

A CATALOG OF CONTRADICTIONS, 2ND COR. 6:8-10

(Paradoxes of Christianity)

IN THE SCRIPTURES WE CONSTANTLY COME UPON DOUBLE STATEMENTS LIKE THESE:

POSSIBLE, YET IMPOSSIBLE

ABSENT, YET PRESENT

IN EARTH, YET IN HEAVEN

KNOWING NOTHING, YET JUDGING ALL THINGS.

IN THIS SCRIPTURE WE HAVE A SERIES OF PARADOXES

"AN ASSERTION SEEMINGLY CONTRADICTORY, OR OPPOSED TO COMMON SENSE BUT THAT YET MAY BE TRUE IN FACT."

I. THE PARADOX OF INTEGRITY: "DECEIVERS, YET TRUE"

1. SOME PROFESSING CHRISTIAN LEADERS REFUSED TO RECOGNIZE PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP AND ACCUSED HIM OF BEING AN IMPOSTER.
2. CHRIST HIMSELF WAS ACCUSED OF BEING A DECEIVER.
3. THE GREATEST DECEIVER OR IMPOSTER IS THE HYPOCRITE.
4. THE GENUINE CHRISTIAN IS THE PERSON OF THE GREATEST INTEGRITY.

II. THE PARADOX OF REPUTATION: "AS UNKNOWN, YET WELL KNOWN"

1. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE THE "HIDDEN ONES"
2. "THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT, BECAUSE IT KNEW IT HIM NOT."
3. BUT THESE "HIDDEN ONES" OCCUPY A MOST PROMINENT POSITION BEFORE GOD, FOR "THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE OVER THE RIGHTEOUS."

A. THEY ARE WELL KNOWN TO THE FATHER IN HEAVEN.

B. THEY ARE WELL KNOWN IN ALL THE COURTS OF HEAVEN.

III. THE PARADOX OF LIFE: "AS DYING, YET WE LIVE"

1. THE LIFE OF THE OLD MAN DIES BY THE PAINFULLY SLOW PROCESS OF CRUCIFIXION.

2. A NEW DIVINE LIFE IS PLANTED IN THE SOUL, WHICH DEVELOPS IN PROPORTION AS THE OLD MAN IS CRUCIFIED.

IV. THE PARADOX OF SUFFERING: "AS CHASTENED, YET NOT KILLED"

1. SOMETIMES WHAT APPEARS AS HARDSHIP COMES THROUGH THE DIRECT CHASTENING OF A FATHER'S LOVE.

2. SOMETIMES HARDSHIP AND SUFFERING COME THROUGH GOD'S PERMISSIVE WILL.

A. PAUL WAS SCOURGED MANY TIMES, (V. 5 & 11:23-27)

B. THE EXPERIENCE OF JOSEPH

3. BUT WE HAVE HIS GUARANTEE THAT WE WILL NOT BE OVERWHELMED.



V. THE PARADOX OF SORROW: "SORROWFUL, YET REJOICING"

1. THE SOURCE OF THE BELIEVER'S SORROW:

- A. INNER CONDITION
- B. OUTER CIRCUMSTANCES

2. ATTITUDES TOWARD SORROW.

- A. MORBIDLY NURSE IT AS IF IT WERE A WARRANT OF VENGEANCE.

- B. ACCEPT IT AS A MESSAGE FROM ABOVE TO TEACH US MORE OF OUR RELATIONS AND DUTIES TO OUR FELLOW MEN AND TO GOD.

3. A MAN WHO LOOKS ON SORROW IN THIS WAY WILL ALWAYS FIND CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE AND REJOICING.

VI. THE PARADOX OF POVERTY: "POOR, YET MAKING MANY RICH"

1. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE OFTEN POOR IN THIS WORLD'S GOODS.

- A. CHRIST HIMSELF
- B. PAUL WAS OFTEN BREADLESS, HOMELESS, CLAD IN RAGS.

2. BUT HIS PEOPLE ARE RICH IN MANY WAYS.

- A. FAITH IS WEALTH
- B. KNOWLEDGE IS WEALTH
- C. CONTENTMENT IS WEALTH
- D. HOPE IS WEALTH
- E. CHEERFULNESS IS WEALTH
- F. LOVE IS WEALTH

3. BY HIS FAITHFUL WITNESSING TO AND WINNING OTHERS TO CHRIST HE CAN MAKE MANY RICH.

- A. THE HIGHEST WORK OF MAN IS TO IMPART SPIRITUAL RICHES TO

- B. "SUCH AS I HAVE GIVE I THEE" HIS BROTHER.

- C. "YOU MUST HAVE SOMETHING, BEFORE YOU CAN GIVE IT."

VIII. THE PARADOX OF POSSESSIONS: "HAVING NOTHING, YET POSSESSING ALL THINGS"

1. UTTER DESTITUTION: "HAVING NOTHING"

2. BOUNDLESS POSSESSIONS:

- A. THE SPIRIT OF GOD
- B. THE REDEEMING SON OF GOD
- C. OUR HEAVENLY FATHER'S LOVE AND CARE
- D. SALVATION FROM SIN
- E. AN INHERITANCE INCORRUPTIBLE, UNDEFILED.
- F. LIVING BREAD, LIVING WATER, A HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS, ROBES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, GARMENTS OF SALVATION.
- G. ALL THINGS

- "ALL THINGS ARE YOURS"

- "MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED"

- "HE THAT OVERCOMETH SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS"

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