon (Acts 2) are very similar to statements in vss. 13-15?
2. What verse in Acts 2 is similar to Acts 3:19?
3. What prophets does Peter mention here who were not mentioned in Acts 2?

III. The Sequel (Acts 4:1-22)

1. What sect led the persecution? Why (vs. 2)?
2. Did the arrest of Peter and John prevent converts?
3. Were Peter and John arraigned with charges or with questions?
4. What charges did Peter make against the rulers?
5. Why did the boldness of Peter and John surprise the council?
6. Why did the council not deny the miracle?
7. What did they do to prevent further spread of the gospel?
8. What was Peter's response?
9. When they returned to their brethren, for what did they pray ((4:29)?
10. What did they do (4:31)?

IV. The Second Arraignment (Acts 5:25-42)

1. Were the Apostles arraigned this time with charges or with questions? Specify.
2. Who replied? What did he say?
3. How does Peter's statement in verses 30-32 compare with his sermons in chapters 2 and 3?
4. What punishment did the apostles suffer?
5. What effect did this punishment have on their preaching?

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Peter Preaching in Judea, Samaria

Lesson 10

- Intro.
1. The persecution which began with the arrest and beating of the apostles rapidly escalated, resulting in the scattering of the church.
 2. Rather than destroying the church, the persecution only led to its proliferation. Those who fled from the persecution "went everywhere preaching the word."

I. The Gospel in Samaria (Acts 8:1-25)

1. What did the apostles do when the church was scattered?
2. Who was Philip?
3. What success did Philip have in Samaria?
4. What kind of influence were the Samaritans under before Philip came?
5. Why did the people forsake Simon and believe Philip?

6. What effect did this have on Simon?
7. When the apostles heard of events in Samaria, what did they do?
8. What two things did Peter and John do (vss. 15 & 17)?
Why did Philip not do this?
9. What did Simon try to buy?
10. What was Simon's problem?
11. What two things did Peter say he must do?
12. What did Peter and John do as they returned to Jerusalem?

II. Peter's Visitor (Galatians 1:15-19)

Note: Acts 9 tells of the conversion of Saul, the persecutor, in Damascus. After some time in Arabia, Saul returned to Damascus and then made his way to Jerusalem.

1. Whom did Saul visit in Jerusalem? How long did he stay?
2. Did Saul learn the gospel from Peter (Gal. 1:11-12)?

III. Peter Evangelizing (Acts 9:31-43)

1. What accounts for the peace which descended on the church throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria?
2. Where had Peter been when he came to Lydda?
3. Whom did Peter heal in Lydda?
4. Why was Peter called to Joppa? Learn what you can about Joppa.

Note: Lydda was about 12 miles from Joppa. The Tel Aviv airport now covers ancient Lydda.

5. Describe Dorcas (Tabitha).

6. What did Peter find when he arrived in Joppa?
7. How did Peter proceed?
8. What did Peter accomplish by God's power?
9. Whom did he call to witness what was done?
10. What was the result throughout all Joppa?
11. Where did Peter abide?
12. What was the man's occupation? Might this explain the location of his house?

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Peter Preaching to Gentiles

Acts 10 - 11:18

Lesson 11

- Intro.
1. All preaching of the gospel to this point had been done among Jews.
 2. Old Testament prophecy had foretold the conversion of the nations to the worship of God. What had Peter himself said concerning the promise of remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:39)?
 3. The prayers of a devout Gentile in Caesarea reminded God of His promise (Acts 10:4).

I. Preliminary Events (Acts 10:1-33)

1. Describe Cornelius.
2. What did an angel tell Cornelius to do?
3. What did Cornelius do in response?
4. In Joppa, what was Peter doing about noontime the next day?
5. Why did Peter refuse to eat the animals in the vision?
What did the voice from heaven tell him?
Did Peter understand the vision immediately?
6. What instructions did the Holy Spirit give Peter regarding the men who had come for him?
7. Whom did Peter take with him to Caesarea?
8. How did Cornelius greet Peter?
9. What had Peter decided about the meaning of the vision?
10. What question did Peter ask Cornelius?
What was his answer (vs. 33)?

II. Conversion of the Gentiles (Acts 10:34-48)

1. What truth did Peter perceive (vss. 34,35)?
2. Did Cornelius know anything about Jesus before Peter came?
3. How does Peter's theme (vss. 39-41) compare with his sermons in Acts 2,3 and 5?
4. What did Peter say was available for all who believe in Jesus?
5. What happened as Peter was speaking?
How did they know what had happened?
6. Why were the Jews from Joppa astonished?
7. What did this prove to Peter according to vs. 47?

III. The Sequel in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-18)

1. What charge did the brethren make against Peter?
2. List at least four facts Peter reported in his defense.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
3. According to the angel, by what was Cornelius to be saved (vs. 14)?
4. Why, then did the Holy Spirit come on them?

Conclusion: Acts 15 describes a conference discussing the position of the Gentiles in God's plan. Peter speaks in vss. 7-11. According to Peter's speech,

1. How did the Gentiles come to believe?
2. By what were their hearts purified?
3. What was accomplished by the baptism of the Spirit?

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Peter "On Death Row"

Lesson 12

- Intro.
1. Jesus had predicted that Peter would be executed (John 21:18-19). It must have seemed that the time had come when the events of Acts 12 occurred.
 2. Up until this point, all opposition had been from Jews. Herod, however, represented Rome.

I. Peter Slated for Execution (Acts 12:1-4).

1. What action of Herod indicated the seriousness of his intentions to wipe out the church (vs.2)?
2. Whom did he seize next? Why?
3. How many soldiers were set to guard him?

II. Divine Intervention (Acts 12:5-19)

1. What was the church doing while Peter was imprisoned? Where?
2. How did Peter spend the night before he was to be brought before the people?
3. As the angel released him, what did Peter think he was seeing?
4. Where did Peter go?
5. How did the brethren respond when Rhoda told them Peter was at the door?
What does this suggest about the content of their prayers?
6. What did Peter tell the brethren to do?
7. Where did he go?

III. Later Glimpses of Peter

1. **Acts 15** at the "Jerusalem Conference" (Studied in Lesson 11)
 - a. What position did Peter take regarding the relative standing of Jews and Gentiles?
 - b. Did Peter favor placing the Gentiles under the yoke of the law?
 - c. By what did he say they should be saved?
 - d. Who drew the conclusions (13-21) Would this have been true if Peter were pope?
 - e. As result of this meeting, what was perceived regarding the relative commissions of Paul and Peter (See Gal. 2:7-8)?

2. **Galatians 2:11-15**

- a. What mistake did Peter make in Antioch?

Was this a recurrence of Peter's old weakness displayed in the courtyard of the high priest?

- b. Would Paul have rebuked Peter publicly if Peter had been "pope"?

3. **I Corinthians 9:5**

- a. Who was accompanying Peter on his preaching tours?
- b. What was her spiritual status?

4. **I Peter 5:12-14**

- a. Where was Peter when he wrote this epistle?
- b. What two prominent men were with him?

Note: This may well have been the time when the book of Mark was written.

5. **II Peter 1:12-15**

- a. What did Peter expect to happen to him shortly after writing this book?
- b. Why did he write this second epistle?

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Questions About Peter

Lesson 13

Assignment: Read through First and Second Peter and find any references or allusions that reflect the character and experiences of Peter as we have observed them in this study.

I. Catholic Claims Based on Peter's Years as "Bishop of Rome."

- A. The authority of the present pope is based upon the claim that he is Peter's successor as "bishop of Rome". It is developed in this way:
 - 1. Jesus made Peter the foundation of the church and gave him the keys (Mt. 16:18-19).
 - 2. It is claimed that Peter went to Rome in 42 A.D. and served as Bishop until 67 A.D. (25 yrs.)
 - 3. The successor of Peter as Bishop of Rome was also his successor as head of the church.
 - 4. The present pope is "Bishop of Rome" and therefore the Bishop of the universal church.
- B. Three things to be proved:
 - 1. That the Lord made Peter head of the church.
 - 2. That Peter was Bishop of the church in Rome.
 - 3. That a successor of Peter as "Bishop of Rome" would succeed him as head of the church.

II. Evidence that Refutes These Claims:

- A. There is no evidence that Jesus made Peter head of the church.
 - 1. Matthew 16:18 does not prove it.
 - a. The words *Petros* (Peter) and *Petra* (the word Jesus used) are different.
 - b. Peter was to be the key-keeper, not the foundation.
 - c. The foundation was the truth Peter had confessed regarding Jesus (I Cor. 3:11, I Pet. 2:4-8).
 - 2. The other apostles did not understand that Jesus had made Peter head of the church.
 - a. They continued to argue about who was greatest (Mt. 20:20-28; Lk. 22:24-30).
 - b. They sent Peter to Samaria (Acts 8:14).
 - c. Peter did not preside at the meeting in Acts 15. James presided and stated the conclusion.
 - d. Paul (1) Spoke of Peter with respect but with no suggestion of his primacy (Gal. 2:6-9).
 - (2) Rebuked him publicly (Gal. 2:11-21).
 - (3) Insisted the he (Paul) was not inferior (II Cor. 11:5; 12:11).
- B. Peter could not have been Bishop of Rome for 25 years.
 - 1. The first writer to mention Peter's being Bishop of Rome was Jerome in 400 A.D.
 - 2. If he were in Rome from 42 to 67 it would be inexplicable that:
 - a. Paul wrote a letter to the Romans (58 A.D.) containing many greetings, yet none to Peter.
 - b. That Paul wrote 4 letters from Rome (61-63) and did not mention him. See esp. Col. 4:11.
 - c. That in 67, when Paul was in Rome he wrote, "Only Luke is with me" (II Tim. 4:11).
 - 3. Tradition is almost unanimous in saying Peter died in Rome, but there is no proof in scripture.
- C. Even if Peter was Bishop of Rome, no proof that his successor would be head of the church.
 - 1. Headship of the church would have been based on his successor as an apostle, not as a bishop.
 - 2. Successor of an apostle had to be one who had accompanied Jesus on earth (Acts 1:21-22).
 - 3. Any "Bishop of Rome" succeeding Peter in 67 A.D. would have been over John, the apostle.

Conclusion: Tradition is early and strong that in Rome Nero had Peter crucified, perhaps "head down at his request." We can be sure, in light of the prophecy of Jesus (John 21:18-19), that he glorified God by his arrest and martyrdom, wherever that might have occurred.