

Paradox

April 5, 2015

INTRODUCTION

A Paradox can be defined as: Something that is seemingly absurd, self-contradictory or even false at first glance, but when investigated or explained closely may prove to be well-founded or even true. Today is Easter Sunday, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the Greatest Paradox. God humbled Himself, lowered Himself, and became like one of us; He lived a perfect life; He was crucified on an instrument of torture and shame; and in the end He defeated death and rose from the grave. And He is calling us to reflect this Paradox through our own lives.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you name some common paradoxes? What is something that at first didn't seem true to you, but after closer investigation and examination, you found that it was true?
2. What are some common paradoxes we find in Scripture?
3. Read Matthew 16:24-26. What are some of your initial thoughts as you read these verses? What is Jesus saying here? What is He asking from His disciples?
4. What are some of the values in our world that you think contradict the call to be a follower of Jesus? Have you ever struggled in trying to reconcile the call to follow Jesus and the gravitational pull of what the world often tells us is true?
5. What are some areas in your life that you need to deny and die to in order to fully follow after Jesus?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Jesus flipped that equation upside down. And if you take a look at the Gospels accounts, you'll see that He lived His life in a radically different way. He healed the sick; ate with the prostitutes and sinner; He served and ministered to the poor, the marginalized and the outcast; He gave honor and dignity to women; He challenged the religious order of His day; He commissioned a ragtag group of fishermen to carry on the work of the Church; and He voluntarily gave up His life, because He knew where true North was. And in the end, He willfully submitted Himself to the will of His Heavenly Father, picked up His cross and was obedient to death. He truly lived His life upside down.

God doesn't want our leftovers and scraps. He has called us to deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow after His leading for our lives. As we celebrate the Resurrection, and Christ's victory over sin and death and the grave, let us respond by committing ourselves in reflecting the Greatest Paradox.

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen!"
– Luke 24:5b-6