

*"The Lord gave the  
word: great was the  
company of those  
that published it."*

(Psalm 68:11)

Victory Baptist Press  
P.O. Box 766  
Milton, FL 32572-0766

**Return Service Requested**

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Milton, FL  
Permit No. 118



# The NEWSLETTER

March-April 2009

## Send us your email address

Go to [www.victorybaptistpress.com](http://www.victorybaptistpress.com) and opt in to our Newsletter mailing list. You will then receive news releases, special book offers, and this bimonthly Newsletter online in a printable PDF format.

It's reported that Robert Louis Stevenson, at age twelve, was looking out into the dark from his upstairs window watching a man light the streetlamps. A man came into his room and asked what he was doing. He replied, "I am watching a man cut holes in the darkness." We too, as God's children, should be busy cutting holes in the spiritual darkness of our world.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your

Father which is in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)



## Let Victory Baptist Press Be The Source For All Of Your Special Printing Needs

When you use Victory Baptist Press for your printing needs, you have the integrity of this Bible-believing ministry standing behind every job order, plus the joy of knowing that all profits from the book division go 100% into printing and supplying scriptures for missionaries, free of charge.

For information or pricing contact Mark at  
[markyorey@victorybaptistpress.com](mailto:markyorey@victorybaptistpress.com)  
Ph: 850-623-0086 Ext. 14



**Victory Baptist Press is a ministry of the Victory Baptist Church of Milton, Florida**

**Founder:** Dr. Thomas F. Woodward (1935-1994) **Pastor:** Tim Fellure **Editor & VBP Director:** Jim Fellure

The Newsletter is the official publication of **Victory Baptist Press** and is sent free of charge to those who request it. The main purpose of the Newsletter is to promote missions with an emphasis on the printing and distribution of the word of God. While we may not agree with every statement printed from outside sources, we will make every effort to keep the paper as free from error as possible. To receive the Newsletter send your complete mailing address to: P.O. Box 766, Milton, FL 32572-0766

Phone: 850-623-0086 Fax: 850-623-3502 • e-mail: [news@victorybaptistpress.com](mailto:news@victorybaptistpress.com)

## Editor's Notes



*Jim & Mary Fellure*

**Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

With the political uncertainty, economic downturn, and moral decay so evident in our country, I rejoice that in the words of a great old song, "This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue. The angels beckon me from Heaven's open door, And I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

It's very evident that the unsaved are "lovers of their own selves," and "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" but the born again, Bible-believing, dedicated Christian has his/her sights fixed on Heaven's bright shore and refuses to live for this world alone.

Our lifestyle is probably a little odd to the younger generation, but regardless of how much the new U.S. president emphasizes change, we intend to continue with the same biblical principles and lifestyle that we have enjoyed for the past forty-eight years. When I first got saved, I smoked cigarettes. One little tract condemning the tobacco habit took that away. My wife wore pants and shorts. The example of one godly Christian lady that wore dresses only, convicted my wife, and she hasn't worn the immodest apparel for forty-five years now. A good, old fashioned radio preacher named Lester Roloff made me feel like the worst sinner in the world because I had a television in the home—that was in 1970. Out the door the TV went. My wife and I learned early in our Christian life that the King James Bible is the Word of God, and that joining an independent Baptist church and being faithful to all of its programs was for our benefit.

We learned that witnessing, tithing, and giving to missions was the right thing to do with our money. We sent our three children to a Christian school and Christian college, and that decision paid off big time.

I actually lived so long ago that we thought there was a difference between people and animals. We thought that a cat left free to roam the house at night might lick the salt shakers, nibble on the bread, or use the kitchen sink for a commode. The "clean dog," if not watched closely, would use his tongue for toilet paper, then kiss the baby right on the mouth. In view of these ideas, animals were not allowed inside the house, and the cat had to hunt mice for food, and the dog ate left over table scraps, if there were any. We lived by the philosophy that, "if any would not work, neither should he eat," and that if a dog wouldn't hunt, he didn't eat either.

I'm not suggesting that anyone live like I was raised, I am just telling how it was in my day. In fact, it appears that since I was young, in some instances some animals, even rodents, have gotten smarter than humans. I once heard it said that the man who invented the mouse trap made millions, but the mouse that invented the man trap, (Mickey in Orlando) made billions.

In a Christ-rejecting world, men live like animals. Even the Bible calls an unsaved woman a sow, and an unsaved man a dog (2 Peter 2:22), and they try to get animals to live like people.

In *TOYOTA TODAY*, *The magazine for Toyota dealerships* for November/December 2008, the cover story is *Creature Comforts* which advertises pet friendly products for the 2009 Venza. The story says, "Given its highly spacious and versatile interior, it's anticipated the all-new Venza will address the needs of buyers who transport not only people and stuff but, perhaps most importantly, their pets. A full line of animal friendly products—the most ever offered by Toyota—aims to boost the appeal." Pet friendly features listed for the new model are: a seat belt harness, leash teather, barriers, seat covers, booster seats, and a ramp for easier

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

**W**E ACCEPT the Holy Scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments as being the verbally inspired Word of God and being perfectly preserved in the King James 1611 Bible. We do not believe it can be corrected or improved upon in any way. It is the final rule of faith and practice.

**W**E BELIEVE in the triune God, who is eternally in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).

**W**E BELIEVE in the deity of Christ - His virgin birth, His sinless life, His death for the sins of the world, His bodily resurrection, His exaltation at God's right hand, His personal, imminent, and premillennial return.

**W**E BELIEVE all men are sinners and are guilty before God; in need of a Saviour.

**W**E BELIEVE that men are born again through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ; that they become the children of God, eternally saved; that the Holy Spirit dwells within every believer to guide and help him in his testimony and service.

**W**E BELIEVE in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in Glory, and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost in hell. We believe that all believers have a responsibility to get the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ into all the world.

access. According to the same article, Americans spend \$34 billion annually on their pets—double what was spent 10 years ago, and it appears that Toyota plans to get some of that money.

I hope I don't get charged with a hate crime for talking about dogs the way I do, however, if they are going to charge me they better do it soon because it seems as though Barak Hussein Obama might help

...more next page

## The Print Shop



Al & Heidi Berg

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Since our last newsletter, things certainly have been busy in the shops. I say shops because we have been in the process of moving for several months into our new building, but things really got busy in that regard in the last week or so. There is an old saying, *"The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry."* The original plan was to finish binding all the Spanish Bibles we had printed in the old print shop so we would not have to move all the loose signatures. At first, things went well. We put a few thousand Bibles together with cover stock that we had foil stamped in Shelbyville, TN. We planned to do the rest of the foil stamping ourselves on our new to us letter-press. It took a little longer to get the cover stock than I had first anticipated, so that was a delay. Fortunately, it was not too difficult to learn how to run the letter press, and we had just started foil stamping the covers, when I realized the covers were not cut according

to the specifications sent to the company that makes the cover stock. They have agreed to make it right by doing it over, but that is another three week delay. In light of that, and the fact that we were using some borrowed equipment to help us with the move, we decided to go ahead and move everything while we were waiting for the new cover stock to arrive. All the equipment and Bibles are now in the new print shop. The glue binder still has to be put back together, and there is a lot of organizing to do, so it looks like we will be busy for some time to come. Please pray that we get enough done before the new cover stock gets here so we can get back to putting these Bibles together as soon as possible.

Please pray that we can get one piece of equipment in particular running soon. It is a three knife trimmer that came with the bindery system we use to help collate the Bibles. It has never worked properly since we have had it. A company in Iowa can do an upgrade on it for over \$10,000. Some others have said they could repair it but have not had the time to do so yet. For now we use our single knife trimmer to trim the books, but this is very time consuming, since each book must be put into the cutter three times to finish the cuts. We will do it if need be, but it sure would be a blessing to have the three knife trimmer working properly so we can get these Bibles where they need to go as soon as possible.

My wife who helps keep the print shop clean is looking forward to cleaning

## MEMORIALS

Victory Baptist Press  
recently received memorial gifts  
from

**Leona Callaway**  
in memory of  
**Jack Strawbridge**

from  
**Bill & Vicki Richburg**  
In memory of  
**Hank Thompson**

**Elsie Gilkerson**

"...Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

the new shop. The floors have a sealer on them instead of paint, and for now are a lot smoother and easier to run a dust mop over. For now there is very little floor space to dust mop as everything was pretty much brought over in a hurry and put down wherever there was room.

Please pray that we get settled in soon and get these Bibles to the people that need them, and that the money will be there for the next truckload of paper when we need it.

May God bless You,  
*Albert Berg*

## When You Support VBP Prayerfully And Financially, You Are Helping Send The Gospel of Christ, In It's Purest Form, Around the World

Editors notes...

usher in the tribulation period, but just before that happens, I'm out of here by way of the rapture. Praise the Lord! Even so, come Lord Jesus!

In the last issue of this newsletter I made an appeal for our readers to help with the \$20,000 needed by Antonio and Angela Arellanos to finish their house in Monterrey, Mexico. So far \$3,600 has come in and has been sent to Brother Antonio, and he has been able to do some more work on their house. Angela's father,

Missionary Sonny Fritz, told me that Antonio is paying \$600 a month for Angela's arthritis medicine. That's a lot of money to pay out of monthly mission support. Hopefully, others will soon contribute to this need and help get this good family into a decent house on ground level. Being on ground level will not cure arthritis, but it sure will help relieve the pain for Angela to not have to climb the stairs to their apartment. Send your offerings to Victory Baptist Press marked for the *Mexico House Project*. We will promptly send you

a tax deductible receipt and forward the offering to Brother Antonio.

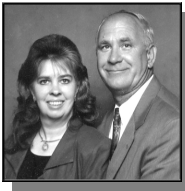
We are experiencing growing pains with the ministry. The men in the print shop are beginning to say they need more help, and Brother Bill Richburg is saying we need more field representatives.

Please pray that these needs will be met.

Thank you for your  
prayers and support,  
*Jim Fellure*



## VBP Field Reps



### **BILL and VICKI RICHBURG**

P. O. Box 508, Six Mile, SC 29682  
864.506.2380

The Richburgs left a full-time ministry in South Carolina and became field representatives for Victory Baptist Press in 1999. Brother Richburg now serves as our general field director.



### **MARTIN and ANNE FULLER**

317 Chick Springs Rd., Greenville, SC 29609  
706.294.5832

The Fullers became field representatives for Victory Baptist Press in 2002. Brother Fuller attended Tabernacle Baptist College of Greenville, SC, and was on staff there under Dr. Harold Sightler. He also served as an assistant pastor and youth director, and pastored for 12 years.

## When All Doors Seemed Shut

Some years back there was a missionary with the same kind of persevering passion as we find in Caleb in the Book of Joshua. His name was Jonathan Goforth--of China. At an advanced age, his mission was turned over to the United Church of Canada. He was now separated from his life's labor in China. His wife was weak with illness, and he was accompanied by two lady missionaries who were now semi-invalids and a young man who did not know the languages. Closed doors and nothing but difficulties surrounded him. But at seventy years of age when most are retired or dead, Goforth set out for a new field to preach the name of Christ where it had not been named.

Goforth tried to enter five different fields in Manchuria--and every door closed. But his faith was steadfast. Then came a call to northwest Manchuria, and another miracle of modern missions took place. In a few short years almost two thousand people came to Christ through his ministry-- when all doors seemed shut.

...copied

Editor's note: *When The Spirit's Fire Swept Korea* is the last message pioneer missionary, Jonathan Goforth, preached on this earth. It's a heartrending account of the great revival he experienced in Korea in 1907.

The message may be ordered from the VBP bookstore.

## HELP WANTED NOTICE!

The day that Jesus Christ saved me I had no idea of what lay in store for me in the future, but within weeks He had us (Vicki & I) busy doing one thing or another. Then He called me to preach, as Paul said, "putting me into the ministry." We saw doors open and went through them - Bible College, staff employee, bus driver, church planter, Pastor, principal of a Christian school, preaching revival meetings, but the day that He directed us to come on with Victory Baptist Press as field representatives was one of the greatest days of our lives.

If I tried to list all of the blessings that have been sent our way, it would fill this newsletter from cover to cover. The realization that we have a part in putting the Word of God into the hands of hundreds of thousands of people every year humbles our hearts. We now have ten years on the road, and yes, there are many sacrifices. However, the benefits and blessings outweigh them all.

I have no doubt that there are other preachers all over the country that have a heart to see the Word of God published, just like my wife and I, and could be a gifted field representative for **VICTORY BAPTIST PRESS**. We could use your help. The more men that we have out on the road covering the ten's of thousands of churches that need to be contacted personally by someone, would no doubt generate the much needed support to enable us to do more.

Help is wanted! Needed! Pleaded for! If you would like to know more about being a field representative for VBP contact me.

On the Road,  
Bill Richburg  
864-506-2380  
billrichburg@bellsouth.net



**Robert &  
Leonor  
Schmidt**  
Willing to help ministries  
with Low-Rate Air Fares  
205.533.2236 / 850.418.3108  
bobleonor3@bellsouth.net

BR0. BOB SCHMIDT AND HIS WIFE, LEONOR, ARE TRAVEL AGENTS AND DO THEIR BEST TO GET THE BEST FLIGHT RATES AVAILABLE FOR THE BRETHREN. BROTHER BOB SAYS THEY CAN DO ESPECIALLY WELL WITH OVERSEAS FLIGHTS.

## I FOUND MY PLACE

I had a zeal to serve the Lord  
Somewhere on Easy Street,  
Where people pray and read God's Word,  
And God's dear children meet---  
Where Christians sing and testify  
Of blessings they have known-----  
How God doth all their needs supply,  
And bless the seed they've sown.

But though I sought a place with them,  
My joy was not complete;  
For I could hear these words from him:  
"No room on Easy Street."

Then I turned off on Busy Lane,  
Where all God's saints were working  
I sought my place, but all in vain,  
For there no one was shirking.

Then did my heart begin to sink;  
My tears like rain were falling.  
"O Lord," I cried, "I really think  
That I have missed my calling."

"Oh, no my child," replied the Lord.  
"I know your zeal for me;  
And if you'll but believe my Word,  
I have a place for thee."

"For if to me your life you'll yield,  
And wait for my direction,  
I'll place you on the battlefield,  
And give you full protection."

"Though Satan's army you must face,  
And though he brag and boast,  
You will, through my great power and grace,  
Defeat his mighty host."

Then, as I knelt in fervent prayer,  
Oh, how my heart did thrill!  
And as I felt His presence there,  
I whispered: "Lord, I will!"

...copied

Submitted by Bill Richburg after writing the Help Wanted Notice on the previous page.



## Blessings & Benefits Mrs. Pam Leake

### God's "*Thinking of You*" Note

*"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."* (Jeremiah 29:11)

Nineteen-year-old Amanda's jaundiced face revealed the increasing failure of her liver. Though she had been accepted into college, that was not yet to be. The disease she was born with had advanced to the point of her being placed at the top of the transplant list. For weeks she had awaited the call, remaining in a sort of quarantine at home to avoid exposure to colds and germs that might prevent her from being ready for surgery at a moment's notice. No doubt, many times throughout her life, Amanda had wondered why she had to be afflicted with this life-threatening disease. But the Lord said, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you..."

Finally, the anticipated call came – a liver was going to be available and it was compatible with Amanda's blood type and other necessary criteria. Although an anxious time, the entire surgical process went perfectly and was completed in record time. As my husband and I visited with her following the surgery, it was evident that the Lord had been gracious to this young lady, displaying "thoughts of peace, and not of evil." She slowly opened her eyes, smiled weakly and said with a confidence in her Savior, "I'm so glad I waited on the Lord. He is so good."

Now, as Amanda goes through the recovery process, the Lord continues to be her Great Physician. Other than some of the normal concerns and hurdles of transplant surgery, her recovery has been right on track with no signs of rejection. With her whole adult life before her, Amanda will be a trophy of God's grace, as her testimony gives evidence of a loving Lord who has guided her "to an expected end."

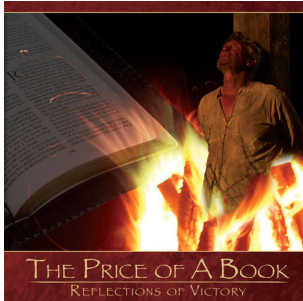
Each one of us, somewhere along the path of life, will encounter uncertain, unexpected events, and the unsettled times that punctuate the human experience. But, for the child of God, knowing that nothing takes God by surprise brings the peace that passes all understanding. We have in our possession all those precious promises of our Lord and Savior, among which is Jeremiah 29:11. He loves us, His thoughts are toward us, and He has that expected end in view!

NOTE: Pam is the wife of Ed Leake, pastor of Colonial Baptist Church and director of Colonial Press of Charlottesville, Virginia. You may email her at: [pamleake@colonialbaptist-cville.org](mailto:pamleake@colonialbaptist-cville.org)

*He loves us,  
His thoughts  
are toward us,  
and He has  
that expected  
end in view!*

# Victory Baptist Press Bookstore Sales

Located On The Beautiful Gulf Coast of Northwest Florida

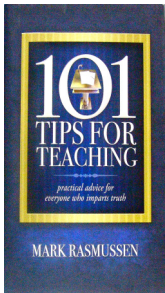


## Reflections Of Victory The Price Of A Book

Never The Same/  
God's Wonderful Book Divine/  
Come Home/ Isn't The Love  
Of Jesus Something Wonder-  
ful/ Anything That Costs Me

Nothing/ Holy Ghost Revival/ The Price Of A Book/ Press  
On/ The Longer I Serve Him/ I Saw The Light (Instrumental)/  
Be Thou My Vision (Instrumental)/ Pierce The Darkness

CD **\$15.00**

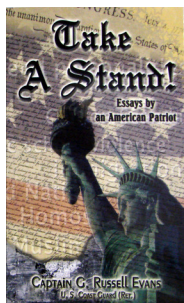


## 101 Tips For Teaching

by Mark Rasmussen.

Written to teachers, parents, pas-  
tors, and anyone who imparts truth to oth-  
ers - here is a treasury of to-the-point, prac-  
tical advise from one of America's leading  
Christian educators! Every page shares an  
idea that you can put into practice today - in  
your home, in your classroom, and in your  
ministry. Any church would benefit greatly by putting this  
tremendous book into the hands of every staff member that  
teaches on any level.

205 pages. Hdbk. **\$11.95**



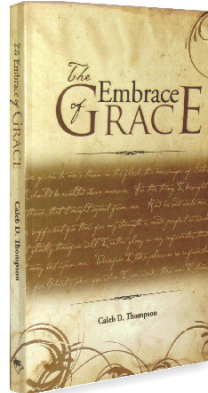
## Take A Stand: Essays by an American Patriot

by Captain G. Russel Evans.

With liberal groups attempting to  
seize new territory every day, how should  
concerned Americans respond to the  
issues which threaten our nation's heri-  
tage and sovereignty? As a man who

has honorably served his country in times of war and  
peace, G. Russel Evans insists that it's time to lay aside  
political correctness and take a stand!

180 pages. **\$9.00**



## The Embrace of Grace

by Caleb D. Thompson.

Has the sun been darkened from your  
sky? Do you find yourself under a juniper tree?  
Are you sitting on the ash heap of your life's  
labors?

Five years into a fourteen year sen-  
tence in the Texas State Penitentiary for con-  
senting to the discipline of a child, Caleb opens  
the dark shades of trial and sheds fresh light on  
the grace of God that sustains the soul in its  
most difficult hour. His insight from personal  
experience is sure to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfort-  
able. In this book he invites you to walk with him down the dark corri-  
dors, past the menacing faces and threatening barriers, out to a su-  
pernatural visitation where you may experience, *The Embrace of  
Grace*.

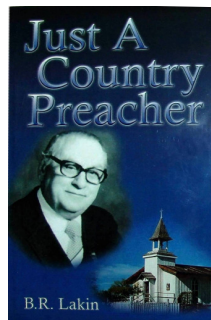
"A must read for anyone desiring to know God more intimately  
and learn firsthand of God's marvelous grace..."

Dr. Raymond Barber, Evangelist and Author.

213 pages. **\$15.00**

Order ten copies and save 20%. Total price **\$120.00**

Order a case of twenty-five and save 40%. Total price **\$225.00**



## Just A Country Preacher

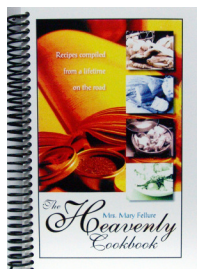
Dr. Bascum Ray Lakin once said that  
he'd like to be remembered "merely as a coun-  
try preacher that has never dipped his colors  
and never sought to advance himself. I want to  
be loved by the great majority of people who  
believe the like precious faith. I'd like to be  
known as a man who never wavered, never  
flattered." This book is a small part of  
the heritage of B. R. Lakin.

158 pages. **\$12.95**

"Books are the quietest and most constant of friends;  
they are the most accessible and wisest of counsellors,  
and the most patient of teachers."

...Copied

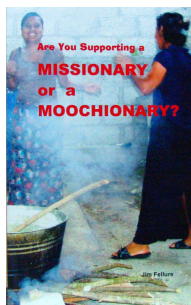




### **The Heavenly Cookbook** by Mary Fellure.

This great cookbook will be a great asset to your kitchen or as a gift for a friend. It contains 469 recipes that Mrs. Mary has gathered from many pastor's wives during her travels with her husband all across America.

Spiral-bound. **\$12.00**



### **Are You Supporting a Missionary or a Moochionary?** by Jim Fellure.

A straight forward shot at sham missionaries that are bleeding off mission money that should go for more productive causes.

The problem and the cure are both dealt with in a very convicting and instructive manner. This is the old *Missionary or Moochionary* book improved and expanded.

163 pages. **\$9.50**

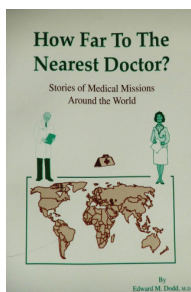


### **Your Clothes Say It For You**

by Elizabeth Rice Handford.

Are there definitive statements in the Word of God for the way you clothe yourself? Does it really make any difference to God what a woman wears? Elizabeth Rice Handford articulates in a gifted fashion a clear-cut application of the Scriptures to the questions concerning a woman's wardrobe, her makeup, and her hairstyle. She shows why it is important for a woman to be aware of the way she walks, her conversation, her mannerisms, and the dangers of flirtation.

96 pages. **\$5.50**



### **How Far to the Nearest Doctor?**

by Edward M. Dodd, M.D.

In this book the writer has tried to bring before American young people a living reality - the medical work of the Christian church in many lands.

163 pages. **\$5.00**

**We welcome your orders by regular mail, however, purchases made online at [www.victorybaptistpress.com](http://www.victorybaptistpress.com) will usually be shipped three to five days faster.**

**Victory Baptist Press Bookstore** is a ministry of Victory Baptist Press. Any profit made from the sale of our competitively priced books, goes toward the printing of more Bibles and scripture portions. This is just one more way we get the Word of God to a lost world.

Victory Baptist Press Bookstore			
Item Description	Qty.	Price Each	Subtotal
Shipping & Handling charges:		Order total: _____	
Up to \$15 - \$3.00 / \$15.01-\$30 - \$4.00		Shipping: _____	
\$30.01-\$60 - \$5.50 / \$60.01 and up - 10% of subtotal		Total: _____	
Make checks payable to: <b>Victory Baptist Press Bookstore</b> P.O. Box 766 Milton, FL 32572-0766		<b>Ship to:</b> Name _____ Street _____ City _____ St _____ Zip _____ Email _____	



Pastor Tim Fellure

### The Committed Christian

#### John 21:15-25

Of all the disciples, Thomas and Peter are the two we like to beat up on the most. Our nature is to belabor the faults of our brethren because it helps our own image, and these two disciples are the easiest to criticize. Especially Peter: he was always opening his mouth at the wrong time, was argumentative with the Lord, denied Christ in the hour of crisis, and returned to the fishing business after the crucifixion.

Peter probably deserves every sermon preached about him, but he wasn't always the Peter we so often hear about. In fact, the Peter in Acts and the epistles is very different than the Peter in the gospels. If all you knew about him came from the gospels, you would be amazed that it was this same Peter who had 3,000 conversions at Pentecost, stood fast even in prison, welcomed Gentiles into the church, and even bravely faced martyrdom. The scene in John 21 was a defining moment in his life: he was never the same Peter after his encounter with the risen Lord on the seashore. If we did not have this incident, we would never understand how Peter could go from warming his hands by the enemies' fire to preaching at Pentecost. This scene bridges the gap for us.

**Peter's Failure** was that, though he made great boast that he would never forsake the Lord (Luke 22:33, 34), he did deny the Lord even as the Lord was dying for him. **Peter's Foolishness** was assuming that his ministry was over and that it would be better to return to his old life. Yet **Peter's Friend** had not stopped loving him. Though he had failed the Lord miserably, he found that Jesus is the friend of the fallen. **Peter's Future** was

that he went on to follow the Lord, lead the church, and eventually glorified God through his death.

One of Peter's faults was that he thought he was stronger than he was. He boasted of his commitment to Christ – *"Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended"* – but his commitment wasn't as strong as he boasted of. What does commitment really look like? After this encounter with Jesus, Peter began to demonstrate true Christian commitment.

### His Work Was Compelled by Love!

**(21:15-17)** Three times Jesus challenged Peter's love for Him. The supreme issue was how much Peter loved the Lord. He did not ask him how much he would do for Him, but how much did he love Him. A truly committed Christian must serve God out of a heart of love. *"For the love of Christ constraineth us"* (2 Cor. 5:14). We don't serve Christ because we have to but because we want to. We can manipulate and browbeat people into holding to a standard, but love is a greater motivation. Peter had sworn that he loved the Lord more than the others, so Jesus challenged that. *"Lovest thou me more than these?"* Whether He was pointing to the boats and nets or to the other disciples, He wanted Peter to love Him more than anything in his life.

A word must be said here about the use of the two Greek words for love in this chapter: *agape* and *phileo*. Much "to do" has been made by Greek students about how *agape* is a deep, spiritual love while *phileo* is a casual, friendship style of love. Accordingly, we who can only read English are told that Jesus was asking Peter if he loved Him with *agape* love and that Peter replied that he loved the Lord with *phileo* love. Of course, if you don't know Greek you would miss that deep meaning of the text. The only problem with this deeper truth is that the NT uses both words interchangeably. John 3:35 says the Father loves the Son (*agape*), while John 5:20 says the Father loves the Son (*phileo*). John 3:16 says God loves the world (*agape*), while John 16:27 says the Father loves us (*phileo*). Ephesians 5:25 says husbands are to love their wives (*agape*), while Titus 2:4 says wives should love their husbands (*phileo*). So much for golden nuggets in the Greek!

### His Way Was Committed to God!

**(21:18-19)** Peter had failed the Lord and had thought that surely the Lord would not have anything to do with him now. He had returned to the career he had left behind three years earlier, and I'm sure his heart was breaking. But the Lord came to him, and instead of chastening him, He loved him. Three times He commissioned Peter to, *"Feed my sheep,"* meaning there was a ministry for him. Then the Lord tells Peter that he will end his ministry in death. Young men get called to preach and have visions of how grand the ministry is. They see a big church, nice office, salary, speaking engagements – but that is not what Jesus told Peter he was getting. He was getting a cross!

*"This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."* He had failed in the hour of crisis once, but this time when he faces the greatest trial of his life, he will glorify God in it. He had put Jesus to shame just a few days earlier; but he would not fail the next time. In 64 A.D., Peter was imprisoned and put to death by Nero. Historians tell us that when they crucified Peter, he asked his crucifiers to crucify him upside down. He did not feel worthy to die the way his Lord had died.

In all of Christian martyrdom, there is not a story of greater courage in the face of death than that of Peter. You will know you are truly committed to God when you can say goodbye to everything in your life that matters to you for Christ. You won't know where your commitment is until it costs you something – but then you'll know.

### His Will Was Content With Following!

**(21:19-23)** *"Follow me,"* Some people think the Christian life is complicated, but this is about as simple as it gets. You don't have to be in the lead; you don't have to be recognized; you don't have to make a name for yourself – you just need to follow. Everywhere you go, if you should be asked, *"Why are you here?"* you should be able to say, *"I'm following Jesus, and this is where He's led me today."* That means the places you go, the words you say, the things you do, the relationships you build, are all founded on the fact that you're following Jesus, and He has brought you to that place.