

Title: SEVEN GREAT BIBLE PARADOXES

Text: Isaiah 55:8

Intro: The Bible is a unique and strange Book. It is very different from any other "sacred book" of other religions. The Bible contains "God's thoughts" which are strange and yet marvelous spiritual teachings. Among them are paradoxes. A **Paradox** is defined as a seemingly self-contradictory declaration but is in fact true.

To some, such biblical paradoxes may seem somewhat ridiculous and yet such are the very words of God which were written for our admonition and learning. In today's Bible study we shall look into the Seven Great Bible Paradoxes which are truly amazing, namely:

1. EXALTATION THROUGH HUMILITY (Jas. 4:10)

God has never been pleased with the proud, boastful and over confident. We know that, Lucifer in his madness became Satan. He wanted to be exalted like God but he fell! The Most High God sees to it that all who will desire to be exalted out of His will & timing will ultimately fall. What a contrast Satan & his children are from Christ who humbled himself but was exalted! (**Phil. 2:8-9**).

2. STRENGTH THROUGH WEAKNESS (II Cor. 12:10)

In this passage we see that, of all the apostles, Paul received an abundance of revelation than all the others combined. Paul wrote 14 NT books including Hebrews or about 1/3 of the entire NT! With all his God-given privileges & advantages; there was always the possibility of being proud and over confident. So God allowed a "**thorn in his flesh**" which kept him lowly and ever dependent in God. Thrice he prayed for removal of the thorn but God said that His grace is ever sufficient. In this Paul rejoiced! Would you like the world to see the power of Christ rest in you? Then serve God faithfully in spite of sickness, trials, troubles. Rejoice in God! We all have weaknesses which God can use to make us aware of our limitations, and keep us humble and useful!

3. RECEIVING THROUGH GIVING (Acts 20:35)

The ultimate test of love for God & man is in giving something that we hold so dear. Giving is quite foolish to selfish people. The world's philosophy is – It's much better to work & work, save, earn all you can, get rich, keep & withhold! Some of the most miserable people on earth are those who take & take. Some of the happiest people are givers for they manifest God in their unselfish attitude. God Himself is the greatest giver (**John 3:16**). God will bless you beyond what you need so you may have the

chance of becoming His channel of blessing! You may cheerfully & willingly give your time, talent, treasure for God's glory and in return receive love, joy, peace, satisfaction, respect from men!

4. FREEDOM THROUGH SERVITUDE (Rom. 6:18)

Men think they are free since they are outside prison cells. The truth is there's another form of imprisonment & bondage which is spiritual & moral in nature. Many are enslaved by fear, doubt, hatred, vices, and sin that add to life's hardship. Friend, if today you are enslaved by sin & doubt, you can be free in Christ! Only in personally knowing Christ as Lord & serving Him can you be truly free from the devil, sin & the bondage they bring (**John 8:32,36**)

5. GAINING THROUGH LOSING (Phil. 3:7-8)

Materialism and love of money have always been the greatest hindrances to a personal living relationship with the Lord. People who are materialistic never have any thoughts of sacrificing & offering anything for Him who died & gave Himself for them. After receiving Christ as Lord & Saviour, we need to accept the fact that we are to live a life of service and sacrifice for Him. Only then can we be truly satisfied. You can gain the whole world but lose your own soul (**Mark 8:36; 10:29-30**) or like Paul you can lose earthly opportunities but gain Christ & lay up treasure in heaven!

6. LIVING THROUGH DYING (John 12:24)

Jesus was foretelling his death. The corn of wheat that falls to the ground and dies also grows and becomes productive. This is an agricultural and a spiritual principle as well. Death to the old self is the first step to Christian growth and this principle is found in all the NT (**Rom. 8:13**). Death to the sinful nature means to be willfully against the works of the flesh, the mentality, philosophies and damnable superstitions of the world. God says that the flesh must be crucified with its sinful lusts (**Gal. 5:24**). The more you die to SELF the more CHRIST is seen in you! John the Baptist said that Christ must increase and we must decrease! (**John 3:30**).

7. FINDING THROUGH LOSING (Matt. 10:39)

People try to find the meaning of life in earthly pursuits, in trying to succeed & prosper, & in trying to enjoy their material possessions – only to find out too late that nothing on earth really satisfies the soul. Friend, without Jesus... life is meaningless for Jesus is the very essence of life. He is everything that your poor lost soul has ever longed for. Jesus will still be Lord and King even without you, but friend you are NOTHING without Jesus!