

Bible Paradoxes

by William MacDonald

The Bible is full of paradoxes that challenge our understanding of life and faith, revealing the wisdom and power of God's ways.

Scripture: Genesis 32:24-28, Psalm 4:1, Proverbs 11:24, Jeremiah 48:11, Matthew 6:19, Mark 8:35, Luke 14:11, John 15:5, Acts 20:35, Romans 6:17-20, 1 Corinthians 1:20-21, 2 Corinthians 6:9-10, 2 Corinthians 12:10, 1 John 1:8, 1 John 3:9
Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Paradoxes of Faith"

Description

William MacDonald explores the intriguing paradoxes found in the Bible, emphasizing how these truths challenge our conventional understanding. He illustrates that true life is found in losing it, strength in weakness, and freedom in servitude to Christ. MacDonald highlights that joy comes from giving rather than receiving, and that we can possess everything while having nothing. He concludes that the Christian journey is filled with contradictions that ultimately lead to spiritual growth and understanding.

Transcript

"As dying, and, behold, we live." (2 Cor. 6:9)

The Bible is full of paradoxes, that is, truths that seem contrary to what we would normally suppose or truths that seem to contradict one another. G. K. Chesterton maintained that paradox is truth standing on its head to attract attention. Here are a few of the paradoxes trying to attract our attention.

We save our lives by losing them; we lose our lives by loving them (Mark 8:35).

We are strong when we are weak (2 Cor. 12:10), and powerless in our own strength (John 15:5).

We find perfect freedom in being Christ's slave, and bondage when we are free from His yoke (Rom. 6:17-20).

We find more joy in sharing what we have than we do in getting more. Or, in the words of our Lord, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

We increase what we have through scattering it, and experience poverty through hoarding it (Prov. 11:24).

We have a new nature that cannot sin (1 John 3:9), yet everything we do is stained by sin (1 John 1:8).

We conquer by yielding (Gen. 32:24-28) and experience defeat by fighting (1 Pet. 5:5c).

We are abased when we exalt ourselves, but He exalts us when we abase ourselves (Lu. 14:11).

We are enlarged by pressure (Psa. 4:1 JND) and shrunk by prosperity (Jer. 48:11).

We can possess all things, yet have nothing; we can be poor, yet make many rich (2 Cor. 6:10).

When we are wise (in man's view) then we are fools (in God's sight), but when we are fools for Christ's sake, then we are truly wise (1 Cor. 1:20, 21).

The life of faith brings freedom from care and anxiety; the life of sight brings fear of loss through moths, rust and thieves (Matt. 6:19).

The poet sees the Christian life as paradox from start to finish:

How strange is the course that a person must steer,

How perplexed is the path he must tread;

The hope of his happiness rises from fear,

And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,

And his best resolutions be crossed;

Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved

Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured

Of the total remission of sins;

When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,

From that moment his conflict begins. (Selected).

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