



Was Peter The First Pope?

With all of the recent news regarding the Catholic Church many have heard stated as fact by news media and others that Peter was the first pope. This is, of course, official Catholic doctrine. But what does the Bible say about Peter's pope-hood? Is there one scripture that plainly declares that Peter was the first pope? There's not one. In fact, the evidence in scripture is against Peter being the first pope. Let's take a look at a few things in this regard.

Those who claim that Peter was the first pope state that Matthew 16:18 proves that Peter was given this title by Jesus himself. What does this verse say, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." These say that Peter is the rock upon which Jesus was going to build his church. However, the rest of scripture state otherwise. Jesus said that He was the rock in Matthew 21:42, when he said, "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes". To this, Peter himself agreed! Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:6, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be con-founded." Who is the chief corner stone? Peter or Jesus?

It is Jesus. Inspired by the same Holy Spirit as Matthew, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The scriptures teach that Jesus was and is the foundation of the church, not Peter. Who then was the "rock" in Matthew 21:42? It was Jesus himself. It was upon the rock of Peter's confession upon which Jesus would build His church, not upon Peter himself.

There are, however, other inconsistencies with the claim that Peter was the first pope. Peter, unlike the popes of our day, had a mother-in-law according to Matthew 8:14, Mark 1:30 and Luke 4:38. This meant that Peter (Cephas) was married. In 1 Corinthians 9:5, Paul calls our attention to this fact when he says, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" This is entirely inconsistent with what the Catholic Church requires in a "pope" today. The Catholic Encyclopedia states, "Virginity is consequently the special prerogative of the Christian priesthood." By and large, one must come up through the ranks of Catholic priesthood in order to become the pope. This would require celibacy for the pope. Too bad Peter didn't know this. Perhaps he could have been a better pope.

Another inconsistency is that Peter didn't allow anyone to bow down before him and worship him as those who fawn over the pope do today. In Acts 10:25,26 we read, "And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." The word "worship" in this verse refers as much to a position as to an attitude. It means to bow the knee toward or kiss toward another. The action of Cornelius' bowing down to Peter was understood as an action of worship. Unlike the popes of modern day who accept such worship, Peter refused it. He told this man to stand up because he, Peter, was also a man. Strange behavior indeed, from a pope! Why don't the popes of today follow Peter's example in this regard, if he TRULY was the first pope. Hypocrisy comes to mind as at least one of the reasons. Another reason is simply that Peter wasn't the first pope.

Perhaps the clincher is the situation in which Peter found himself at the church in Antioch. He had traveled there to visit and have fellowship with the brethren, but when his fellow Jews arrived, Peter stopped engaging in that fellowship and refused to eat with them. Paul called Peter down on this point. He states in Galatians 2:11 "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I resisted him

Was Peter The First Pope? (cont.)



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to the face, because he stood condemned." This is strange behavior toward someone who was the first pope. Didn't Paul know about Peter's elevated status? Didn't Paul know that the pope is beyond reproach? Didn't Paul know that the pope makes the doctrine of the church? Who among the Catholics today would so act toward the pope if he were found to be in sin? Not any of them would so act. Yet, Paul treats Peter not as if he were someone special, but as if he were merely a brother who needed correction.

The fact of such matters is that Peter was never the first pope. Peter was not so elevated above the other apostles as to have a greater measure of authority than any of the others. Peter was a leader, of that there is no doubt. Peter was also a shepherd, but acknowledged that there were others who were on equal footing with him in this role (1 Peter 5:1). The

Catholic Church would have us believe that Peter was the chief Shepherd of the whole church. The Catholic Encyclopedia says, "The title pope, once used with far greater latitude (see below, section V), is at present employed solely to denote the Bishop of Rome, who, in virtue of his position as successor of St. Peter, is the chief pastor of the whole Church, the Vicar of Christ upon earth" (The Pope). They also state regarding John 21:15-17, "... here [Jesus] makes [Peter] the shepherd of God's flock to take the place of Himself, the Good Shepherd." But to Peter, there was but ONE Chief Shepherd and that was Jesus himself. He makes this abundantly clear in 1 Peter 5:4 where Peter says, "And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away." Again, the Catholic Church would do well to listen to their

"first pope." Yet, sadly, they do not.

The scriptures plainly teach that Peter held no such role of prominence for which the Catholic Church argues. They argue this not based upon the facts of the scriptures, but merely to justify their own traditions. And the traditions of men never outweigh the word of God (Mark 7:13). In fact, traditions have no authority whatsoever when it comes to doctrinal matters (Mark 7:13). Only the scriptures can provide the man of God with everything that he needs for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Our plea is for unity, not based upon the traditions of men, but upon the authority of the word of God. If we take that as the standard, then we will avoid such folly as attempting to twist the scriptures into confirming Peter as the first pope.

Kevin Cauley



Bible Studies for the week of April 24th, 2005

- AM Sermon..... "Jesus Calls Us"
- Scripture Reading..... Mark 1:16-20
- PM Sermon..... Principles of Personal Cooperation
- Scripture Reading..... Philippians 2:1-11
- Sunday Class The Book of Hebrews
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Job

Kevin's Korner

I've had a lot of good feedback on my recent articles regarding the pope. I hope that each has found these studies beneficial. I've also had some comments from some members of the community and I've given these bulletins to them. We should note that the people who believe Catholic doctrine are not our enemies. It is the teaching itself that is false and then the wrong behavior follows from that. What we believe makes a difference in how we act and so it is critically important that we believe the right things so that we can act in the right ways.

Friends and family day is going to be here before we know it. We still have several flyers in the foyer that need to be handed out. On that day we will have our regular morning worship hour, but then after worship we will have lunch. BBQ brisket will be the meat dish, so please bring any foods that will

go with that. Then we will have a gospel singing at 2:00. Please let members of other congregations know about this event so they can join us Sunday afternoon. After this we will resume our regular evening services at 6:00 P.M. Each year we do this, we always have a wonderful time. This year won't be any exception. Please make your plans to be with us and also for your friends and family to be here as well!

This past Thursday, we had a volunteers luncheon at the community center. I was asked to cook hamburgers and sausages for the event. The community center paid for the meat. We had a good time being there and visiting with some of our friends from around town.

Bill Fort and I have been working this past week with our friends in Costa Rica. We believe we have temporarily stabilized things somewhat,

but they could really use our prayers at this time. We've arranged it so that we will be traveling down there on May 3rd and coming back on the 10th. Please remember us in your prayers.

While we've had a cool weekend, summer is coming upon us rapidly. We have some great activities planned for this summer. Our vacation Bible school is being planed right now and we will have some more info on that coming out soon. In addition to that, there are some community activities happening this summer. One such activity is Cub Scout day camp which will be the third week in June for boys ages 6-10. This will be held at the Carroll County Fair Grounds. The cost for participation is \$35 which basically covers the week's supplies. If you would like more information on this activity, please feel free to get in touch with me about it.



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Records for the week of April 17th, 2004

Sunday Bible Class	57
Sunday AM Worship.....	68
Sunday PM Worship.....	50
Wednesday Night Study.....	48
Contribution.....	\$1517.25
Budget.....	\$1778.13



Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in prayer: Kala Guess, Raymond Kimes, Glenn Quigley, Jack Sears.
- Our shut-ins: Curtis and Opal Hull, and Edith Mischler.
- There is a youth devotional tonight after services. Please bring chips, deserts, and drinks.
- Next week is our regularly scheduled elders and deacons meeting after evening services.
- Our weekly Bible study at the nursing home will be this Thursday at 2:00. We are studying the book of Mark.
- Bill and Kevin will be traveling to Costa Rica May 3rd-10th. Please remember that work and their safe travels in your prayers.
- Friends and Family Day is less than a month away now. Let's get the word out!
- This is the last Sunday of this month. Be sure to check the bulletin board for next months assignments.
- Our pantry item is: Laundry Detergent.



Welcome!

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	April 24th, 2005	May 1st, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Brent Stevens	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bruce Foster	Glenn Williams
Scripture Reading:	Brandon Foster	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
(assist)	Rusty Windle	Jerry Roller
	Bob Moore	Matt Morrell
	Ervin Hand	Rusty Windle
Closing Prayer	Glenn Quigley	Bill Fort
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Glenn Williams
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Glenn Williams	Dale Pinkley
Scripture Reading:	Dan Hand	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Clay Bozarth	Leon Duncan
	Leon Duncan	Brandon Foster
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
Wednesday		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Glenn Quigley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Bob Moore
Invitation:	Kevin Cauley	Bruce Foster
Closing Prayer:	Dan Hand	Clay Bozarth

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