

## The Life of Peter 2

### Matthew 16:13-20.

Jesus and His Disciples are sat in a room together, and Jesus interrupts the conversation with a question. 'Who do people say I am?' A question that He knew the answer to but He showed little interest in it. Think about it; a sad state of affairs, two years of preaching, living a perfect and sinless life, miracles and healing, everyone just thought He was some reincarnated prophet. Where did they get that from? God had never previously recycled a prophet, so why do you think everyone was so stuck on this prophet thing?

They were all eagerly waiting in anticipation for the Messiah but for them, this wasn't him: why? Was it that they all had a preconception of what the Messiah looked like and Jesus didn't fit it, or was it the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy which Jesus alluded to in Mark 4:11-12? But we're going to read the original in Isaiah 6:9-10?

Does God ever make people a bit stupid to suit His purpose? Mark 4:25. Isaiah 6:9-10.

Anyway, the question was a precursor to a much more important question, who do YOU say I am? Peter was the only disciple to answer. Verse 16.

V17. Correct answer, go to the top of the class. Note, the crowd said Jesus was a recycled prophet and none of the rest of the disciples even put their hand up for the second question. It was Peter that declared his understanding of the true nature of Jesus. Jesus knew Peter inside out, even down to his thought process. Jesus was able to tell him that he hadn't worked this out, it wasn't logic or anything he'd read, it was the Holy Spirit that revealed that fact to him, and of the 12 disciples, He chose Peter. Now remember, this is pre-Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was only given to a select number of Bible heroes to enable them to carry out their heavenly duties. It seems that Peter was one. In fact this happened earlier, Matthew 10:1. Please keep this in mind for later in this passage. Note the next verse, 2. Judas was also given the Holy Spirit.

So, did Peter eventually have a role in building the Church? Acts 2:14. From what we know of Peter, would he be your choice of 'head disciple'? Was John not more cerebral and cultivated? There seems to be a lot of jockeying for top dog status within these three 'chosen disciples', Matthew 20:20-28.

Read - Matthew 18:18, John 20:21-23. The power Jesus gave to Peter is given to all the Disciples, and you, but what do these verses mean to you? They look like verses of power. I think that they are verses of responsibility. If you witness, there's a good chance your recipient will repent and believe. If you don't, they won't. V 23; if you can convince your listener, his /her sins are forgiven. Matthew 5:19.

Matthew 16:21-24. Jesus lets the Disciples know what's going to happen in the following few weeks. Peter's not happy and so he asks Jesus, 'can I have a word with you?' They step outside and Peter gives Jesus a good telling off. He was telling Jesus He was wrong with His prediction and he wasn't going to allow it. Referring back to verses 17-19, Peter must have had an ego the size of a Manhattan skyscraper.

So, what do you think was going through Peter's head at this moment? Jesus instantly recognised that this wasn't Peter talking, it was Satan, speaking through Peter. So Jesus addresses Peter in the same manner He addressed Satan in Matthew 4:10. Given that

Peter was one of the twelve disciples who'd been filled with the Holy Spirit, how was it then possible for Satan to get into his head and speak through him, directly to Jesus? How do I distinguish between what the Holy Spirit is telling me and thoughts, notions and ideas planted by Satan?

Jesus gave Satan a stern rebuke, telling him he was focused on human instincts and desires but that Jesus was focused on God's will and desire. That seems to shut Satan up. In the context of these verses, what were the 'things mindful of men' that Jesus was referring to? Is there a lesson in these verses for you? What's the difference between these verses and Luke 22:31-32 Is there a lesson there for you?

Now Satan was in the room when Jesus was outlining His plan of redemption. Surely he realised that if this plan succeeded, he was finished. His response was to get into Peter and try to get Jesus to change His mind. That failed, and yet Satan still went along with Jesus's plan, entering into Judas and geeing up the scribes and Pharisees to demand Jesus's crucifixion. Is he just stupid, or arrogant enough to think that he could contain Jesus in death? Well, he was stupid or arrogant enough to think he could usurp God in Heaven. Isaiah 14:12-16.

John 13:3-17. Feet washing. This is a crucial lesson that Jesus gives to His disciples, but Peter didn't get it.

V3. God was no longer in control, He had handed control over to Jesus. What does that mean, practically speaking? I like where John said, 'knowing He had come from God and that He was going to God.' Jesus doesn't even like to think about that bit in the middle.

V4-5 Jesus takes on a traditional low grade servant's role, washing feet. Luke 7:44. Was He telling them that their feet stink, or was there a deeper message?

V6. Peter's question is an objection. Again, He's reprimanding Jesus for breaking protocol.

V7. Jesus asks Peter to humour Him on this one. One day you'll understand what I'm doing. In fact, he only had to wait until verse 15.

V8. Peter stands firm, it's a no. So why does Jesus say, 'if I can't wash your feet, I don't want anything to do with you'? What might be behind that statement to Peter? Was he referring to Peter's feet or more than that?

V9. Put like that, Peter almost wants a strip down wash!

V10-11. Jesus declines, 'you're clean other than your feet, but you're not all clean.' I wonder who He was referring to?

V12-15. Is there one word that summarises these verses? Servitude. Note, Jesus is referring to brothers and sisters, more than the wider public. We have a duty towards one another but in verses 34-35 Jesus takes that duty to a whole new level. Can you describe the two levels (verses 12-15 and 34-35)? How can you fulfil these two duties? By going to church and talking to people, and not just the Sunday morning service but other meetings to, getting to know each other. That's not going to happen if you stay at home.