

## Was Peter the first Pope?

by Hendrik Joubert

In answering this question one is tempted to say: "I recognize Jesus, and I know Peter, but who is the Pope or the Roman Catholic Church?" (**Acts 19:15**) In **Romans 10:17** we learn how one obtains faith: ***So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*** When we approach the Bible, we *must* do so in order to learn what we are to believe, and not to find support for what we want to believe. The latter involves a manipulation of the Scriptures in order to support our beliefs. There is an apparent awareness that what we do in worship has to come from God; however many do not seem to realize that we blaspheme by quoting God *out of context*, to coin a phrase.

Every denomination has points on which they differ, distinguishing them from each other. Some differences are more pronounced than others. If a single man was to proclaim all the conflicting doctrines represented in the denominational world he would not be taken seriously, yet in reality men blame God of doing just that in the Scriptures. It is obvious that the Bible teaches what each of these *wants* it to teach. This actually fulfills a prophecy Paul made in his second letter to Timothy: ***...For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*** (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

*The Seventh Day Adventist* seeks proof for keeping the seventh day Sabbath and therefore has to *interpret* passages such as **Colossians 2:11-17** and **2Corinthians 3:7**. *Mormonism* resulted from a complete new revelation received through *an angel*. ***But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!*** (**Galatians 1:8**) The *Jehovah's Witnesses* ignore their failed prophecies as they manipulate specific Scriptures in an effort to prove their doctrine. ***"When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him."*** (**Deuteronomy 18:22**) Many other individuals claim to receive communications *directly from God*, yet they cannot agree.

The Roman Catholic Church believes that the apostle Peter was the first Pope, just as they believe only certain individuals are to be described as ***saints***, and not every *sanctified sinner* as is obvious from the Scriptures. (**Acts 9:32; Romans 1:7; 12:13; 15:25-26;...1Corinthians 1:2;...2Corinthians 1:1;...Ephesians 1:1...etc.**) In order to prove that Peter was something we do not read of in the Bible, in a church we do not read of in the Bible, they give preference to passages where Peter is prominent.

Peter was married. (**1Corinthians 9:5**) He was fallible even after the resurrection of the Christ, and was reprimanded by the ***least of the apostles*** (**1Corinthians 15:9**): ***Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to***

*be blamed <sup>12</sup> for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. <sup>13</sup> And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. <sup>14</sup> But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews? (Galatians 2:11)*

The church of Christ (**Romans 16:16**), of which He is the Head (**Ephesians 1:22-23**), has ***been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone.*** (**Ephesians 2:20**) This church stands on a firm **rock**, the fact that Jesus ***is the Christ, the Son of the living God.*** (**Matthew 16:16-19**) The Roman Catholic Church is built upon their perception of the apostle Peter, however the Lord's church is built upon a foundation which cannot be re-laid: ***For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*** (**1 Corinthians 3:11**) Peter is not the foundation of the Lord's church, or the Roman Catholic Church.

Peter indeed had the privilege of being first to announce the terms of entrance into the kingdom (**Acts 2:38**), and thereby unlocked the doors; however the terms of entrance (keys) were cut in heaven: ***...shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.***" (**Matthew 16:19**) In **John 14:25-26** **16:12-13** we learn that the Holy Spirit was sent to assist them by reminding them of all Jesus taught them, but also to guide them into all the truth...***shall have been bound in heaven...*** and

The Bible knows of no Pope, nor the Roman Catholic Church, or any other church men may have started. This is not an effort to put down the beliefs of some to promote other human doctrines. This is an effort to call every sinner to notice the fact that Jesus did all this personally. Who gives anyone the right to start a separate church and be selective in applying the teachings of the Bible? Christ cannot be divided, Peter was not crucified for us, nor are sinners to call upon the Lord's name through baptism (**1 Peter 3:21; Acts 22:16**) in the name of Paul, Cephas, Apollos or any other man. (**1 Corinthians 1:10-13**)