

## Paradoxes of the Cross

### Int.

1. Aim: To show that the cross of Christ is necessary even though it seems foolish to men.
2. I Cor. 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."
  - a. To us the cross is glorious: - wear jewelry with crosses, sing songs about cross
    - i. We know that Christ died for us
    - ii. We are removed in time [2,000 years] and distance [6,300 miles]
  - b. But to the people of the 1st century it was terrible:
    - i. Terrible instrument of execution
    - ii. Reserved for slaves and lowest sort of criminals
    - iii. Humiliating death
    - iv. Cross was a symbol of shame, degradation, and humiliation.
  - c. It pleased God
    - i. God Sent his Son to die on the cross
    - ii. The Messiah was crucified!!
    - iii. Wisdom of God
3. The cross is a paradox
  - a. Paradox = Seems to contradict itself - but it is true
  - b. Examples of statements by Jesus which are paradoxes:
    - i. Mt. 10:39 NKJV "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it"

- ii. Mt. 23:11 "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant."
- iii. Matt. 5:4 "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."

4. Here are some ways in which the cross of Christ is a paradox:

### Discussion

#### I. Jesus Christ came into the World that WE MAY ENTER INTO HEAVEN

A. Jesus came into the world

- 1. I Tim. 1:15 "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
  - a. Purpose - To Save Sinners = Paul was Chief
  - b. Save us from hell
- 2. Matt. 20:28 "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

B. That we may Enter into Heaven

- 1. John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."
- 2. II Cor. 5:1 "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

## II. Jesus Christ was born in the Flesh, that we may be BORN of the SPIRIT

### A. Jesus Christ was born in the flesh

1. John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,...."
2. 1 John 4:2-3 "By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world."

### B. We may be born of the Spirit

1. John 3:5 Born of the water and of the spirit
  - a. Spirit = 1 John 5:6-8 "...the spirit is the truth..."
  - b. The spirit is truth in that the word of God is truth
  - c. The H.S. operates through the word
  - d. Born of the spirit means to be taught by the word of God
  - e. Persons body is buried in water in baptism, but it is the soul that is born again.
2. 1 Pet. 1:23 "having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,"
  - a. Purified by obedience to the truth
  - b. Begotten by truth, word of God.

### **III. Jesus was born of a woman that WE MAY BE BORN OF GOD**

#### A. Jesus was born of a woman

1. Gal. 4:4 "But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,"
  - a. "Made of a woman"
  - b. "Born of a woman" ASV and NKJV
2. Isa. 7:14 "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."
  - a. Virgin birth
  - b. Miraculous
  - c. Matt. 1:23

#### B. We may be born of God

1. John 1:11-12 "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"
2. 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."
  - a. Born of God = the New Birth
  - b. Overcomes the world = the temptations
  - c. Faith enables us to resist temptations to sin

#### **IV. Jesus became the son of Man that WE MAY BE SONS OF GOD**

##### A. Jesus became the Son of Man

1. Phil. 2:5-9 ".made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man"
2. Luke 19:10 "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

##### B. We may be Sons of God

1. 1 John 3:1-3 v. 1a "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:..."
2. Gal. 4:6 "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

#### **V. Jesus Christ Accepted Poverty that WE MAY BE MADE RICH**

##### A. Jesus accepted poverty

1. II Cor. 8:9 "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."
  - a. He was in heaven with God
  - b. He was on an equality with God
2. Luke 9:58 "And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

##### B. We may be made rich

1. II Cor. 8:9
  - a. Remission of sins Prayer
  - b. Strength and assurance of God's aid
2. Jas. 2:5 "Rich in faith"

**VI. Jesus Christ was rejected of men that WE MAY BE ACCEPTED OF GOD**

## A. Jesus Christ was rejected of man

1. John 1:11-12 "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"
2. I sa. 53:3 "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

## B. We may be accepted of God

1. Eph. 1:6 "to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.
2. Acts 10:34 & 35 "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"

**VII. Jesus Christ became the man of Sorrows that WE MAY REJOICE AND BE GLAD**

## A. Jesus Christ became the man of sorrows

1. I sa. 53:3 "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."
2. Matt. 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

## B. We may rejoice and be glad

1. Phil. 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."
2. 1 Pet. 4:13 "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

**VIII. Jesus Christ was made Sin for us that WE MAY BE RIGHTEOUS OF GOD**

## A. Jesus Christ was made sin for us

1. II Cor. 5:21 NKJV "For he made him who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might become the righteousness of God in him"
2. 1 Pet. 2:22-24 "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
  - a. Never a single instance of Jesus doing wrong
  - b. He died in our place because of our sins / not His

## B. We may be righteous of God

1. II Cor. 5:21
  - a. We can be made righteous
  - b. But it is through Christ
2. 1 John 3:7 "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."

**IX. Jesus Christ was put to Death that WE MAY BE MADE ALIVE**

## A. Jesus Christ was put to death

1. Luke 24:46 "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:"
2. Matt. 27:50 "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."

## B. We may be made alive

1. Col. 2:13 "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;"
2. Eph. 2:1 NKJV "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,"

**X. Jesus Christ was cursed on earth that WE MAY BE BLESSED ABOVE**

## A. Jesus Christ was cursed on earth

1. Gal. 3:13 NKJV "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),"
  - a. He was made a curse for us - condemned to die on the cross
  - b. Deut. 21:22-23 "And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: 23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."
  - c. Christ became a curse for us

2. Isa. 53:7-8 "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."

B. We may be blessed above

1. Gal. 3:14 "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."
2. Rev. 14:13 "...blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

## CONCLUSION

1. The Paradoxes of the cross of Christ
  2. God's plan for man to have a home with him in heaven
  3. Statement "Paradoxes of the Cross"
  4. I Cor. 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."
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## **PARADOXES OF THE CROSS**

The cross of Christ is the greatest of all paradoxes. It was the most tragic event in the history of the world. Yet the most wonderful thing that ever happened. It was the saddest spectacle man ever beheld, yet out of it came the greatest joy. The cross was Satan's greatest victory and Christ's most humiliating defeat, yet it was the most stunning defeat Satan ever suffered and the most glorious victory Christ ever won. Christ won by losing. He conquered by surrendering.

The cross was the greatest exhibition of divine justice in condemning sin, yet the most wonderful demonstration of divine mercy in pardoning sin. It was God's greatest manifestation of hatred for sin, yet his supreme proof of love for the sinner. The cross was the means by which God's justice condemned sin and his mercy forgave it. The cross was the darkest hour in history, yet it was the time of greatest light. Though the sun refused to shine, and God hid his face from Christ, the cross was the means by which Christ really became the "light of the world." In the cross we see man's hatred for Christ, yet we see Christ's love for man. There we see human vengeance as they cry for his blood, yet we see divine forgiveness as Jesus prays "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The cross portrays man's sinfulness and God's holiness: human weakness and divine strength. It shows man's inability to save himself, and God's ability and power to do this for man. The cross, from the human standpoint, is foolishness, yet it is a revelation of the highest wisdom of God.