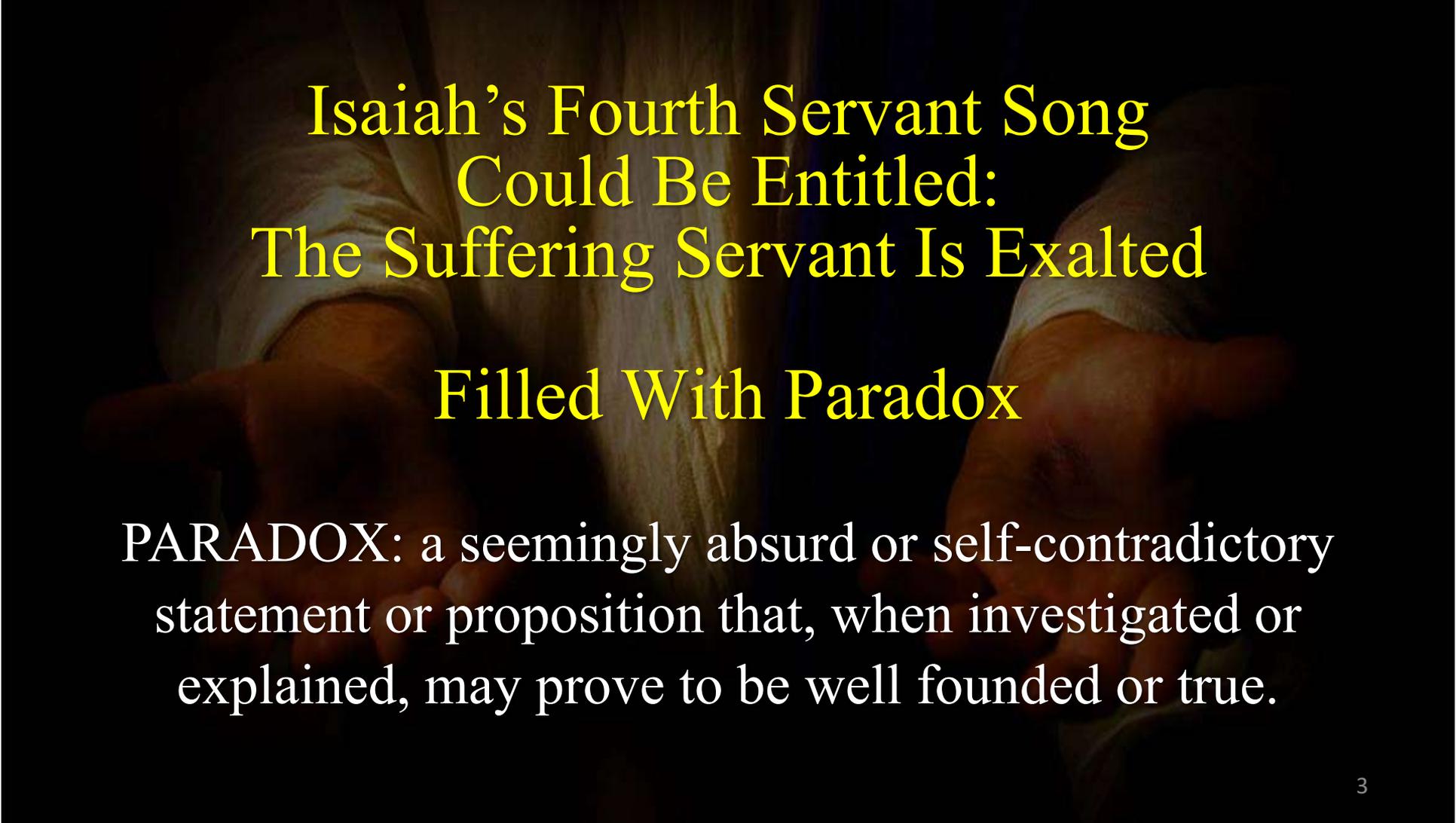




*“By His Wounds We Are
Healed!”*

Isaiah
by
Michelangelo
in the
Sistine Chapel





Isaiah's Fourth Servant Song
Could Be Entitled:
The Suffering Servant Is Exalted
Filled With Paradox

PARADOX: a seemingly absurd or self-contradictory statement or proposition that, when investigated or explained, may prove to be well founded or true.

The Song Begins - Isaiah 52:13-15

- The “*servant will act wisely*” and thus he prospers.
- He “*will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.*”
- But! There will be a time when his appearance is so appalling and disfigured that he barely looks human.
- Through this suffering, He will (**sprinkle, cleanse, startle**) many nations and shut the mouths of kings. (Septuagint “*so will many nations marvel at him*”)
- Those who did not previously know of God’s work through the servant will understand his triumph.

Isaiah's First Readers Must Have Had As More Questions Than They Had Answers.

- Who could experience such suffering and rejection and still emerge victorious, cleansing The nations?
- How could any person intercede for the sins of others by his own death?
- The song begins with the paradox of glorious success and horrible disfigurement. In actuality, the glorious will both precede and succeed the horrible.

This Paradoxical Theme Became A Song Of The Early Church.

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:6-11

Christians Must Embrace This Concept

1 Corinthians 1:27 (NIV)

But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NIV)

That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

“The Arm of the Lord”

- A symbol of strength in the Old Testament.

Psalm 118:15-16 (NLT2)

Songs of joy and victory are sung in the camp of the godly.

The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things! The strong right arm of the LORD is raised in triumph. The strong right arm of the LORD has done glorious things!

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save...

Isaiah 59:1 (NIV)

In Isaiah 53:1-3, The Arm Of The Lord Is Seen In Weakness Rather Than Strength.

- It is like a tender shoot, or a root out of dry ground.
- The one revealing the arm of the Lord had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
- He will be despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.
- There will be a time when people will not even want to look at him.

We Don't Know What Jesus Looked Like. Which Do You Think Is More Accurate?



OR



OR



John 1:10-13 (NLT2)

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

Isaiah 53:4-6

The Paradoxes Continue

- In his weakness, “*it was our weaknesses he carried.*”
“*it was our sorrows that weighed him down.*”
- Popular opinion – God was punishing him for his sins.
- BUT NO! *He was pierced for our rebellion, (The mighty “arm of the Lord” is) crushed for our sins. He was whipped so we could be healed.*
- We rebelled! *All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all.*

This Suffering Servant Confused First Century Jews

- They were expecting the mighty “*arm of the Lord.*”
- The “arm” that led them out of Egypt, that parted the Red Sea, engulfed Egypt’s arm and leveled the walls of Jericho.
- They were not expecting a Messiah who was “*gentle and humble in heart.*”
- They were expecting a Messiah who not only could but would call down “*twelve legions of angels.*”

That Was God's Plan.

*But he was pierced
for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment
that brought us peace was upon him,
and by his wounds we are healed.*

Isaiah 53:5 (NIV)

Healed Of Our Wounds By Someone Else's Wounds

1 Corinthians 1:18-19 (NLT2)

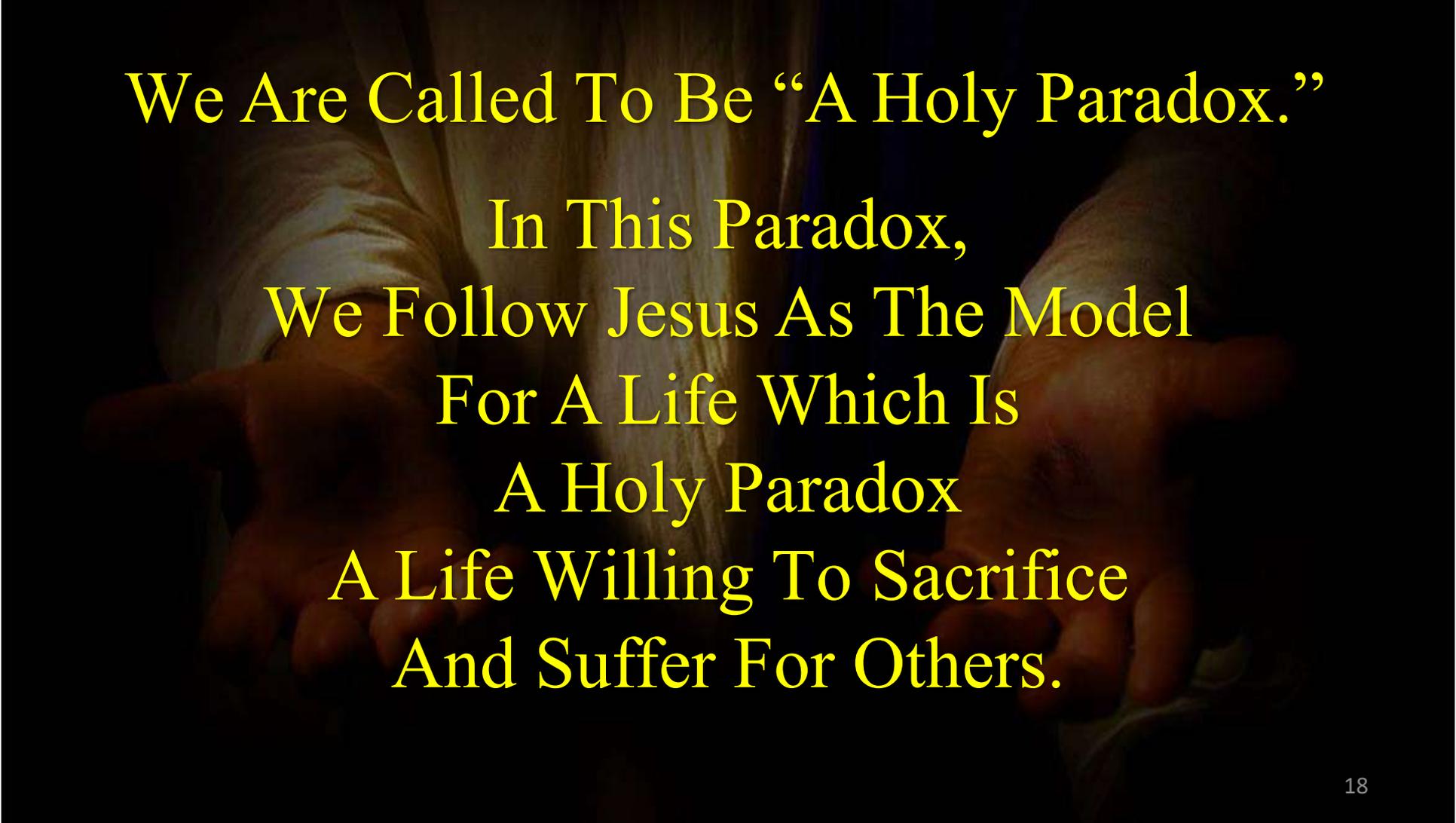
The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. As the Scriptures say, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent."

“A Wonderful Exchange”

“That is the mystery which is rich in divine grace to sinners: wherein by a wonderful exchange our sins are no longer ours but Christ’s and the righteousness of Christ not Christ’s but ours. He has emptied Himself of His righteousness that He might clothe us with it, and fill us with it. And He has taken our evils upon Himself that He might deliver us from them... in the same manner as He grieved and suffered in our sins, and was confounded, in the same manner we rejoice and glory in His righteousness.” – Martin Luther



In Coming Lessons
We Will Explore What
“By His Wounds We Are Healed?”

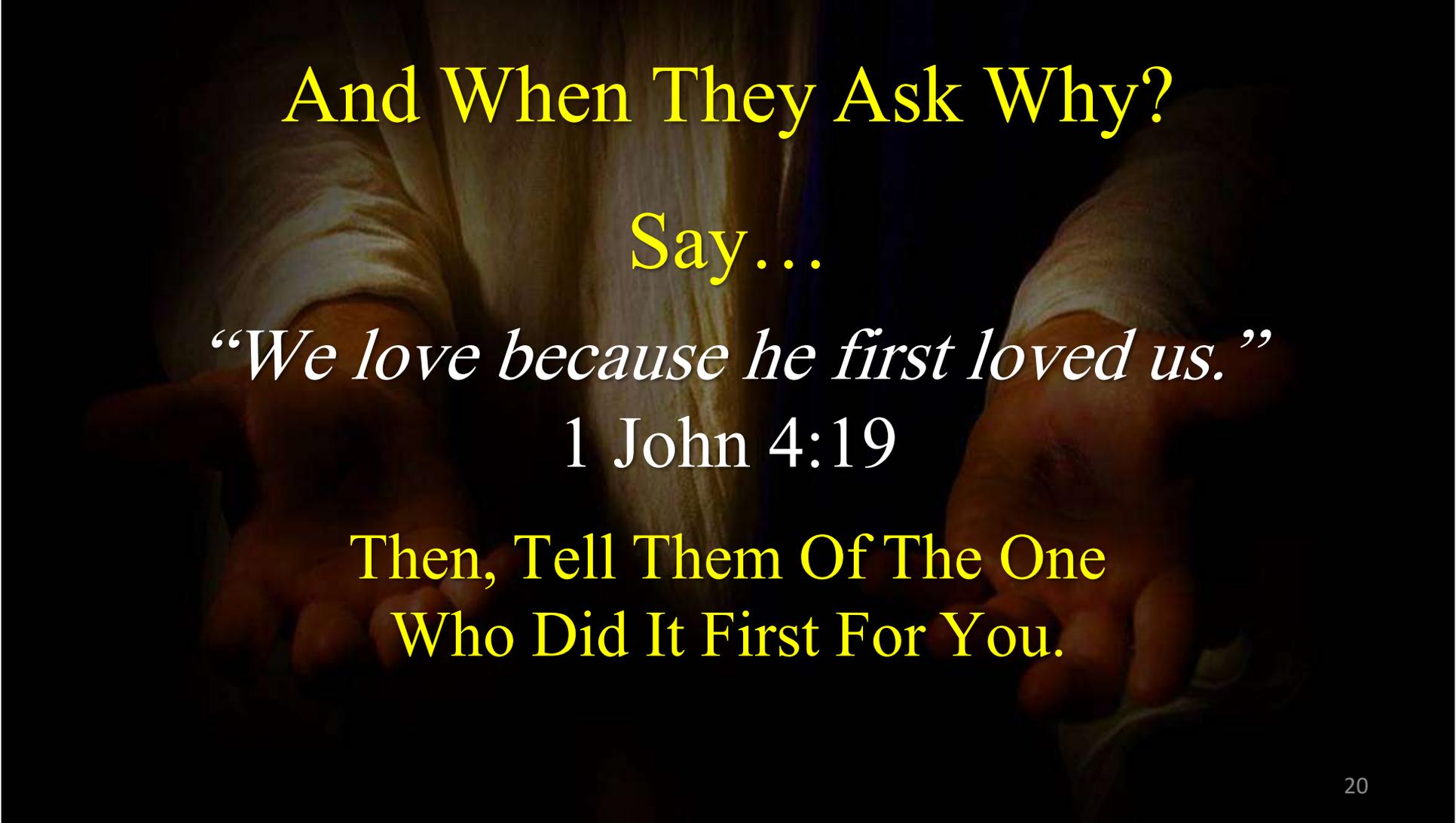
A group of people, seen from the chest up, are holding hands in a circle. They are wearing light-colored, possibly white, shirts. The background is dark, making the hands and shirts stand out. The overall mood is one of solidarity and community.

We Are Called To Be “A Holy Paradox.”

In This Paradox,
We Follow Jesus As The Model
For A Life Which Is
A Holy Paradox
A Life Willing To Sacrifice
And Suffer For Others.

A Holy Paradox Life Means

- Turning The Other Cheek
- Going The Extra Mile
- Returning Blessing For Cursing
- Giving The Widow's Mite
- Praying For Our Enemies
- Loving The Unlovely
- Laying Down Our Lives For Others



And When They Ask Why?

Say...

“We love because he first loved us.”

1 John 4:19

Then, Tell Them Of The One
Who Did It First For You.