

The Pillar Principle

Matthew 16:13-18 ¹³When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? ¹⁴And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. ¹⁵He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? ¹⁶And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ¹⁷And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. ¹⁸And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

- If you ever are tempted to doubt your potential as a Christian, take a good look at Simon Peter!
- He is a favorite of almost every Bible reader, because his stumblings seem to summarize the way we all frequently feel about our own feeble steps as we attempt to live for God.
- Consider Peter's extremes: With one breath he rises to the highest heights of spiritual insight (Thou art the Christ); in the next breath Jesus rebukes one of his insights as demonic (Get thee behind me, Satan). On the night of Jesus' arrest, he declares "Though all shall be offended, yet will not I" (Mark 14:29) – but within hours he denies even knowing Jesus, not once but three times!
- Peter is both a saint and a sinner, a spiritual giant and a spiritual dwarf. In the end, we are encouraged because he is just like us!
- Peter inevitably ends up in the right place, because he consistently shows the right attitude of repentance and keeps aiming in the right direction! Although he keeps fumbling the ball, he keeps picking it up and finally runs for a touchdown.
- Several years ago, Dr. Laurence J. Peter wrote a business book called, "The Peter Principle." It was not named for the Apostle, but for the author. The principle is this: a businessperson will eventually be promoted in a corporation beyond their level of competence, and when they do they will lose their effectiveness. This principle seems to work in every arena of life ... EXCEPT THE CHURCH!
- According to all logic, Peter should have failed as a disciple. He didn't have the personal strength and skills to be a success. But instead of becoming a failure, Peter became a PILLAR – a tower of strength in the New Testament Church!

Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

- For everyone who has ever doubted their potential to live for God ... for everyone who is plagued with doubt sent by the devil ... for everyone who feels incarcerated by their past ... for everyone who has ever thought they might be dreaming beyond reality ... here is God's PILLAR PRINCIPLE:
- **First, God demands FAITH (Him that overcometh) ...**
 - **1 John 5:4** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
 - You have to believe that you can have a NEW BIRTH (born of God)!
 - **John 3:5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 - Do you believe enough to simply obey the word of God? Your faith in obeying the gospel plants the seed of eternal life in you – a holy DNA destined to grow you into the likeness of Christ!
- **Secondly, God promises HEAVEN'S COVENANT (I will write upon him the name of my God) ...**
 - How do you get God's name applied to your life? Water baptism! It is indeed an outward physical act, but our obedience to the terms of God's covenant accomplishes an inner spiritual work.
 - That is why in the Bible there is no such thing as a Christian who hasn't been baptized! Some people ask, "Do I HAVE to be baptized?" A good answer is, "No, you GET to be baptized!"
 - Just look at this list of some of the issues that are dealt with when an individual is baptized in Jesus' name!
 1. **My sins are WASHED AWAY or remitted, accomplishing God's full work of forgiveness**

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

2. **My CONSCIENCE is washed and cleansed, so I can be free from my past way of thinking**

1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:
 3. **My body is buried in a “grave of water,” portraying the death of my OLD LIFE**

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.
 4. **I am born again “of the water,” portraying the birth of my NEW LIFE**

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 5. **I am brought into God’s covenant of New Testament salvation, portraying the “cutting off” of my fleshly DESIRES**

Colossians 2:11-12a ¹¹In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: ¹²Buried with him in baptism ...
 6. **I take upon myself the name of Jesus Christ, which is the only SAVING name**

Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
 7. **I apply the BURIAL of Christ to my life, making it effective in me**

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- **Thirdly, God promises HEAVEN’S POWER (I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out no more) ...**
 - God doesn’t just say “you can make it” - He says “I will make it happen!” It’s not your power, it’s His power!
 - The word “make” used in this verse not only means “the shaping of something already present” but also “bringing into existence anything that is needed but lacking.”
- Jesus is saying, “I’m going to take the raw material of your life and shape it. But if you’re concerned that what you lack will hinder my work, don’t be afraid. I can CREATE things in you that don’t yet exist!” GOD HAS THE ABILITY IF YOU HAVE THE AVAILABILITY!
 - God wants to make you a PILLAR – a strong support to others! He’s talking about making you into a father your kids can lean on, a husband your wife can trust, and a friend your associates know won’t fail them! JESUS IS IN THE BUSINESS OF MAKING PILLARS – producing stability in our lives because of the power of God! (Just like He did in Peter!)
 - This can only be accomplished through the power of the Holy Ghost! The baptism of the Holy Ghost provides POWER to help me live for God!
 - **It brings me rest, peace and JOY**

Isaiah 28:11-12 ¹¹For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. ¹²To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

Romans 14:17 ¹⁷For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
 - **It helps me PRAY**

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
 - **It gives me power to WITNESS to others about the Lord**

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
 - **It gives me power over the ENEMY**

Isaiah 59:19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
 - Pillars are strategic in architecture – God wants you to become a strategic part of His kingdom! And it all starts with your FAITH!