

## An “Interview” with Peter, the Apostle

Obviously, it’s impossible to do a “live” interview with Peter. However, by looking at his life and his teaching, we can safely conclude what his answers would be to these questions.

**Question:** Tell us how you were first introduced to Jesus.

**Answer:** Through my brother, Andrew. He learned about Jesus from John the Baptist, who one day pointed to Jesus walking by and said, “Behold the Lamb of God.” That same day Andrew followed Jesus to the place he was staying and spent the day with Him. He came to me as soon as he left and said, “We have found the Messiah.” He then took me to meet Jesus, who when He saw me said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (or Peter), a name which means stone or rock. I appreciate His patience with me, because it sure did take me awhile to become the rock He wanted me to be. [See John 1:35-42.]

**Question:** It was several months later when Jesus called you to follow Him. What convinced you to do it?

**Answer:** By that time I had spent more time with Jesus and had gotten to know Him better. But you need to know what happened the day He called me. James and John and I had spent the previous night fishing and had caught nothing. Jesus came along while we were washing and mending our nets. There were so many people who wanted to hear Jesus teach that He asked me to put my boat out a little distance from the land so He could teach the multitudes from there. When He stopped speaking, He said to me, “Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a catch.” I was tired from the previous night, and I didn’t think we would catch anything, but I did what He said. Before long we had caught so many fish that the net began to break. James and John brought the other boat to help us, and we filled up both boats with so many fish that the boats began to sink. I was so overwhelmed by the greatness and power of Jesus that I fell at His knees and said, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!” Jesus then said to me, “Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men.” How could I possibly say no to Him? When we got to the shore, I left everything behind and followed Him. [See Luke 5:1-11; Mark 1:16-20; Matthew 4:18-22.]

**Question:** Leaving everything behind, at least to some, might seem very difficult. Any regrets?

**Answer:** None whatsoever. When I reminded Jesus later that we had left all to follow Him, here’s what He said: “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life.” Just prior to my conversation with Jesus, He had offered a rich young ruler the opportunity to follow Him. He turned Jesus down, because he mistakenly thought that he would lose too much. Not very smart—to turn down an investment that yields a hundredfold! [See Matthew 19:16-30; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 18:18-30.]

**Question:** Let’s talk about the confession you made in the presence of Jesus: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). You then went on to proclaim the very same thing in the presence of others (Acts 2:36). Explain how you could be so certain.

**Answer:** I saw Him heal my mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31). I was with Him when He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead (Luke 8:49-56). I saw Him walking on the Sea of Galilee, the same power which He even gave me—at least until my faith began to waver (Matthew 14:24-31). I was there on the mountain with Him when He was transfigured, when His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. I heard the voice from the cloud which said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him” (Matthew 17:1-5; see also 2 Peter 1:16-21). And here's the clincher: I saw His empty tomb (John 20:2-8), the same tomb that had been sealed and well-guarded (Matthew 27:62-66). And then I saw **Him!** I saw His hands, through which nails had been driven; I saw His side, which had been pierced with a sword. I ate with Him, had conversations with Him (John 21:10-23). There's no other way to explain it—Jesus was raised from the dead. You can trust my testimony concerning Jesus, because I was an eyewitness to these great events—and to many more.

**Question:** Unfortunately, what many remember most about you is that after His arrest, you denied Jesus three times. Can you explain how that happened?

**Answer:** I was easy prey for Satan, because I was overconfident. The other disciples—I could see where they might stumble, but not me (Matthew 26:33). “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!”—that's what I said to Jesus. In my first epistle, I wrote, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). I was anything but sober and vigilant. I didn't heed the warnings Jesus gave me—“Satan has asked for you” (Luke 22:31); “Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). I was prepared for a physical battle (John 18:10-11), when I should have been prepared for a spiritual one.

**Question:** And how did it make you feel that you had denied someone with whom you had such a close relationship?

**Answer:** When Jesus turned and looked at me after the third denial, I was so ashamed that I went out and wept bitterly (Luke 22:61-62). I didn't just weep, though; I repented. I failed Jesus this time, but He still had big plans for me—to strengthen my brethren (Luke 22:32), to feed His sheep (John 21:15-17), to preach the gospel throughout the world (Matthew 28:18-20). And that's exactly what I did, only this time with more faith and courage (see Acts 1-12, especially chapters 4-5). I wasn't perfect; in fact, Paul had to rebuke me to my face one time (Galatians 2:11-14). But, I appreciate the Lord's patience with me, because for the most part I finally became the rock He wanted me to be (John 1:42).

**Question:** Speaking of strengthening your brethren, what instruction do you have for your brethren to help them overcome temptation, to keep them from denying Jesus?

**Answer:** First, don't be overconfident like I was. “Beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness” (2 Peter 3:17). Secondly, don't make brash statements about what you will or won't do; just work on getting stronger spiritually: “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). “Add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love...for if you do these things you will never stumble” (2 Peter 1:5-7, 10). Thirdly, “be serious and watchful in your prayers” (1 Peter 4:7).

That's what I should I have done in the Garden (Matthew 26:41), and that's exactly what you need to do—every day, several times a day.

**Question:** You spoke earlier about the miracles you saw Jesus perform. Tell us now about the miracles you performed.

**Answer:** Like the other apostles, I did perform a number of miracles, some while Jesus was still with us (Matthew 10:1; Mark 3:14-15; 6:7; Luke 9:1-2), and then many more after He ascended to heaven (Acts 2:43; 5:12-16). I'll mention a few in particular. I healed a man in his forties, who had been lame from birth (Acts 3:1-9; 4:22), as well as a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed (Acts 9:32-34). I also raised from the dead a lady named Dorcas, who was well known among the saints in Joppa for her good works and charitable deeds (Acts 9:36-42). Unlike the acts performed by at least one man we met (Acts 8:9-13), these were all genuine miracles, a fact that even our enemies could not deny (Acts 4:15-16).

**Question:** What was the purpose behind these miracles?

**Answer:** Not fame or fortune, I can assure you of that. We were always careful to give credit to Jesus, because it was in His name and by His power that we performed these miracles (Acts 3:12-16; 4:8-10). He baptized us (apostles) with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8; 2:32-33), which not only gave us the power to preach (and later write) by inspiration, but also the power to perform these miracles. These miracles were designed to confirm that what we were preaching was indeed the truth (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). In other words, performing these miracles in His name would persuade people that we were also preaching in His name. Unfortunately, there were some who tried to use the name of Jesus to perform signs—without proper authority (Acts 19:11-17). The Lord certainly made them wish they hadn't done that. One other thing about these miracles—they were never intended to last through the ages, only until the word of the Lord could be fully revealed and confirmed.

**Question:** In the early years of the church, many Jewish Christians were resistant to receiving the Gentiles, unless they became circumcised and kept the law of Moses (Acts 15:1-5). What was your stance on this?

**Answer:** It took me awhile, but when God sent me to preach to the Gentiles (Cornelius and his family), I learned the truth—that God shows no partiality (Acts 10:34); that whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him (Acts 10:35); that we should no longer bind the law of Moses (Acts 15:10); that salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is available to all men (Acts 15:8-9, 11).

**Question:** Anything else you would like to say that we haven't covered?

**Answer:** "Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility" (1 Peter 5:5). It's hard to imagine now, but in the hours leading up to the arrest of our Savior, the other apostles and I actually argued about who would be the greatest (Luke 22:24). Jesus put us all to shame that same night when He laid aside His garments, girded himself with a towel, poured water into a basin and began to wash our feet and wipe them with that same towel (John 13:3-5). When our Lord says, "be clothed with humility," He's only asking us to do what He has already done.