

## THE NEW YOU Sermon Series: Simon to Peter

Have you ever met someone, shared your name, & then they called you by a different name (or vice versa)? Maybe unintentionally... or on purpose...

Jesus did this with Simon! He calls him by a different name! Remember that famous interaction between the two of them recorded in Matthew 16.

**Matthew 16:13-18** - We often think that this was the first time Simon receives this name, but it's not... **It was a defining moment where Jesus confirmed that new name, but this name had already been given to him!**

**Matthew 10:1-4** – But isn't it possible that Matthew is simply including here the alternative name for Simon, as he writes this account in hindsight?

**John 1:40-42** – Jesus gives Simon the name Peter at their **first meeting!** It wasn't a result of confusion, or a reaction to anything Simon had yet done!

Remember, in this culture and time, names meant far more than what they do today... **Jesus was giving Simon a new name... identity... future...**

So what can we learn from this, and the different names given to Simon?

**Simon – “one who listens.”** When we think of Simon in Scripture we don't normally think of someone who is **“quick to listen and slow to speak!”**

But Simon is the one disciple who proved that he was truly listening and paying attention to Jesus. Let's go back to **Matthew 16:13-18**.

- Jesus asks His disciples what they have been hearing... What are people saying about Him...? There was a lot of hearsay about Jesus!
- But Simon was the one disciple bold enough to declare what he had come to believe about Jesus' true identity! **His listening led to this proclamation!**
- Because Simon lived into his birth name, “one who listens”, he also started living into the new name that Jesus gave to him.

**Cephas** – This is the actual name Jesus gives to Simon. Jesus & His disciples spoke Aramaic, and so “Cephas” is the actual Aramaic name given! **This name “Cephas” is the exact same Aramaic word for “rock”.**

Jesus was literally calling Simon “Rock”, but what did he mean by that?

I believe the answer is found in the original Greek, which the gospels were written in. When Matthew took the name “Cephas” in Aramaic & translated it into the Greek (Peter), the meaning of this new name became more clear!

**Peter** – The name “Peter” (Petros), in the Greek, is slightly different than the Greek word for “rock” (petras). Why is this significant?

**“Petros” actually means “stone”,** which can have many meanings...

- **“Rock” – A strong & solid substance!** Peter would become such a figure in the early church! **Acts 2** - Preaching at Pentecost!
- **“Stumbling stone” – Something that is in the way!** Peter would also live into this meaning of his name! **Matt. 16:23** - **“Get behind me Satan...”**
- **“Casting stone” – Something you can use as a weapon against another!** Peter could often be a loose cannon at times, a stone to be weaponized!
- **“Loose gravel” – Something that gives the appearance of a solid foundation until storms & high water threaten to wash it away!**  
**John 18** - Peter showed this to be true by denying knowing Jesus 3x!
- **“Foundation stones” – These are stones, that when set upon the cornerstone, form a firm foundation upon which to build!**  
**Matthew 16** - Peter's confession of Christ & His ongoing dependency on Him proved to truly be the building blocks of the Christian faith!

Peter was a stone of different kinds, at various times in his life, but **Jesus was His “Rock”!** His faith came from hearing the Word of Christ (listening... living into his birth name), & he responded to what he heard w/ strength & boldness!

What about us? What do we do with what Jesus has revealed about Himself? Are we paying attention to all the hearsay of the world, or are we “listening” to the voice of Jesus, and the Word of God that testifies to Him?

And if/once we have listened to His voice, and once we recognize that He is the true “rock” of our salvation, **what kind of “stone” are we going to be?**

**1 Peter 2:4-6** – **May we be “living-stones” built upon the cornerstone of Christ!** It may cost us much, maybe everything in this life, but we will never be put to shame, and great will be our reward in heaven! That's His promise!

Peter wasn't a perfect example/stone, but He was chosen by God to be a part of the house that Christ was/is building! **The same can be true of us!**

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