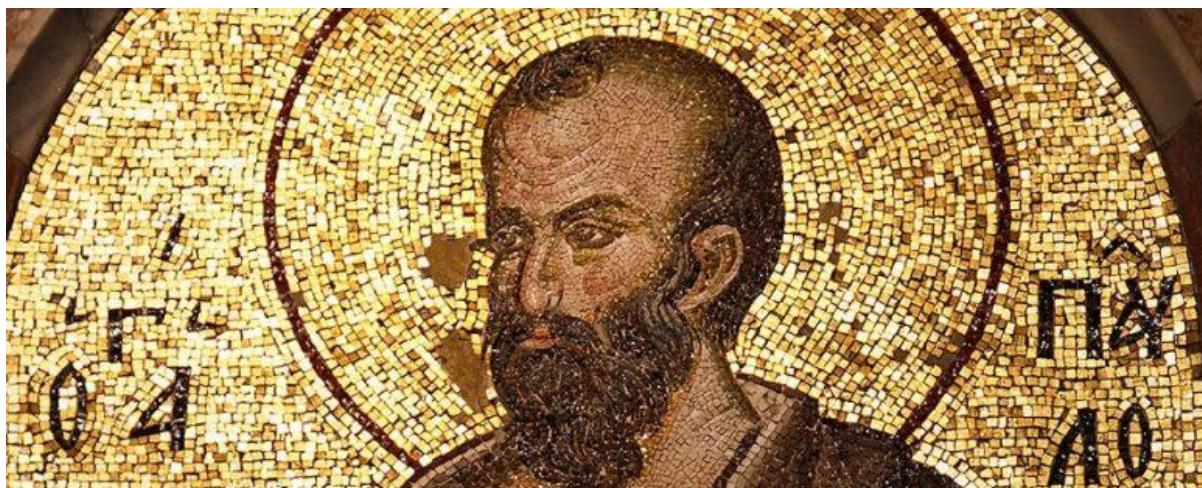


The New Testament is the record of the experience of people and communities whose lives were transformed around the belief that Jesus is Christ is the one who saves and sustains life. From the gospels to the book of the Revelation, we find many voices helping to shape the life of faith, voices that speak out of personal experiences, communities and passions. All seek to affirm faith in Jesus, and to explain the meaning of his life for our lives.

The Apostle Peter

In Peter we shall explore what it means to be forgiven, have one's dream restored, and be bold in leadership.



The apostle Peter was doubtless one of the most complex characters of the New Testament.

Peter stands as an archetype for the band of disciples, the church, and even individual Christians. We read the dialogues he has with Jesus on a number of levels. First, we see him as his own person, struggling to respond to Jesus as best he can, wanting to please, wanting to serve and wanting to prove himself worthy of the trust placed in him. Secondly, we can see him as an example, either of discipleship or of the church, and we can begin to read texts on a different level, seeing in him the struggle of the infant church to embrace new realities and new understanding about the way God interacts with and embraces humanity.

Peter is a very human face, and many will readily identify with his roller-coaster ride of faith and doubt, triumph and failure, passion and struggle. It is worth reflecting on the ways our lives mirror Peter's. Here there is the challenge to be obedient to the call of God, but more, there is the sustaining power of forgiveness as we encounter the one who restores and renews. Peter's life may well have been complex, but, in the end, we are filled with hope as we see the way in which Jesus dealt with him and related to him.

| Text | What do we learn about Peter? | What do we learn about the nature of discipleship? | What does it all mean for me? |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Matt 14:25-33 | | | |
| Matt 26:31-35 | | | |
| Matt 16:13-23; 17:1-6 | | | |
| John 13:5-10 | | | |
| John 18:15-18; 25-27 | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------|--|--|--|
| Acts 2:14-18 | | | |
| Acts 3:1-15 | | | |
| Acts 10 | | | |

Keys

What key is this you hand me now?
Keys of a kingdom I fathom not; keys of
a life I did not choose; keys of a house
in which I seldom dwell?

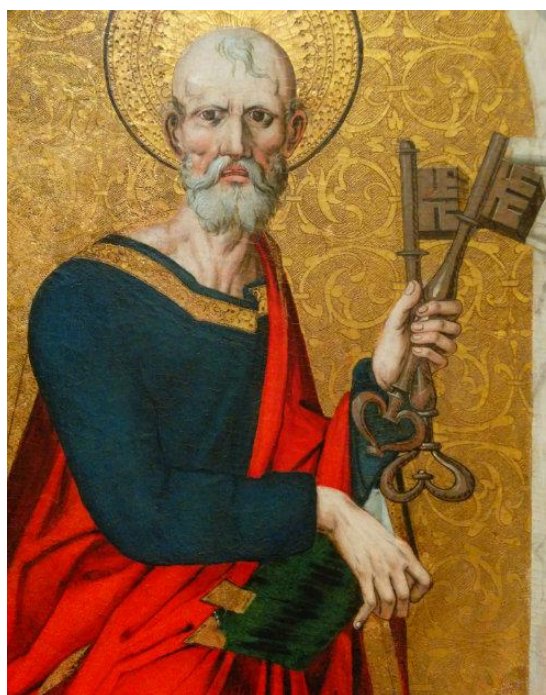
There are others better fit for speaking
better trained for knowing better led
for showing better loved for growing.

I am made of cloddish stuff, too eager
for contemplation, too bold for
wisdom's chasing, too brash for humble
waiting.

Yet in my hand you place this key to
open all eternity a door to life's divinity
a way to hold reality and exit from
uncertainty –

and I must hold it true.

By Ian Price



As a group, discuss the following questions.

1. What stories of Peter do you identify with the most?
2. What is God asking of you?
3. What is God wanting to do for you?
4. What do you think the example of Peter has to say to the church today?
5. Where do you find hope for yourself in the stories?

Daily reflection for the week ahead: Return to the reflection and your notes in your devotion time.

1. *What is God asking of you?*
2. *What is God wanting to do for you?*

Loving Saviour, as you called Peter to move beyond his understanding and capacity, call us now to new realities of service and witness. As you forgave Peter his frailty and cowardice, touch us now with your grace and love. As you empowered him with your Spirit to preach and teach and lead in your name, pour out your Spirit upon us now that we might witness in your name. Make us obedient in our calling, faithful in our following, and courageous in our serving. In your name we pray. Amen