

## PETER'S BEING BISHOP OF ROME DENIED IN NEW TESTAMENT?

Christians Refute Catholicism

I don't agree with everything in this article but there is more than enough correct in it to prove that the papacy is lying about Peter being the first bishop of Rome

“No one working from the first-century evidence alone can fail to be struck by the disparity between the unanimous teaching of the church, both East and West, and the lack of any ‘strictly historic proof’ that Peter was ever in Rome.”

—Markus Bockmuehl, “Peter's Death in Rome? Back to Front and Upside Down,”

with a reference to F.J. Foakes-Jackson, *Peter: Prince of Apostles* (1927)

“In the middle of the second century ce at the latest, . . . Christians identified a simple grave in the Vatican necropolis as the Apostle Peter’s burial place. This is all that can be said in a scientifically responsible way about the history of this tomb prior to 160 ce.”

—Peter Lampe, “Early Christians in the City of Rome,” in *Christians as a Religious Minority in a Multicultural City*

“Ever since the excavations under St Peter’s Cathedral started in the 1940s and culminated in the official announcement of Pope Pius XII in 1953 that the true remains of St Peter had been found, many scholars have remained skeptical about the significance of the discoveries. Even the strongest proponents of the authenticity of the discovery cannot deny that little if anything about the earliest graves shows any clear Christian character. The first and second century CE graves very much resemble contemporaneous simple interments of common people from the neighbouring quarters of Rome.”- Jürgen Zangenberg, *European Association for Biblical Studies*, Rome, 2001

Below are some major New Testament proofs, which completely disprove the claim that Peter was in Rome from the time of Claudius until Nero. These Biblical points speak for themselves and ANY ONE of them is sufficient to prove the ridiculousness of the Catholic claim. Notice what the New Testament tells us! The truth IS conclusive!

### PROOF ONE:

We should consider Christ's commission to Peter. This is often very embarrassing to Catholics, because Christ commissioned Peter to become chief minister to the CIRCUMCISED, not to uncircumcised Gentiles. "The gospel of the CIRCUMCISION was unto Peter; (For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)" (Gal. 2:7-8). Here we have it in the clearest of language. It was Paul, NOT Peter, who was commissioned to be the chief Apostle to the Gentiles. And who was it that wrote the Epistle to the ROMANS? It certainly WASN'T Peter! "And when James, Cephas [Peter], and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace [i.e., the gift or office] that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision" (Gal. 2:9). Paul further mentioned his special office as the Gentile Apostle in II Timothy 1:11: "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles." PETER is NOWHERE called the Apostle to the Gentiles! This precludes him from going to Rome to become the head of a Gentile community.

If there was a Jewish Christian community in Rome it was too small to need a bishop and especially one that despite having a high role in Church affairs in Jerusalem gave it up to become minister to a handful!

### PROOF TWO:

Paul specifically told the Gentile Romans that HE had been chosen to be their Apostle, not Peter. "I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable" (Rom. 15:16). How clear! Paul had the direct charge from Christ in this matter. He even further relates in Romans 15:18 that it was Christ who had chosen him "to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." PAUL established the Church at Rome.

### PROOF THREE:

We are told by Paul himself that it was he -- not Peter -who was going to officially found the Roman Church. "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1:11). Amazing! The Church at Rome had not been ESTABLISHED officially even by 55 or 56 A.D. However, the Roman Church would have us believe that Peter had done this some ten years before -- in the reign of Claudius. What nonsense!

#### PROOF FOUR:

We find Paul not only wanting to establish the Church at Rome, but he emphatically tells us that his policy was NEVER to build upon another man's foundation. "Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, LEST I SHOULD BUILD UPON ANOTHER MAN'S FOUNDATION"(Rom. 15:20). If Peter had "founded" the Roman Church some ten years before this statement, this represents a real affront to Peter. This statement alone is proof that Peter had never been in Rome before this time to "found" any church -- because Peter was not in Rome.

#### PROOF FIVE:

At the end of Paul's Epistle to the Romans he greets no fewer than 28 different individuals, but never mentions Peter once! See Romans 16 --read the whole chapter! Remember, Paul greeted these people in 55 or 56 A.D. Why didn't he mention Peter? -- Peter simply wasn't there!

#### PROOF SIX:

Some four years after Paul wrote Romans, he was conveyed as a prisoner to Rome in order to stand trial before Caesar. When the Christian community in Rome heard of Paul's arrival, they all went to meet him. "When THE brethren [of Rome] heard of us, they came to meet us" (Acts 28:15). Again, there is not a single mention of Peter among them. This would have been extraordinary had Peter been in Rome, for Luke always mentions by name important Apostles in his narration of Acts. But he says nothing of Peter's meeting with Paul. Why? Because Peter was not in Rome!

#### PROOF SEVEN:

When Paul finally arrived at Rome, the first thing he did was to summon "the chief of the Jews together" (Acts 28:17) to whom he "expounded and testified the kingdom of God" (Verse 23). But what is amazing is that these chief Jewish elders claimed they knew very little even about the basic teachings of Christ. All they knew was that "as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Verse 22). Then Paul began to explain to them the basic teachings of Christ on the Kingdom of God. Some believed -- the majority didn't. Now, what does all this mean? It means that if Peter, who was himself a strongly partisan Jew, had been preaching constantly in Rome for 14 long years before this time, AND WAS STILL THERE -- how could these Jewish leaders have known so little about even the basic truths of Christianity? This again is clear proof Peter had not been in Rome prior to 59 A.D. There is no mention of Peter in Paul's Letters.

#### PROOF EIGHT:

After the rejection of the Jewish elders, Paul remained in his own hired house for two years. During that time he wrote Epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, Philemon, and to the Hebrews. And while Paul mentions others as being in Rome during that period, he nowhere mentions Peter. The obvious reason is -- the Apostle to the circumcision wasn't there!

#### PROOF NINE:

With the expiration of Paul's two year's imprisonment, he was released. But about four years later (near 65 A.D.), he was again sent back a prisoner to Rome. This time he had to appear before the throne of Caesar and was sentenced to die. Paul describes these circumstances at length in II Timothy. In regard to his trial, notice what Paul said in II Timothy 4:16. "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men [in Rome] forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge." This means, if we believe the Roman Catholic Church, that Peter forsook Paul, for they tell us Peter was very much present at Rome during this time! Peter thrice denied Christ, but that was before he was indwelt by the Spirit at Pentecost. To believe that Peter was in Rome during Paul's trial, and FORSOOK Paul as he forsook Christ, is absolutely untenable. Peter did not forsake Paul; PETER WAS NOT IN ROME.

#### PROOF TEN:

The Apostle Paul distinctly informs us that Peter was not in Rome in 65 A.D. -- even though The Roman Catholic Church says he was. Paul said: "Only Luke is with me" (II Tim. 4:11). The truth becomes very plain. Paul wrote TO Rome; he had been IN Rome; and at the end wrote at least six epistles FROM Rome; and not only does he NEVER mention Peter, but at the last moment says: "Only Luke is with me." Peter, therefore, was never Bishop of Rome!

Near 45 A.D., we find Peter being cast into prison at Jerusalem (Acts 12:3, 4). In 49 A.D., he was still in Jerusalem, this time attending the Jerusalem Council. About 51 A.D., he was in Antioch of Syria where he got into differences with Paul because he wouldn't sit or eat with Gentiles. Strange that the "Roman bishop" would have nothing to do with Gentiles in 51 A.D.! Later in about 66 A.D., we find him in the city of Babylon among the Jews (I Pet. 5:13). Remember that Peter was the Apostle to the CIRCUMCISED. Why was he in Babylon? Because history shows that there were as many Jews in the Mesopotamian areas in Christ's time as there were in Palestine. It is no wonder we find him in the East.... scholars say Peter's writings are strongly Aramaic in flavor, the type of Aramaic spoken in Babylon. Peter was accustomed to their Eastern dialect.

At the times the Roman Catholics believe Peter was in Rome, The Bible clearly shows he was elsewhere. There are, of course, many supposed historical accounts of Peter in Rome -- but none of them are first-hand accounts, and none of them should be put above the many accounts of The Bible.

The book of Revelation addressed seven Churches and said they were symbolised as seven lamps before God. This indicates that the author considered the Roman Church apostate or dubious even then! He had a lot of bad things to say about the Churches he addressed which gives an inkling of what he thought of the Roman Church!

PROOF ELEVEN:

Clement of Alexandria wrote, "Peter, James and John, after the ascension of our Saviour, despite their being prepared by our Lord, did not seek the honour of being bishop of Jerusalem but chose James the Just for this office". Now Peter if he were head of the Church would have been bishop of Jerusalem. Catholics must believe that. They must believe that until he went to Rome, Peter was bishop of Jerusalem and it was the centre of the Church and then he moved his seat of authority to Rome. Peter not being bishop of Jerusalem implies that Peter never was a pope.

THE VATICANUS, CEMETERY IN ROME WHERE PETER BURIED?

There is supposed to be a Peter buried in the Vaticanus cemetery under St Peter's basilica. This Peter buried in this cemetery, of all places, could NOT be the Apostle Peter. In the first place, Peter was a Jew, and they had to be buried in their own cemeteries. This is quite a big step from not even being able to eat with gentiles to be buried in the special cemeteries reserved for the chief pagans and self-proclaimed Gods or "Patrons". And even if by a happen-chance a Jew could be buried in a Roman cemetery, it is most unlikely that a Jew -- especially one who attacked the Roman religion as the Apostle Peter did -- would ever have been allowed into the most holy of pagan cemeteries! This cemetery was reserved for prophets, soothsayers and the great ones of pagan Rome. I personally think that the apostle Peter would not be caught dead in a pagan cemetery.

If this Peter buried in Rome is the Peter of the New Testament, then when he had struggled with prejudices against Christian Gentiles so that even Paul had to tell him off publicly then it is true that he would not have been allowed to have been buried in a pagan cemetery. Even Paul wouldn't approve of such a burial. And Rome cannot offer any evidence that if there is a Peter buried in the tomb that it says is Peter that it is the apostle. Some Catholic scholars noting that Paul said that the Peter he met in Jerusalem seemed to be one of the heads but he didn't care who he was and noting that Jesus said Peter was the rock he would build his Church one hold that there was more than one Peter in a leadership role in the Church. If there were two then why not three or more?

The well-known tradition of Peter being crucified upside down dates from the end of the second century. Now this was almost 150 years after his death. Had Peter died in Rome that way, we would not have the tradition appearing so late! Clement of Rome would have mentioned it in the letter attributed to him. The Clement Letter calls Peter and Paul martyrs but martyrs just means people who testified to the faith not those who died for it. It only came to mean people who gave their lives for their faith later so for all we know, Peter could have died in his bed in Jerusalem (Scottish Journal of Theology, Michael D. Goulder, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Studies, University of Birmingham, 2004). The Clement letter gives names of people, including Peter and Paul, who suffered because of jealousy as examples. Not all in the list were those who died because of jealousy. Clement is supposed to be the third bishop of Rome and the third pope though the letter doesn't say who or what he is or even mention that Clement wrote it (page 34, St Peter and Rome). He was probably just a secretary for the Church in Rome. The letter was sent by the Roman Church and not any individual who can be called a pope! Roman Catholicism lies when it says Pope Clement wrote this letter and it shows his authority over other Churches.

The Clementine Homilies and Recognitions say that the apostle James in Jerusalem is bishop of bishops and Lord of bishops of the Church of Jerusalem and the Church everywhere - which denies that Peter was pope. It was James (page 36, St Peter and Rome). Read them online.

The early Christian evidence from believers who hated St Paul indicate an explanation for the legend about Peter being in

Rome. Paul was in Rome. The believers hated him and condemned him under the name of Simon Magus. They produced writings to condemn him. The Simon Magus name was used instead of his real name to avoid their writings being destroyed by the believers who accepted Paul as a true apostle and prophet of Jesus Christ. The result was stories about Peter battling with the heretic Simon Magus in Rome and overcoming his teaching and doing better miracles than his. Simon dies as a result of a miracle going wrong. Paul isn't mentioned at all. Clearly Simon Magus was Paul though stories and legends about the real Simon Magus were mixed into the accounts. The motive for such lies was that since Paul was in Rome, the anti-Pauls had to invent the idea of Peter going there to destroy his work.

Liberal Catholic theologians may say that even if Peter was never bishop of Rome or head of the Church he still should have been looked up to by the Church as pope and they will say that the papacy developed over time. They will say God developed it this way. And they say that we know he did so for the papacy is needed and the true Church accepts it and the true Church cannot err when it intends to be infallible. The pope then is successor of Peter not because Peter was bishop of Rome but because God worked on Rome to make it lead the Church. Any city would have done but God chose Rome. This view means that even if Peter never was a bishop anywhere or was never in Rome the Church can conclude that it was God that chose the bishop of Rome to take his place and it was not Peter who did that. The view is nonsense for God could have wanted the Church run by a council of Twelve bishops or something rather than a pope. And the papacy being good for the Church is certainly a matter of opinion! Think today how the papacy has managed to be the best friend the AIDS virus ever had through its banning of condoms and manipulating governments and health agencies to keep condoms from the poor who really need them. The Church has erred for it says God can forgive sins when the sins are repented simply because the sinner wants to avoid the fires of Hell. So it is the punishment that is hated not the sin. Infallibility cannot give a justification for belief in the papacy as a divine institution. If the way these liberals say God worked out the succession from Peter is plausible, then why did he let there be two popes, one fake and the other true, when neither side knew who the real pope was? Face it liberals. If you admit that Peter was never bishop of Rome and in Rome then admit that the papacy is a godless addition to the faith and a man-made production.

---

"There is a hundred times more evidence" that Peter was buried in Jerusalem than in Rome." ~ Rev. Father J.T. Milik, Roman Catholic Priest and archaeologist

"Well, we will have to make some changes... but for the time being, keep this thing quiet." ~ Pope Pius XII, the Bishop of Rome

Conclusion:

Roman Catholicism is creating a deliberate hoax by claiming that Peter was first bishop of Rome and first pope. If God wrote the New Testament and Catholicism was true, clearly he would not have it going out of its way to even seemingly eliminate Peter being even near Rome. And it more than seemingly does this too! The evidence that Peter was in Rome comes from unreliable traditions. As unreliable as the New Testament may be, it is certainly more authoritative. The papacy can't claim to be the rock and the successor of Peter the rock when it has no evidence that he was ever bishop of Rome when he died. The evidence being poor would prove that the papacy is based on lies but there being no evidence at all proves it is telling whoppers.

#### BOOKS CONSULTED

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Thomas Bokenkotter, Image Books, New York, 1979  
A HANDBOOK ON THE PAPACY, William Shaw Kerr, Marshall Morgan & Scott, London, 1962  
A WOMAN RIDES THE BEAST, Dave Hunt Harvest House Eugene Oregon 1994  
ALL ONE BODY – WHY DON'T WE AGREE? Erwin W Lutzer, Tyndale, Illinois, 1989  
ANTICHRIST IS HE HERE OR IS HE TO COME? Protestant Truth Society, London  
APOLOGIA PRO VITA SUA, John Henry Newman (Cardinal), Everyman's Library, London/New York, 1955  
BELIEVING IN GOD, PJ McGrath, Millington Books in Association with Wolfhound, Dublin, 1995  
BURNING TRUTHS, Basil Morahan, Western People Printing, Ballina, 1993  
CATHOLICISM AND CHRISTIANITY, Cecil John Cadoux, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1928  
CATHOLICISM AND FUNDAMENTALISM, Karl Keating, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1988  
DAWN OR TWILIGHT? HM Carson, IVP, Leicester, 1976  
DIFFICULTIES, Mgr Ronald Knox and Sir Arnold Lunn, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1958  
ENCOUNTERS OF THE FOURTH KIND, Dr RJ Hymers, Bible Voice, Inc, Van Nuys, CA, 1976  
FROM ROME TO CHRIST, J Ward, Irish Church Missions, Dublin  
FUTURIST OR HISTORICIST? Basil C Mowll, Protestant Truth Society, London  
GOD'S WORD, FINAL, INFALLIBLE AND FOREVER, Floyd McElveen, Gospel Truth Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI, 1985  
HANDBOOK TO THE CONTROVERSY WITH ROME, Karl Von Hase, Vols 1 and 2, The Religious Tract Society,

London, 1906  
HANS KUNG HIS WORK AND HIS WAY, Hermann Haring and Karl-Josef Kuschel, Fount-Collins, London, 1979  
HITLER'S POPE, THE SECRET HISTORY OF PIUS XII, John Cornwell, Viking, London, LONDON 1999  
HOW SURE ARE THE FOUNDATIONS? Colin Badger, Wayside Press, Canada  
HOW DOES GOD LOVE ME? Martin R De Haan II, Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986  
INFALLIBILITY IN THE CHURCH, Patrick Crowley, CTS, London, 1982  
INFALLIBLE? Hans Kung, Collins, London, 1980  
IS THE PAPACY PREDICTED BY ST PAUL? Bishop Christopher Wordsworth, The Harrison Trust, Kent, 1985  
LECTURES AND REPLIES, Thomas Carr, Archbishop of Melbourne, Melbourne, 1907  
NO LIONS IN THE HIERARCHY, Fr Joseph Dunn, Columba Press, Dublin, 1994  
PAPAL SIN, STRUCTURES OF DECEIT, Garry Wills, Darton Longman and Todd, London, 2000  
PETER AND THE OTHERS, Rev FH Kinch MA, Nelson & Knox Ltd, Townhall Street, Belfast  
POPE FICTION, Patrick Madrid, Basilica Press, San Diego California 1999  
PUTTING AWAY CHILDISH THINGS, Uta Ranke-Heinemann, HarperCollins, San Francisco, 1994  
REASON AND BELIEF, Brand Blanshard, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, London, 1974  
REASONS FOR HOPE, Editor Jeffrey A Mirus, Christendom College Press, Virginia, 1982  
ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS, Charles Gore MA, Longmans, London, 1894  
ROMAN CATHOLIC OBJECTIONS ANSWERED, Rev H O Lindsay, John T Drought Ltd, Dublin  
ROMAN CATHOLICISM, Lorraine Boettner, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Phillipsburg, NJ, 1962  
SECRETS OF ROMANISM, Joseph Zacchello, Loizeaux Brothers, New Jersey, 1984  
ST PETER AND ROME, J B S, Irish Church Missions, Dublin  
THE CHURCH AND INFALLIBILITY, B C Butler, The Catholic Book Club, London, undated  
THE EARLY CHURCH, Henry Chadwick, Pelican, Middlesex, 1987  
THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, LION BOOKS, Herts, 1977  
THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, Hal Lindsay, Lakeland, London, 1974  
THE LION CONCISE BOOK OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT, Tony Lane, Lion, Herts, 1986  
THE PAPACY IN PROPHECY! Christadelphian Press, West Beach S A, 1986  
THE PAPACY ITS HISTORY AND DOGMAS, Leopold D E Smith, Protestant Truth Society, London  
THE PETRINE CLAIMS OF ROME, Canon JE Oulton DD, John T Drought Ltd, Dublin  
THE PRIMITIVE FAITH AND ROMAN CATHOLIC DEVELOPMENTS, Rev John A Gregg, BD, APCK, Dublin, 1928  
THE SHE-POPE, Peter Stanford, William Hienemann, Random House, London, 1998  
THE VATICAN PAPERS, Nino Lo Bello, New English Library, Sevenoaks, Kent, 1982  
TRADITIONAL DOCTRINES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH EXAMINED, Rev CCJ Butlin, Protestant Truth  
Society, London  
VICARS OF CHRIST, Peter de Rosa, Corgi, London, 1993  
WAS PETER THE FIRST POPE? J Bredin, Evangelical Protestant Society, Belfast  
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HEAVEN?, Dave Hunt, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1988