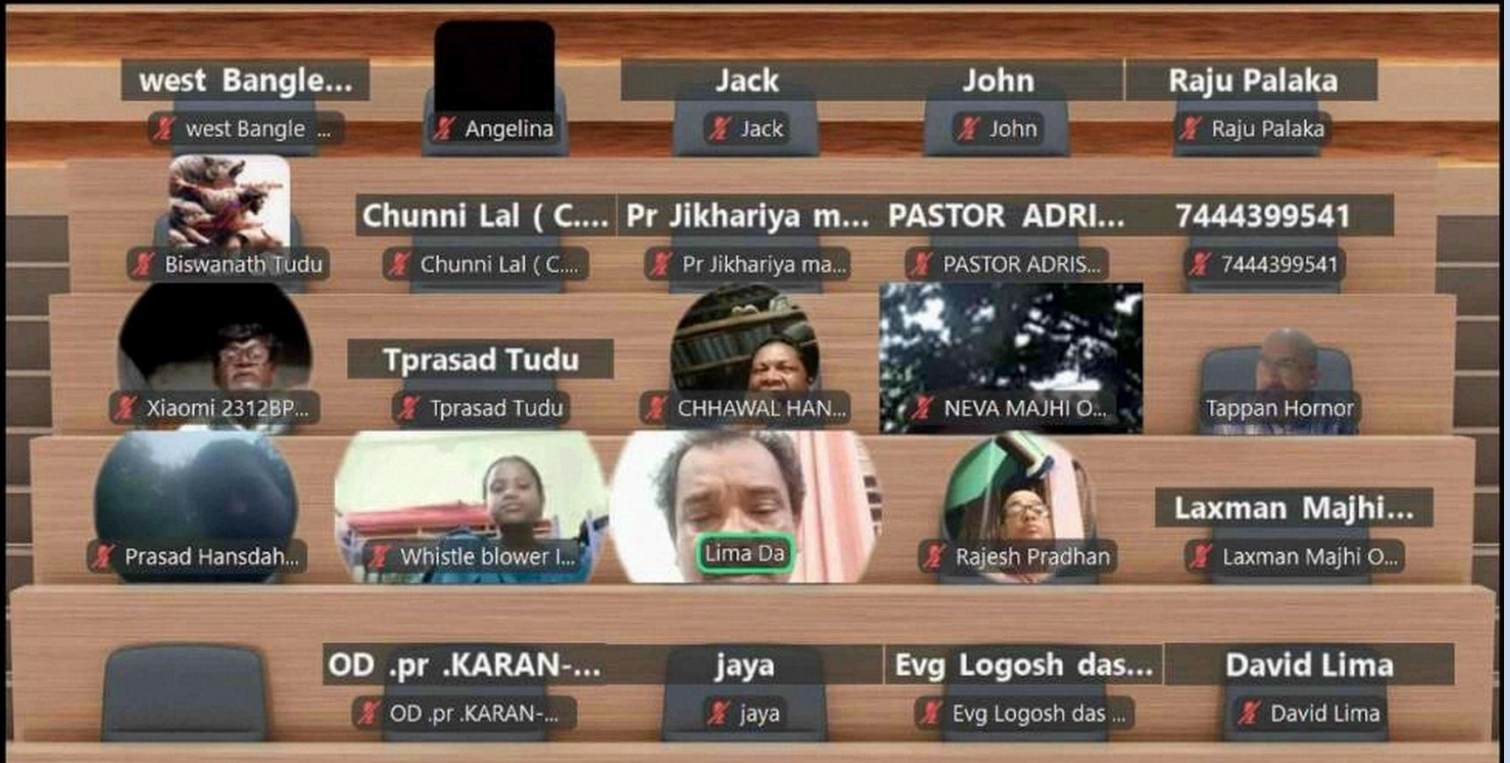


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The Christian life is a holy paradox: Isaiah 55:8–9

God’s ways often appear opposite to human thinking, but His truth is higher, wiser, and eternal.

Main Points

1. God’s thoughts and ways are higher than ours.

From **Isaiah 55:8–9**, the message begins by showing that man does not think like God. We cannot judge God’s ways by our limited understanding. What may seem like weakness, loss, suffering, or defeat to us may actually be God’s path to life, victory, and glory.

2. The cross looked like defeat, but it was victory.

The world saw Christ crucified and thought His enemies had won. But the resurrection proved that God’s plan was not failure. The cross became the place where God revealed His wisdom, power, salvation, and eternal victory.

3. We gain by losing.

Using **Matthew 16:25** and **Philippians 3**, the message explains that if a person tries to save his life by living for himself, he will lose what truly matters. But if he loses his life for Christ, he finds true life. Paul counted his former gains as loss because knowing Christ was far greater.

4. We live by dying.

From **Galatians 2:20** and **Romans 6:4**, the message explains that the believer's old life has been crucified and buried with Christ. True life begins when we die to sin, self, and the flesh, and live by the life of the risen Christ within us.

5. We become free by surrendering.

From **Romans 6:22** and **John 8:36**, the message teaches that real freedom is not doing whatever we want. True freedom is being set free from sin so we can willingly serve God. The believer becomes a servant of God, not by force, but out of love and gratitude.

6. The world will not understand this without spiritual life.

The message applies this especially to ministry among Hindu and Muslim neighbors. Until Christ opens their eyes and they are born again, they may not understand the gospel. They may reject, hate, or persecute believers, but Christians must still faithfully proclaim the truth.

7. God sees what we cannot see.

The closing encouragement is that God sees every believer, family, neighbor, suffering, and ministry. We are limited, but God is unlimited in wisdom, love, knowledge, and grace. Therefore, believers can rest in the care of a good, loving, risen Savior.

Central Summary

God's ways are higher than our ways. In Christ, **we gain by losing, live by dying, and become free by surrendering.** What looks like weakness to the world is often the very place where God reveals His power, wisdom, and eternal life.

Full message The Holy Paradox of the Christian Life Isa 55:8–9; Mt 16:25; Gal 2:20; Rom 6:4, 22; Jn 8:36

A paradox is a truth that seems strange or opposite to normal human thinking, but it is still true. The word comes from the Greek idea of "an opinion beside another opinion." In simple words, it means two ways of seeing the same reality. Man sees one way. God sees another way.

We see weakness, loss, suffering, surrender, and the cross. The world says, "That is defeat." But God says, "That is where My power, wisdom, life, and glory are revealed."

Isaiah 55:8–9 says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

We must never shake our fist in God's face and say, "You do not know what You are doing." We do not know more than God. His thoughts are higher than our thoughts. His ways are higher than our ways. We only understand life correctly when we learn to see it through His truth.

The world looked at the cross of Jesus Christ and thought it was defeat. The enemies of Christ thought they had won. They thought they had silenced Him, buried Him, and finished His work. But they were wrong.

The cross was not defeat. The cross was victory. The resurrection proved that God's wisdom is greater than man's wisdom. What looked like loss became eternal glory. What looked like weakness became the power of God unto salvation.

1. We Gain by Losing

Jesus **Mt 16:25**: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." This is completely opposite to natural human thinking.

Man says, "Protect yourself. Save yourself. Live for yourself. Build your own life. Keep control."

But Jesus says, "If you live only to save your earthly life, you will lose what truly matters. But if you lose your life for My sake, you will find true life."

This does not mean we are careless with our bodies or responsibilities. But it does mean that physical life is not the highest treasure. Temporal comfort is not the highest treasure. Personal success is not the highest treasure. Christ is the highest treasure.

John 5:24 says that the one who hears Christ's word and believes on Him has everlasting life and has passed from death unto life.

Before Christ, we were under sin, death, and darkness. But in Christ, we pass into life, liberty, forgiveness, and eternal purpose.

Paul understood this in **Philippians 3**. The things he once considered gain, he later counted as loss for Christ. What he once thought made him important, he came to see as rubbish compared with knowing Christ.

The world says, "Gain everything you can."

Christ says, "Lose everything that keeps you from Me."

And Jesus asked the question no man can escape:

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" — **Matthew 16:26**

A man may gain money, position, comfort, approval, and earthly security, but if he loses his soul, he has lost everything.

We gain by losing because what we lose for Christ is temporary, but what we gain in Christ is eternal.

2. We Live by Dying

Galatians 2:20 says: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..."

Here is another holy paradox.

Paul says, "I am crucified." That means the old life, the life ruled by sin, self, pride, and the flesh, has been put to death with Christ.

But then Paul says, "Nevertheless I live."

How can a crucified man live?

Because the Christian life is not merely an improved old life. It is the life of Christ within us.

Romans 6:4 says: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead... even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Galatians says we are crucified with Christ. Romans says we are buried with Christ. Both teach the same truth: the old life must die, and the new life comes through union with the risen Christ.

Jesus explained this to Nicodemus in John 3. Nicodemus was religious, educated, and respected, but Jesus told him he still needed to be born again.

That is because flesh can only produce flesh. Human religion, human effort, and human wisdom cannot produce spiritual life. Only the Spirit of God can give new life.

So we do not truly live by protecting the old self. We live by dying to sin, dying to self-rule, and living by faith in the Son of God.

The world says, "Express yourself."

Christ says, "Follow Me."

Christ says, "Deny yourself."

The world says, "Live for now."

The world says, "Follow your heart."

Christ says, "Die to self, and you will truly live."

3. We Become Free by Surrendering

Romans 6:22 says: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life."

This is another paradox. We become free by becoming servants of God.

The world thinks freedom means doing whatever you want. But that is not freedom. That is slavery to sin, the flesh, and deception.

Jesus said in **John 8:36**: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

True freedom is not freedom from God. True freedom is freedom from sin so that we can love, obey, and serve God.

In the Old Testament, there was a beautiful picture of this truth. A servant could be released from his master. He could go free. But if he loved his master and wanted to stay, he could willingly choose to remain. His ear would be pierced as a mark that he belonged to his master by love, not by force.

That is a picture of the believer.

Christ has set us free from sin. But now, in love and gratitude, we gladly surrender ourselves to Him. We say, “Lord, I do not want to go back to my old life. I belong to You. I want to serve You.”

We are not forced slaves. We are willing servants.

We become free by surrendering to the authority, love, care, and will of God.

Application to Our Lives and Ministry

God’s ways are higher than our ways.

We live by dying.

We gain by losing.

We become free by surrendering.

Your Hindu and Muslim neighbors may not understand this until Christ opens their eyes. The natural man does not understand the things of God. Until a person is born again, these truths may seem foolish, weak, or strange. Some may reject you. Some may mock you. Some may persecute you. Some may treat you cruelly.

But this is part of the Christian life. This is part of the gospel message we must faithfully explain.

The world may not want to hear this truth, but this is exactly what the world needs. Men and women need to be turned from darkness to light, from lies to truth, from death to life.

The world says, “Go up. Exalt yourself. Protect your name. Fight for your place.”

God says, “Go down. Humble yourself. Lose your life for Christ. Die to self. Surrender to Me.”

And in due time, God will lift up His servants in the right way, at the right time, for His glory.

Take comfort in this: God has not forgotten you.

He sees you.

He sees the whole world at once.

He sees your family.

We do not see everything.

He sees your neighbors.

We do not understand everything.

He sees your suffering.

We are limited.

He sees your ministry.

But God is unlimited in knowledge, love, wisdom, and grace.

So rest in the truth that you follow a good, loving, risen Savior.

He knows what He is doing.

Trust Him. Lose your life for Him. Die to self. Surrender fully.

And you will find that His paradox is not confusion.

It is life.

Mensaje completo

La santa paradoja de la vida cristiana Isaías 55:8–9; Mateo 16:25; Gálatas 2:20; Romanos 6:4, 22; Juan 8:36

Una paradoja es una verdad que parece extraña o contraria al pensamiento humano normal, pero aun así es verdad. La palabra viene de la idea griega de “una opinión junto a otra opinión”. En palabras sencillas, significa dos maneras de ver la misma realidad.

El hombre ve de una manera. Dios ve de otra manera.

Nosotros vemos debilidad, pérdida, sufrimiento, rendición y la cruz. El mundo dice: “Eso es derrota”. Pero Dios dice: “Allí es donde se revelan Mi poder, Mi sabiduría, Mi vida y Mi gloria”.

Isaías 55:8–9 dice: “Porque mis pensamientos no son vuestros pensamientos, ni vuestros caminos mis caminos, dijo Jehová. Como son más altos los cielos que la tierra, así son mis caminos más altos que vuestros caminos, y mis pensamientos más que vuestros pensamientos.”

Nunca debemos levantar nuestro puño contra Dios y decir: “Tú no sabes lo que estás haciendo”. Nosotros no sabemos más que Dios. Sus pensamientos son más altos que nuestros pensamientos. Sus caminos son más altos que nuestros caminos. Solo entendemos la vida correctamente cuando aprendemos a verla por medio de Su verdad.

El mundo miró la cruz de Jesucristo y pensó que era derrota. Los enemigos de Cristo pensaron que habían ganado. Pensaron que lo habían silenciado, sepultado y que habían terminado Su obra. Pero estaban equivocados. La cruz no fue derrota. La cruz fue victoria. La resurrección comprobó que la sabiduría de Dios es mayor que la sabiduría del hombre. Lo que parecía pérdida llegó a ser gloria eterna. Lo que parecía debilidad llegó a ser el poder de Dios para salvación.

1. Ganamos perdiendo

Jesús dijo en Mateo 16:25: “Porque todo el que quiera salvar su vida, la perderá; y todo el que pierda su vida por causa de mí, la hallará.”

Esto es completamente opuesto al pensamiento humano natural.

El hombre dice: “Protégete. Sálvate a ti mismo. Vive para ti mismo. Construye tu propia vida. Mantén el control”.

Pero Jesús dice: “Si vives solamente para salvar tu vida terrenal, perderás lo que realmente importa. Pero si pierdes tu vida por causa de Mí, hallarás la vida verdadera”.

Esto no significa que seamos descuidados con nuestro cuerpo o con nuestras responsabilidades. Pero sí significa que la vida física no es el tesoro más alto. La comodidad temporal no es el tesoro más alto. El éxito personal no es el tesoro más alto.

Cristo es el tesoro más alto.

Jn 5:24 dice que el que oye la palabra de Cristo y cree al que le envió tiene vida eterna, y ha pasado de muerte a vida. Antes de Cristo, estábamos bajo pecado, muerte y tinieblas. Pero en Cristo, pasamos a la vida, la libertad, el perdón y el propósito eterno.

Pablo entendió esto en Filipenses 3. Las cosas que antes consideraba ganancia, después las tuvo por pérdida por amor a Cristo. Lo que antes pensaba que lo hacía importante, llegó a verlo como basura comparado con conocer a Cristo.

El mundo dice: “Gana todo lo que puedas”.

Cristo dice: “Pierde todo lo que te impide venir a Mí”.

Y Jesús hizo una pregunta de la cual ningún hombre puede escapar:

“Porque ¿qué aprovechará al hombre, si ganare todo el mundo, y perdiere su alma?” — Mateo 16:26

Un hombre puede ganar dinero, posición, comodidad, aprobación y seguridad terrenal; pero si pierde su alma, lo ha perdido todo.

Ganamos perdiendo porque lo que perdemos por Cristo es temporal, pero lo que ganamos en Cristo es eterno.

2. Vivimos muriendo

Gálatas 2:20 dice: “Con Cristo estoy juntamente crucificado, y ya no vivo yo, mas vive Cristo en mí...”

Aquí hay otra santa paradoja.

Pablo dice: “Estoy crucificado”. Eso significa que la vida vieja, la vida gobernada por el pecado, el yo, el orgullo y la carne, ha sido puesta a muerte con Cristo.

Pero luego Pablo dice: “Ya no vivo yo, mas vive Cristo en mí”.

¿Cómo puede vivir un hombre crucificado?

Porque la vida cristiana no es simplemente una vida vieja mejorada. Es la vida de Cristo dentro de nosotros.

Romanos 6:4 dice: “Porque somos sepultados juntamente con él para muerte por el bautismo, a fin de que como Cristo resucitó de los muertos... así también nosotros andemos en vida nueva.”

Gálatas dice que estamos crucificados con Cristo. Romanos dice que somos sepultados con Cristo. Ambos enseñan la misma verdad: la vida vieja debe morir, y la vida nueva viene por nuestra unión con el Cristo resucitado.

Jesús explicó esto a Nicodemo en Juan 3. Nicodemo era religioso, educado y respetado, pero Jesús le dijo que todavía necesitaba nacer de nuevo.

Esto es porque la carne solo puede producir carne. La religión humana, el esfuerzo humano y la sabiduría humana no pueden producir vida espiritual. Solo el Espíritu de Dios puede dar vida nueva.

Así que no vivimos verdaderamente protegiendo al viejo yo. Vivimos muriendo al pecado, muriendo al gobierno propio, y viviendo por fe en el Hijo de Dios.

El mundo dice: “Exprésate a ti mismo”.

Cristo dice: “Niégate a ti mismo”.

El mundo dice: “Sigue tu corazón”.

Cristo dice: “Sígueme”.

El mundo dice: “Vive para el presente”.

Cristo dice: “Muere al yo, y verdaderamente vivirás”.

3. Llegamos a ser libres rindiéndonos

Romanos 6:22 dice: “Mas ahora que habéis sido libertados del pecado y hechos siervos de Dios, tenéis por vuestro fruto la santificación, y como fin, la vida eterna.”

Esta es otra paradoja. Llegamos a ser libres al hacernos siervos de Dios.

El mundo piensa que la libertad significa hacer lo que uno quiere. Pero eso no es libertad. Eso es esclavitud al pecado, a la carne y al engaño.

Jesús dijo en Juan 8:36: “Así que, si el Hijo os libertare, seréis verdaderamente libres.”

La verdadera libertad no es libertad de Dios. La verdadera libertad es libertad del pecado para poder amar, obedecer y servir a Dios.

En el Antiguo Testamento había una hermosa ilustración de esta verdad. Un siervo podía ser liberado de su amo. Podía salir libre. Pero si amaba a su amo y quería quedarse, podía escoger voluntariamente permanecer con él. Su oreja era horadada como una marca de que pertenecía a su amo por amor, no por fuerza.

Esa es una imagen del creyente.

Cristo nos ha hecho libres del pecado. Pero ahora, por amor y gratitud, nos rendimos con gozo a Él. Decimos: “Señor, no quiero volver a mi vida vieja. Te pertenezco. Quiero servirte”.

No somos esclavos obligados. Somos siervos voluntarios.

Llegamos a ser libres al rendirnos a la autoridad, el amor, el cuidado y la voluntad de Dios.

Aplicación a nuestras vidas y ministerio

Los caminos de Dios son más altos que nuestros caminos.

Ganamos perdiendo. Vivimos muriendo. Llegamos a ser libres rindiéndonos.

Sus vecinos hindúes y musulmanes tal vez no entiendan esto hasta que Cristo les abra los ojos. El hombre natural no entiende las cosas de Dios. Hasta que una persona nace de nuevo, estas verdades pueden parecer necedad, debilidad o algo extraño.

Algunos pueden rechazarle. Algunos pueden burlarse de usted. Algunos pueden perseguirle. Algunos pueden tratarle con crueldad.

Pero esto es parte de la vida cristiana. Esto es parte del mensaje del evangelio que debemos explicar fielmente.

El mundo tal vez no quiera oír esta verdad, pero esto es exactamente lo que el mundo necesita. Los hombres y las mujeres necesitan ser convertidos de las tinieblas a la luz, de la mentira a la verdad, de la muerte a la vida.

El mundo dice: “Sube. Exáltate. Protege tu nombre. Pelea por tu lugar”.

Dios dice: “Baja. Humíllate. Pierde tu vida por Cristo. Muere al yo. Ríndete a Mí”.

Y a su debido tiempo, Dios levantará a Sus siervos de la manera correcta, en el tiempo correcto, para Su gloria.

Tome consuelo en esto: Dios no se ha olvidado de usted.

Él le ve.

Él ve a su familia.

Él ve a sus vecinos.

Él ve su sufrimiento.

Él ve su ministerio.

Él ve todo el mundo a la vez.

Nosotros no vemos todo.

Nosotros no entendemos todo.

Nosotros somos limitados.

Pero Dios es ilimitado en conocimiento, amor, sabiduría y gracia.

Así que descanse en la verdad de que usted sigue a un Salvador bueno, amoroso y resucitado.

Él sabe lo que está haciendo. Confíe en Él. Pierda su vida por Él. Muera al yo. Ríndase completamente.

Y descubrirá que Su paradoja no es confusión. Es vida.

