

## Scriptures Cited To Support The Papacy Of Peter

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by Bill Crews

There are no plain statements in the New Testament indicating that the apostle Peter was the chief of the apostles, the first earthly head of the Lord's church, the universal bishop or overseer, the vicar (in the place of) of Christ, the first "pope" (father). But many Roman Catholic theologians appeal to what they call a "cumulative" argument. They maintain that the "cumulative" effect of all of the following points is that the New Testament supports their contention that Peter was all of these things.

1. Simon's name was changed by Jesus to "*Cephas*" (Aramaic) or "*Peter*" (Greek) (John 1:42). (Implying that Jesus wanted his name to be "rock," knowing that the church would be built upon him as its foundation.)
2. Peter's name appears first in all of the lists of the apostles (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:13). But after the church actually began, Peter is given no such prominence (Galatians 2:9 — James, Cephas and John); 1 Corinthians 1:12 (Paul, Apollos, Cephas, Christ); 1 Corinthians 3:22 (Paul, Apollos, Cephas). Remember Cephas was Peter.
3. Peter paid the tribute (the temple tax) for Christ and himself (Matthew 17:24-27). Yes, and Judas Iscariot was the treasurer who kept the funds that belonged to Christ and His apostles (John 12:4-6; 13:29), but what does that prove about primacy?
4. Peter entered the empty tomb first; although John arrived first, out of deference for Peter, he waited for him to go in first (John 20:2-10). But we are not told why John, though arriving first, did not go in first. Also, what shall we make out of the fact that the women were the first to see the open tomb and to look into the empty tomb (Luke 23:55 — 24:3) and the fact that the risen Christ made His first appearance to a woman, Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9; details in John 20:11-16)?
5. Peter presided over and was the spokesman in the meeting in Acts 1:15-26 when a successor to Judas Iscariot was chosen. What, then, are we to make of the fact that James (the brother of Jesus and not one of the twelve) seems to be the most prominent one in the great meeting in Acts 15, even making the final recommendation that was followed by the apostles, the elders at Jerusalem and all the brethren?
6. Peter was the chief spokesman among all the twelve apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40). Yes, he had been chosen by God for this role. To him had been given the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:19), and, using them, he opened the doors of God's kingdom to those Jews who were present.
7. Peter performed the first recorded miracle after the church began (Acts 3:4-10). We might call attention to Acts 2:43, which preceded this: "*And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.*" So all of the apostles had already been working miracles.
8. Special and unusual miracles were performed through Peter (Acts 5:15). Yes, and later special and unusual miracles were performed through Paul (Acts 19:11-12).
9. Peter pronounced the fate of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10). Which does not make him "Pope."
10. Paul went up to Jerusalem after his conversion to confer with Peter (Galatians 1:18). (But please read also Galatians 1:15-18. After Paul's conversion he says that he did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did he go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before him, but he went away into Arabia, then returned to Damascus, and then after three years went up to Jerusalem to "visit" Cephas. Paul's point is to show that neither his apostleship nor his gospel came from men, but from God; he is emphasizing the infrequency of his contact with the other apostles. Please read also Galatians 2:11-14 where Paul tells of his rebuking Peter (or Cephas) "*to the face*" and "*before them all*" for his hypocritical conduct at Antioch. No indication here that Peter was "the pope.")

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