



**Peter is most famous for his denial of Jesus.
But cowardice was not his issue.**

Peter was the:

First adviser. (Matt. 16:21-26; Luke 9:28-36).
"Never, Lord. This shall never happen to you." (Jesus calls him another name).

First to act and speak. (Matt. 17:1-8; Luke 9:28-36).
"(He did not know what he was saying)."

First to boast. (Matt. 18:1-6; Luke 9:46-48).
'I am the greatest.'

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Peter was the:

First to swear loyalty. (Matt. 26:31-45; Luke 22:31-34).
"Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

First to fight. (Matt. 26:47-51; Luke 22:47-53; John 18:1-11).
Peter drew his sword and struck the high priest's servant.

First to be challenged. (Matt. 26:69-75; Luke 22:54-62).
"I don't know the man!" (3x)

Peter, Peter, People-Pleaser.

Peter was not afraid of death. He was afraid of disgrace.

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." (Matt. 16:23)

Peter was more concerned with what people thought of him, than with what God thought of him.

Peter, Peter, People-Pleaser.

When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?" (Gal. 2:11-14).

[YOUR NAME HERE], People-Pleaser.

How does people-pleasing cause you to “act not in line with the truth of the gospel”?

Peer-pressure. Teens: Drugs, drinking. Bad grades. Dishonor parents. Sex. To fit in, you make bad decisions that damage your character and negatively impact your future. **Adults:** No witness.

Living for the wrong person. Wife-olatry. Child-olatry. Parent-olatry. Respect-olatry. Living for whatever person has power over you, or for whatever your crowd happens to respect and admire.

**Peter Rabbit
becomes
Peter Rock**

Peter "Rock" (Acts 3:11—4:20)

While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

Peter "Rock" (Acts 3:11—4:20)

"Now, brothers, I know that **you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets**, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. For **Moses said**, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.'
 "Indeed, **all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days.**

Peter "Rock" (Acts 3:11—4:20)

The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. But many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand. The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Peter "Rock" (Acts 3:11—4:20)

Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is " 'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.' Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Peter "Rock" (Acts 3: 11—4: 20)

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that **these men had been with Jesus**. But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and we cannot deny it. But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Peter "Rock" (1 Peter 1: 3-4; 17)

"Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God." (Acts 4:19).

"We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29).

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you... Live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear."

From Rabbits to Rocks. Like Peter, we must:

1. Encounter the risen Christ. (John 21:15-19).

Anything short of a relationship with the risen Christ is just religion.

2. Understand the Word of God. (Acts 3:18, 22-25).

Scripture must take precedence over our preferences and others'.

3. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2; 4:8, 31; 5:32).

Christianity without the Spirit is weak, fearful and powerless to proclaim the gospel; to overcome sin; or to experience the supernatural.

4. Become heaven-bent. (1 & 2 Peter).

Be concerned with the opinion of God, not of people. Keep your focus heavenward. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.