

PETER, THE ROCK

INTRODUCTION: Peter was an ordinary man who had many failures in his life. He was a sinful, unstable man when he first met Jesus, but Christ changed Peter to make him a strong, victorious leader of God's people. In the same way, the Lord also wants to change *your* life! The Lord wants to make *you* a strong, righteous Christian & a leader for God's people!

John 1:42 When Simon the fisherman first met the Lord, he was given the new name Peter. Names are often significant of a person's calling or character: Bethlehem, 'Sons of Thunder,' Abraham, - Peter's new name showed that the Lord would change him to have the character of a "rock."
-Jesus said, "you *shall be* called Peter." This would happen in the future, but was not instantly fulfilled! Simon had a natural character that was the opposite of a rock- he was an impulsive, unsteady man. *But* Christ looked past the failures & weaknesses of Simon Peter, to see what Christ would make him become: a rock- a leader- a saint!

So from when Simon Peter first met Christ, The Lord began to change him, to make him a rock:

Lk.5:5-10 Simon Peter had been a sinner and felt unworthy to be near Jesus...

... But Christ had forgiven him and called him to become a leader, an evangelist!

Mt.14:25-31 The disciples were afraid (we often misunderstand what God is doing & get scared!)

When Peter wanted to also walk on the water, Jesus said 'Come!' (Do what Jesus did!)

When Peter began to sink, Jesus immediately took his hand (Christ will rescue *you!*)

Jesus told Peter, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?' (Christ wants to enlarge our faith!)

Mt.16:13-18 Peter started to become like a rock as he saw that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God

Christ is the Rock of our salvation, 1 Cor10:4, 2 Sam.22:47. When we receive Christ as our Savior

He comes into our heart. The Rock lives in our hearts, to make us strong & stable, **1 Pet.2:4-5!**

But Peter had 1 big failure that made him very discouraged. Peter almost stopped following the Lord!
Peter's big failure was on the night when Jesus was arrested, when he denied Christ 3 times.

WHY DID PETER FAIL AND DENY CHRIST THREE TIMES?

- 1) Self confidence, **Mt.26:31-35**. Peter did not listen to Christ's warning. (we are usually warned before a trial hits us- warned directly by God, or by another Christian)
- 2) Lack of prayer, **Mt.26:37-41**. Jesus encouraged them to pray & warned them.
- 3) Fear, **Mt.26:69-75**. Peter had a problem with fear (as when he tried to walk on water)

WAS PETER'S FAITH DESTROYED? **Lk.22:31-32** No, the prayers of Christ upheld Peter. Now Christ is praying for US, Heb.8:25.

Peter's faith was not destroyed by this failure, but the mixture in his faith was purified and removed. After Peter denied Christ, he went out and wept bitterly. Through his repentance and prayers, Peter's self-confidence & the fear of man were removed! God made Peter to become a rock, **1 Pet.5:10!**

PETER BECAME A ROCK & WAS A FAITHFUL CHRISTIAN LEADER

- The Book of Acts records his faithful ministry, **Acts 2:36, 4:13, 5:27-29**.

- History records that Peter was faithful to death, and was crucified, a faithful martyr.

- The book of Revelation shows us the eternal inheritance of Peter the Rock, that he will be one of the 12 foundation stones of the New Jerusalem, the eternal City of God, **Rev.21:9-10,14**. For eternity Peter will be like a rock: strong & steady, a great leader of God's people!

Are you letting God train and prepare you to be a rock? Have you failed? Do you need a new start? God isn't looking for perfect people, only volunteers willing to be teachable & trained, like Peter.