

Because the demands of Jesus are so great upon His disciples, it is no wonder that some show concerned caution before becoming involved. After all, just exactly Who Is Jesus that He can make such demands upon our lives?

There is no doubt that Jesus' apostles believed that He was more than just an ordinary man. The apostle Paul claimed that in Jesus "all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Colossians 2:9). Since Paul wrote in Greek, it is interesting to note that the word translated "Deity" comes from the Greek work "Theoteis." Some translations render it "Godhead" and it is found in other verses which describe Almighty God. (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20) In other words, everything that makes God God was found in the fleshly body of Jesus. Paul believed that Jesus was actually "God in the Flesh."

The apostle John also reflected this belief. In the gospel of John, chapter 1, verses 1-3, he wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." Then, in verse 14 he added: "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us..." The context of this chapter makes it clear that John is describing Jesus. John calls Him "the Word." In verses 1-3 John claims that none of creation could have occurred without the work of "the Word" (who is Jesus). But he also claims that "the Word WAS God" and that "the Word became flesh." Like Paul, John believed that Jesus was actually "God in the Flesh."

Jesus never denied His deity. Many of His actions were considered to be blasphemous by His earthly contemporaries. Everybody knew that only God can forgive sins. Yet, in Mark 2:5 Jesus said to a paralytic man, "My son, your sins are forgiven." In doing this, Jesus exercised a prerogative reserved only for God. He allowed people to "Worship" Him on numerous occasions (John 9:38; Matthew 14:33; Matthew 8:2; 9:18; 15:25; 18:26; 20:20; 28:9) even though the Law of Moses was clear that only Jehovah God was to be worshipped (Exodus 34:14; see also Matthew 4:10; Acts 10:25-26; Revelation 22:8-9). In doing this, Jesus was acknowledging His deity. He infuriated people in John 8:56-59 when He referred to Himself with the revered "I AM" title of Jehovah from Exodus 3:14. The people picked up stones to throw at Him because they knew that He was identifying Himself with Jehovah. Indeed, Jesus made His identity clear.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah foretold the birth of a child who would be called "Mighty God" and "Eternal Father" (Isaiah 9:6). He also prophesied of a virgin who would bear a son and would "call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). The apostle Matthew revealed that Jesus was the fulfillment of these prophesies, then went on to explain that "Immanuel" means "God with us." (Matthew 1:23) You see, the prophets foretold that God would become flesh; Jesus maintained that He was "God in the Flesh"; and the apostles of the early church believed and taught that Jesus was "God in the Flesh."

Jesus is no ordinary person. This is why He can make such amazing demands on our lives. For Jesus to require that we make Him # 1 in our lives is the equivalent of requiring us to make God # 1 in our lives; because Jesus IS God!

This is not an easy concept to believe. Perhaps we should give some reasons why one might be inclined to believe such a thing as this. And we shall, in Bible Talk # 104.

