

# Peter the Underestimated Apostle

## 1. Peter the Underestimated<sup>1</sup>

- Why do we underestimate Peter?

## 2. Peter the Disciple

- His relationship with Jesus (1 Peter 1:1; Acts 3:6).
- Simon/Simeon called Peter, from Bethsaida / Capernaum.
- Part of inner circle (Mark 5:37; 9:2; 13:3; Matt 26:37; Luke 22:8).
- First to act (walking on water, Matt 14:28–33).
- Slow to understand (John 13:1–11; John 18:1–11; Mark 9:2–8).
- Messianic testimony (Mark 8:29; John 6:68–69).

## 3. Peter the Theologian

- How well trained was he?
- What effect did he have on Early Christianity?
- A powerful proclaimer (Acts 2, 3, 4, 10).
- A theological thinker.
- Peter's theology in Mark's Gospel.
- Peter's theology in Acts.
- Peter's Theology in 1 Peter (see 5:12 and Silvanus).

### A Theology of Salvation

- Defining salvation in the Gospel of Mark (10:45; 10:38).
  - Passion predictions (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32–34).
- Isaianic New Exodus themes: deliverance from Babylon; journey on the way; Arrival in Jerusalem and enthronement of YHWH.
- See Mark 1:2–3.
- 1 Peter 1:1, 17; 2:11; 2:9.

### A Theology of Christ

- 1 Peter 1:10–12 — 'the prophets . . . testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ.'<sup>2</sup>
- 1 Peter 3:18 — 'For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, in order to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit'.
- 1Pet. 3:22 — 'who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.' See Acts 2.
- The revelation of Christ (1 Peter 1:7, 13; 4:13; 5:1; 1:8).

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<sup>1</sup> Title borrowed from Hengel, Martin. *Saint Peter: The under-Estimated Apostle*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010, whose book is very helpful on Peter. For Petrine theology recovery see Green, Gene L. *Vox Petri: A Theology of Peter*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> All refs from NRSV

- Jesus the stone: “Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: “See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.” To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” and “A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.” They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.” (1 Pet. 2:4–8).
  - Ps 118:22; Isa 28:16 in 2:4; Isa 28:16 in 2:6; Ps 118:22 in 2:7; Isa 8:14 in 2:8.
  - Mark 12:10–11 and Acts 4:11.
- Jesus the Shepherd — 1 Peter 2:25.
- Jesus the Lamb — 1 Peter 1:18–19.

#### **A Theology of the Spirit**

- 1 Peter 1:2.
- 1 Peter 1:11–12.
- 1 Peter 4:14.
- Acts 2, 10.

#### **4. Peter the Fisherman**

- Peter’s calling (Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–12).
- Peter the evangelist (Pentecost; on trial in Jerusalem [Acts 3:12]; in Judea [Acts 9:32, 35]; Samaria [Acts 8:14, 25]; and the Gentiles [Acts 10:5–48]).
- After Acts 12 he travels.

#### **5. Peter the Shepherd**

- Peter at the passion (John 18:15–27).
- Peter’s denial (John 18:17–27).
- The restoration of Peter (compare John 18:17–27 and 21:15–17).
- Peter the shepherd in Acts.

#### **Peter and a Pastoral Theology**

- Suffering as a background (1 Peter 3:14).
- God acts for the people.
- God gives hope (1 Peter 1:3–5).
- God acts to save (1 Peter 1:21).
- Living in gratitude to the benefactor (1 Peter 1:2; 5:10).
- Living in trust (1 Peter 1:5).
- Living in community (1 Peter 2:10).

#### **6. Peter the Apostolic Leader**

- Appoints Matthias (Acts 1); preaches (Acts 2:14); works miracles; enacts church discipline; oversees outreach.

## 7. Peter the Foundation

- John 1:42 and Matthew 16:18–19.
- The significance of a name (Cephas).
- Peter the witness of the resurrection.
- Peter and Mark's Gospel.