

THE GREAT CONFESSION

New Testament Lesson #55

From Bethsaida (beth-SAY-i-da), Jesus led his disciples toward Caesarea Philippi (ses-a-RE-a fil-LIP-eye). As they traveled, he asked them, “Who do people say that I am?” The disciples replied, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah or Jeremiah and still others, one of the other prophets.”

But then he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” To this Peter answered, “You are the Messiah (or the Christ), the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven.” Jesus then changed Simon’s name to Peter and said to him, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades (HAY-dees) will not prevail against it.”

Jesus ordered the disciples not to tell anyone about him and proceeded to tell them about all the things he would suffer at the hands of the religious rulers, how he would be killed and rise from the dead on the third day. Peter objected strongly to this terrible picture – he could not comprehend the thought of a suffering Messiah, and Jesus rebuked him with the same words he used on the tempter in Mark 8:33, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

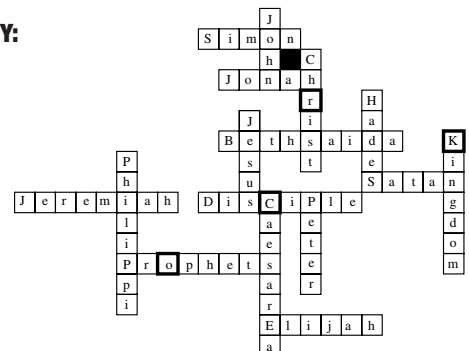
- This story is also told in Mark 8:27-33 and Luke 9:18-22.
- The Greek version of “Peter” is *petros*, “a piece of rock.” When Jesus said, “on this ‘rock,’” he used the Greek word *petra*, “a mass of rock.”
- The Greek word for “church,” *ekklesia*, means “called out ones.” This is Jesus’ first use of this word to mean a group of his followers as opposed to the Jewish synagogues.
- “Messiah” is the Hebrew word for “anointed one.” “Christ” is the Greek equivalent. Both are applied to Jesus.
- Hades can be translated as “grave,” “death” or “hell.”

The Great Confession

- I. When Jesus was alone with his disciples, he asked them questions.
 - A. He said, “Who do people say that I am?”
 - B. The disciples replied that people thought he was a prophet.
 - C. Then Jesus asked if the disciples knew who he was.
 - D. Simon replied that Jesus was “the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”
- II. Jesus blessed Simon.
 - A. He also changed Simon’s name to Peter.
 - B. Jesus said, “On this rock I will build my church.”
- III. He ordered his disciples not to tell anyone about him.
 - A. Jesus prophesied to them about his own death and resurrection.
 - B. Peter said such a tragedy could not happen to Jesus.
- IV. Jesus retorted that Peter’s mind was on human things, not divine things.

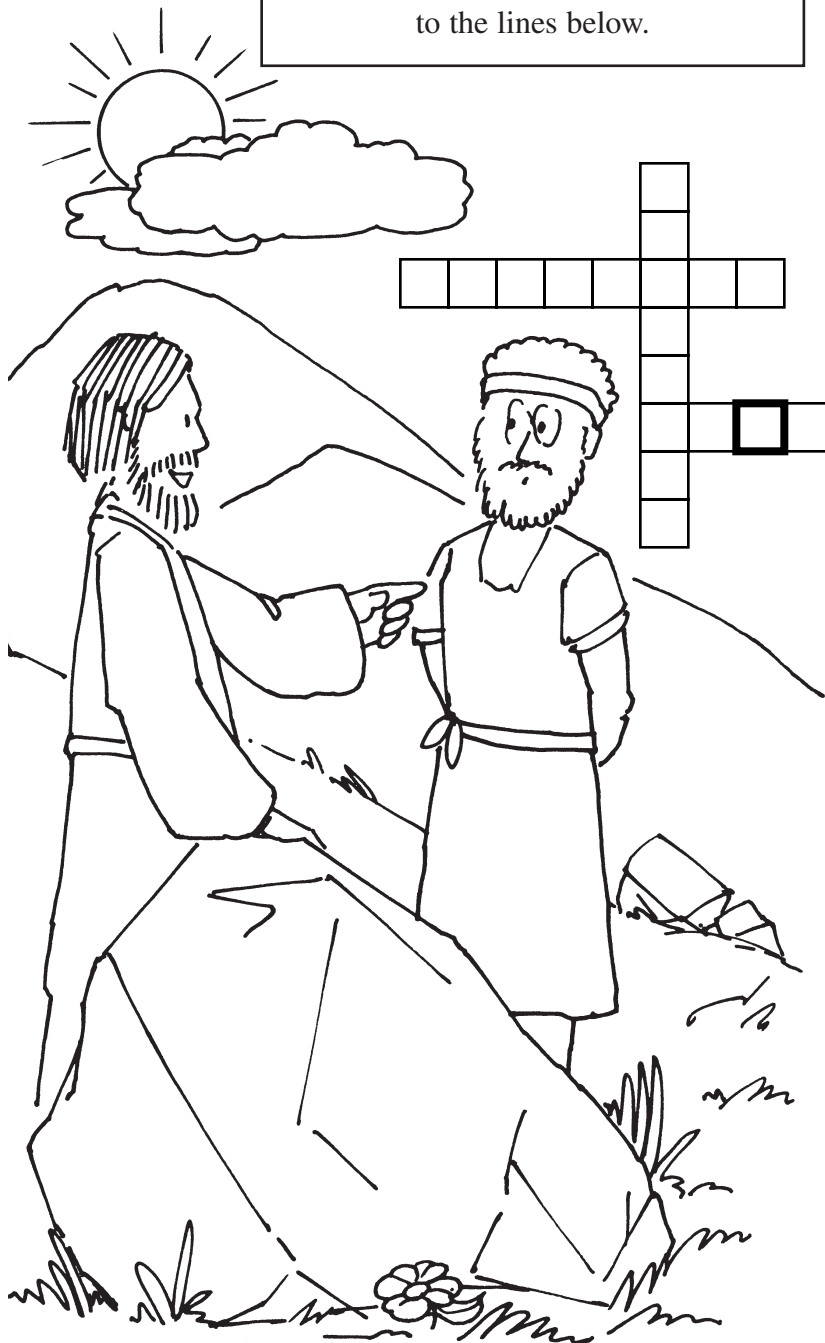
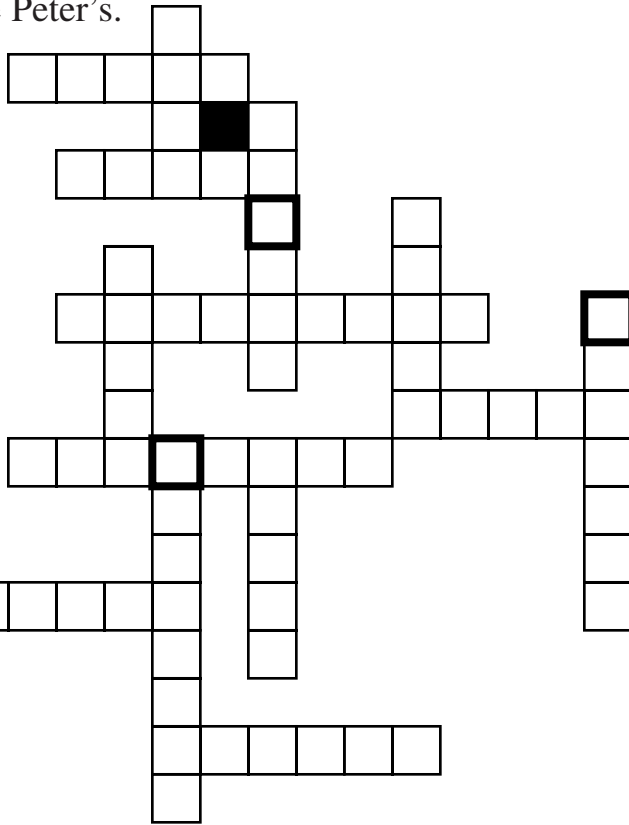
ANSWER KEY:

Rock



Simon correctly told Jesus that Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter and told him He would build His church on faith like Peter's.

Fit the words into the spaces to discover what Peter's name means. Transfer the letters in the darker boxes to the lines below.



- | | |
|--------|-----------|
| John | Elijah |
| Hades | Kingdom |
| Satan | Caesarea |
| Simon | Disciple |
| Jesus | Jeremiah |
| Jonah | Philippi |
| Peter | Prophets |
| Christ | Bethsaida |

Peter's name means "_____."

Name _____

Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

Circle these letters in the picture below: C - H - R - I - S - T



Name _____