

Peter, the Performer— April 7-13

GAMECHANGERS

To prepare for discussion each week, group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures at the bottom of this page. You will notice that we are continuing the pattern of your discussing scripture *after* the Sunday message on that passage.

Background for Matthew 16:13-18, 21-23

Peter is the most famous of Jesus' disciples. Jesus' name is mentioned more times than any other person in the Gospels, but Peter is the close second. In every list of the disciples, he is named first. He is the undisputed leader of the disciples, but before that, he was a fisherman with his brother Andrew.

Peter had another name before he met Jesus and that was Simon. Simon Bar-Jonah simply means Simon, son of Jonah. In Matthew 16:13-18, Simon is given his new name Peter. Clear from the way that he speaks when everyone else was quiet, Simon Peter was impetuous, impulsive, and over eager. Impressed with the way that Simon responds, Jesus names him petros—Greek for rock.

We see Peter's impulsiveness all over the Gospel accounts. He was the one who got out of the boat and walked to Jesus on the water. He was the one who cut off a roman soldier's ear when they came to get Jesus. And in Matthew 16:21-23, he was the one that received one of Jesus' harshest rebukes. His impulsiveness leads him to oscillate between unbridled commitment and forgetfulness.

Peter had a lot of potential, but he needed to learn how to control it. As Peter learned these lessons and his character was transformed. He became the man Christ wanted him to be—a rock. He became a man as sure as his testimony about Jesus.

His legacy tells the story of his transformation. Peter preached to over 3,000 people at Pentecost in the early chapters of Acts. He performed miracles. He wrote 1 and 2 Peter. As a result of his verbosity for Christ, he was crucified. When God changes the world, He uses the impulsive performer to be a rock of steady commitment.

Possible Point of Confusion: Jesus often referred to himself as "The Son of Man." This reference to Daniel 7 connects Jesus with a prophecy long ago for the promised savior.

Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:

April 14

Luke 19:36-40

April 21

1 Cor 15:12-19