

Character Study: Peter

Part 1 – The Development of a Leader

Various Bible Passages

What's happening?

- Peter, along with his brother, Andrew, were fishermen by trade from the city of Bethsaida ([John 1:44](#)). A few references in Scripture indicate he was married, though little is known about his family ([Luke 4:38](#); [1 Cor. 9:5](#)). His birth name was Simon, but when he first met Jesus, the Lord gave him the name Cephas (“Cephas” is Aramaic, translated “Peter” in Greek, both meaning “a rock”). ([John 1:35-42](#))
- At the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, He entered Peter’s boat to speak to a large crowd on the shore. He told Peter to lower his fishing net into the water. Despite being unable to catch any fish that night, Peter listened. To his surprise, the net became full of fish beyond the breaking point. From that day forward, Peter followed Jesus. ([Luke 5:1-11](#))
- Peter became the lead Apostle and part of the Lord’s closest “inner circle” along with James and John. He is referred to more than any other Apostle in the Gospels. He witnessed many of Jesus’ miracles, including the raising of Jairus’s daughter from the dead ([Luke 8:49-56](#)), and he even experienced a miracle when he walked on the sea ([Matt. 14:25-33](#)).
- He often spoke on behalf of the Apostles (for example, acknowledging Jesus as the Son of God; [Matt. 16:13-16](#)), and sometimes acted out of emotion (it was Peter who cut off the ear of the High Priest’s servant with his sword in Gethsemane; [John 18:10-11](#)).
- Peter rebuked the Lord when He mentioned His coming death ([Mark 8:31-33](#)), but he later denied knowing Jesus three times during Jesus’ trial, just as Jesus had foretold he would ([Mark 14:26-31](#); [66-72](#)).

What's God doing?

> Peter was energetic and bold, but sometimes impulsive and inconsistent. God knew exactly how to hone the quality traits he had in order to transform him into a great leader. We will see in our next lesson how the resurrection of Christ worked to further accomplished this in Peter’s life.

What's to learn?

→ Peter had some really great qualities, but he also had some qualities that were not as admirable. He was not perfect, yet he never allowed anything to stop him from following the Lord. As we remain surrendered to the Lord, He will continually mold us into who He wants us to be!