

DID PETER CALL HIMSELF A POPE OR BISHOP?

A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Bible Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Catholic Beliefs and Practices

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Scriptures to Consider:

- 1 Peter 1:1 “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ”
- 2 Peter 1:1 “Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ”
- 1 Peter 2:25 “For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls”
- 1 Corinthians 1:12–17 “**What I mean is that each one of you says, “I follow Paul,” or “I follow Apollos,” or “I follow Cephas,” or “I follow Christ.” [13] Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? [14] I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, [15] so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. [16] (I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) [17] For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.” (ESV)**
- 1 Corinthians 3:4–9 “For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not being merely human?” [5] What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. [6] I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. [7] So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. [8] He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. [9] For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.” (ESV)
- 1 Corinthians 3:19–23 “For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness,” [20] and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.” [21] **So let no one boast in men.** For all things are yours, [22] **whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas** or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, [23] **and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.**” (ESV)
- 1 Peter 5:1–2 “So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: [2] shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, **not under compulsion, but willingly**, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly” (ESV)

Questions to Consider:

- **Why doesn't Peter refer to himself more than just a servant or apostle?** If he was leading the church authoritatively wouldn't he have asserted so in his introduction?
- Is there anywhere in the Bible where Peter asserts his authority, role, or power over the other apostles?
- Specifically as the foundation of the church, the pope, why doesn't Peter mention apostolic succession anywhere in the Bible?
- Why are there so many repeated warnings in 1 Corinthians 1 & 3 about following people by name? If Peter wanted the church to follow his leadership and name, why doesn't he say so in his writings (1 & 2 Peter)?
- Why does Peter always point to Jesus instead of the church and its sacraments as the hope of salvation? Why does 1 and 2 Peter (the writings of Peter) sound so different from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*?
- **Why does the Catholic Church assert the obligation or compulsion for obedience versus the description of 1 Peter 5:1-2 saying “not under compulsion, but willingly”?**