

How a being can be powerless and yet dependent upon itself? (John 5:19)

John 5:19-20

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

NKJV

First, we need to validate the assumptions in this question. Was indeed Jesus powerless?

In an earlier message, the same person asked a question about this verse:

John 10:18

No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

NKJV

In this verse we can see that Jesus has all power and authority. So since he has all power, and yet in John 5:19 he says that he is dependant upon the Father – how can that be? We know that scripture is the word of God and does not contradict itself, therefore there must an answer to this question. Let's look at Philippians 2:

Phil 2:5-11

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

NKJV

This verse tells us many things. First, it tells us that Jesus is equal to God in verses 5-6. How could any man be God's equal? Of course this is not possible – scripture is clearly stating that Jesus is God. So how could He be dependant upon anybody?

We need to read on further – in verse 7 we see that he made himself of no reputation – note he started as God, and made himself of no reputation, or in other words put aside use of His power and authority as God. This is confirmed in 1 Timothy:

1 Tim 3:16

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness:

God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the

Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

NKJV

This says that Jesus “without controversy” or without doubt, was God manifested in the flesh. Yet, he humbled himself to become of no reputation. Then he went further in His voluntary submission to God the father:

Phil 2:8

He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

NKJV

God could not do this without the universe spinning out of control. But in this case, there are three persons in the trinity – three persons, one God. God the Father was on the throne, and Jesus humbled himself, voluntarily placing himself under the authority of the father.

So we see here that God the Son made himself dependant upon God the father, even though he had all power and authority. Why would he do this?

John 3:16-19

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

NKJV

Jesus was God manifest in the flesh, and came to earth as a man, making himself of no reputation, humbling himself in voluntary obedience to the father, obedience unto death out of His love for us, that He might pay the price for our sins.

John 15:13-14 13

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

NKJV

Tom Smith

smithtj.geo@yahoo.com

<http://discern.athome.to>

October 25, 2003