

WAS PETER POPE?

Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. This question is a vital one because the system of Roman Catholicism rests upon the doctrine (“*The Book – The Church* “, page 13 The Authority of Peter).
2. If this doctrine is not true, the whole system of Catholicism is false.
3. This is a question of AUTHORITY.
 - a. Those who claim that Peter was the “Supreme Pontiff, the Pope” look to him and his successors as their source of authority in all matters of religion.
 - b. If the Pope is our source of authority in religion, then the Bible, the Word of God, is not, and is therefore a dead letter.
4. I believe you can see from this that it is an important question.

I. **FOUR THINGS THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE PROVED, TO PROVE THAT PETER WAS POPE.**

- a. That Christ established such an office or position as that of “Vicar of Christ”.
- b. That Peter had SUPREME authority – Matt. 20: 25 – 26.
- c. That Peter was the first bishop of Rome.
- d. That the peculiar powers of Peter PASSED at his death from his person to his successor in the office he vacated, and in turn, to succeeding successors of him.

II. **SOME SCRIPTURAL REASONS PETER WAS NOT POPE, AND WHY HE DOES NOT FIT THE PAPAL PATTERN.**

- a. The church was NOT built upon Peter – Matt. 16:18.
 - i. The Catholics say the word “Peter” means “rock or stone”, and the rock Christ said He would build His church upon was Peter in Matt. 16:18.
 - ii. There are two different Greek words in this text – one for “Peter”, and one for “rock”.
 1. The Greek word for “Peter” is *PETROS*.
 2. The Greek for “rock” is *PETRA* – a solid ledge rock.
 - iii. The rock the church is built upon is Christ – *PETRA* – Matt. 16:16; I Cor. 3:11; I Cor. 10:4.
 - iv. Matt. 16:18 “*thou*” and “*this*”.
- b. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because he was a married man.
 - i. Matt. 8: 14 – 15.
 - ii. In following Christ, Peter “left all” – Matt. 19:27 – but he did not leave his wife – I Cor. 9:5.
 - iii. Peter was an elder as well as an apostle – I Pet. 5:1 – “*who am a fellow-elder*” ASV.
 1. I Tim. 3:2.
- c. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because he was not in Rome.
 - i. There is no Bible evidence that he ever was in Rome.
 - ii. He was not in Rome when Paul wrote ROMANS, about 57 A.D. or 58 A.D., because in the 16th chapter we find a long list of personal greetings and not one hint of greetings to Peter.

- iii. Peter had not been there, as a previous time is also evidenced by Paul's statement in Rom. 1:11.
 - iv. Paul was imprisoned in Rome for two years (Acts 28: 30 – 31), about 61 – 63 A.D.
 - 1. While imprisoned he wrote four letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon – but he does not mention Peter in these letters.
 - 2. No evidence can be found in Acts concerning Peter's presence in Rome.
 - 3. In the last letter Paul wrote to Timothy from Rome he said, "*Only Luke is with me*" – 2 Tim. 4: 11, 16.
 - d. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because he was HUMBLE.
 - i. He would not allow anyone to call him "father" since this was condemned by Jesus – Matt. 23: 8 – 11.
 - ii. He would not let men worship him – Acts 10: 25 – 26.
 - iii. He called himself a "fellow elder" – I Pet. 5: 1 ASV
 - e. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because he DID NOT CONSIDER HIMSELF INFALLIBLE.
 - i. He was rebuked by Paul – Gal. 2: 11 -14.
 - f. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern since HE DID NOT TEACH THAT HE WAS "THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH".
 - i. He taught that the stone, or rock, upon which the church was built was Christ – I Pet. 2: 6 – 8.
 - ii. Christ is the head of the church – Eph. 1: 22 -23; Col. 1:18.
 - 1. He will not die out of office – Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1: 18.
 - g. Peter does not fit the Papal Patter because THE THINGS PETER TAUGHT BY INSPIRATION ARE *DIFFERENT* FROM THE THINGS BEING TAUGHT BY THE POPE.
 - i. Peter believed in baptizing only those who had been taught, and who had believed and repented – Acts 2:38.
 - ii. There is no record of Peter baptizing anyone too young to understand the gospel.
 - h. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because HE WAS NOT GREATER THAN THE OTHER APOSTLES:
 - i. Paul – 2 Cor. 11:5; Matt. 20:20 -28.
 - ii. Matt. 16:19; 18:18.
 - i. Peter does not fit the Papal Pattern because HE WAS POOR:
 - i. Acts 3:6
 - ii. Matt. 17:27
- III. SUMMARY: PETER DOES NOT FIT THE PAPAL PATTERN BECAUSE:**
- a. **He was poor.**
 - b. **He was not greater than the other apostles.**
 - c. **He differed in doctrine from the Popes.**
 - d. **He did not teach he was head of the church.**
 - e. **He did not consider himself infallible.**
 - f. **He was humble.**
 - g. **He was not in Rome.**
 - h. **He was a married man.**
 - i. **The church was not built upon him.**