

ever thought of such a thing. Nevertheless when Peter wrote us his two wonderful epistles - <sup>two</sup> ~~two~~ the very finest parts of the Bible - he did deal with this matter. He explicitly stated who the Rock is upon which the church is built. We find this in 1 Pet. 2:4-7. There we find that Peter speaking about Jesus Christ said: To whom coming as unto a living stone disallowed indeed of men but chosen of God and precious. Ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, a spiritual priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in Scripture: Behold I lay in Zion a chief Corner Stone, elect precious, and He that believeth on Me shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore that believe He is precious." Peter did not say, I'm precious. He did not say, I am the rock on which the church is built. He said Jesus Christ is the stone, the living stone, disallowed of men but chosen of God and precious. Jesus Christ is on a different category, a different standard than any individual mentioned in the Bible or any individual mentioned in history. He must be the very center of our lives if we are truly Christian.

No. 6. The Power of the Church: The Gates of Hell. We find this in this same verse. Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The Power of the Church. When I was a young boy I used to be puzzled by this verse. I used to try to imagine it: here was a church coming out to fight, and here is the gates of hell coming out to fight. The gates of hell can't defeat the church. But what a funny picture. Whoever heard of gates going out to fight. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church. The gates of hell can't destroy the church. Well obviously that's ridiculous. That's not what it means at all. What it means is that the gates of hell cannot hold captive those who are headed for eternal perdition, that the gates of hell will not prevail as the church performs its God given task of rescuing those who are held by the gates of hell. Of bringing them the message of salvation, of showing them how they can be delivered. The gates of hell cannot hold them captive. The gates of hell shall not prevail against them. The Power that God has given to His Church. Well that naturally leads on to

No. 7. The Responsibility of the Church. In vs.19 Jesus continues speaking to