

# THE CHRIST OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

1

2

3

90 CHRISTIAN THINKERS DEBATE 41 QUESTIONS  
ON THE PERSON OF CHRIST

4

5

Bill Grover, Th.D.

6

NEW HARBOR PRESS

7

RAPID CITY, SD

8

1 Copyright © 2021 by Bill Grover..

2 All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distrib-  
3 uted or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying,  
4 recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior  
5 written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations  
6 embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permit-  
7 ted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher, ad-  
8 dressed "Attention: Permissions Coordinator," at the address below.

9 Grover/New Harbor Press  
10 1601 Mt. Rushmore Rd., Ste 3288  
11 Rapid City, SD 57701  
12 [www.NewHarborPress](http://www.NewHarborPress)

13 Ordering Information:

14 Quantity sales. Special discounts are available on quantity purchases by  
15 corporations, associations, and others. For details, contact the "Special Sales  
16 Department" at the address above.

17 The Christ of Christian Doctrine / Bill Grover. -- 1st ed.  
18 ISBN 978-1-63357-381-9

# CONTENTS

1

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CHRIST'S ROLE IN THE TRINITY</b> .....	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Does the name 'Son of God' indicate an eternal role subordination?.....	7	6
2. Is belief in the eternal role subordination of the Son a denial of Homoousios (oneness of nature)? .....	9	8
3. Are there three faculties of will in God?.....	10	9
4. Are Trinal relationships in the economic Trinity (God acting in creation) those in the immanent Trinity (God in himself)?.....	13	12
5. Are operations of the Trinity inseparable? .....	15	13
6. Is the Covenant of Redemption Biblical?.....	17	14
7. If Christ is eternally begotten, must that require him to be eternally role subordinate? .....	18	16
8. As Christ was sent by the Father, does that require Christ to be eternally role subordinate to the Father? .....	20	19
9. As it is the Father who predestines, does that mean that the Son is eternally role subordinate? .....	22	22

1	10. As the Father creates through the Son, does	
2	that mean that the Son is eternally role subordinate? ....	23
3	11. As the Son is at the right hand of power or	
4	at the right hand of God, does that mean that	
5	the Son is of a lower rank in authority? .....	24
6	<b>CHRIST IN SUBORDINATE SCRIPTURE .....</b>	<b>27</b>
7	12. John 5:18,19. The Son can do only what	
8	he sees the Father doing.....	27
9	13. John 6:38, Christ came from Heaven to do	
10	the Father's will. ....	29
11	14. John 14:28. The Father is greater than the Son. ....	30
12	15. 1 Corinthians 11:3. God is the authority	
13	over Christ.....	32
14	16. 1 Corinthians 15:28. The Son will be	
15	subject to God.....	34
16	17. Galatians 4:4,5. When the right time had	
17	come, God sent his Son, born of a woman to	
18	redeem sinners.....	37
19	18. Ephesians 1:3-5. The Father chose us in	
20	Christ before creation and he predestined us. ....	38
21	19. Philippians 2:6. While in God's nature,	
22	Christ did not grasp at being God's equal. ....	40
23	20. Hebrews 5:8,9. Even though he is God's Son,	
24	by suffering he learned to obey, and he became	
25	the source of our salvation.....	43
26	<b>CHRIST IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY.....</b>	<b>47</b>

21. Do the Nicene experts Athanasius and Hilary teach the eternal role subordination of Christ? .....	47	1	2
22. Is Cyril of Alexandria correct that Christ does not act distinctly and differently through his two natures? .....	50	3	4
23. Does Nestorius teach that Christ is two persons?.....	53	6	7
24. Is Chalcedon’s two nature doctrine congruent with functional kenoticism (which teaches that Christ lost, temporally, the use of some divine attributes)? .....	56	8	9
25. Does Constantinople (680-681) err in requiring the belief of two wills in Christ?.....	59	10	11
26. Should Leonitius of Byzantium’s doctrine of enhypostasia (that it, that the divine nature personalized humanity) be rejected?.....	61	12	13
27. Does Augustine or Calvin teach the eternal role subordination of the Son? .....	63	14	15
28. Does Warfield or Charles Hodge teach the eternal role subordination of the Son?.....	66	16	17
29. Is Hodge correct that Christ could have sinned (but did not!)? .....	68	18	19
30. Is the Reformed view on the communication of attributes to be preferred over the Lutheran?.....	70	20	21
<b>CHRIST IN FUNCTIONAL KENOTICISM.....</b>	<b>73</b>	21	22
31. Can God change or give up the use of his divine attributes? .....	73	23	24
		25	26
		27	28

1	32. Does teaching that Christ gave up some divine	
2	powers to incarnate, best prevent ascribing to	
3	Christ a split personality? .....	76
4	33. Is functional kenoticism's unifying Christ	
5	a tendency toward Monophysitism (one nature)? .....	78
6	34. Can Christ possess both divine omni attributes	
7	and human attributes?.....	80
8	35. Was the Son, in his Divine nature, ignorant	
9	of some things while on earth? .....	83
10	36. Was Christ's divine nature confined in a body?.....	85
11	37. Did Christ's divine nature suffer? .....	86
12	38. Does Philippians 2:7 teach that as God Christ	
13	gave up any attribute or the use of one? .....	87
14	39. Did Christ's exaltation restore Christ's	
15	use of divine attributes? .....	88
16	40. Is God limiting himself in creation and	
17	providence corollary to Christ emptying himself?.....	90
18	41. Is Kryptic (also spelled with a 'C') Christology	
19	a better option than Kenotic Christology? .....	91
20	<b>WORKS CITED .....</b>	<b>93</b>

# PREFACE

1

In Theology the work of Christ is often discussed distinctly from the Person of Christ. Obviously, the former alludes to His salvific work on our behalf. The latter is in regard to His divinity and humanity, how these two natures relate in the one Person, and our Lord's place in the Trinity. That is the subject matter here.

I am hoping that this little book will be informative to some who are zealous to understand the Person of our Savior. This book presents the two major views on forty-one issues regarding the Person of Christ about which noted Christian theologians disagree. Each issue is stated in question format. The two positions on each question are referenced under 'YES' and 'NO' responses. Opinions by well-known, modern and historical theologians, and often their argumentation and interaction with their arguments as well, are noted. Every response by a theologian is documented with in text referencing. I believe the Bible to be inerrant and authoritative in its originals, but I observe that even skilled, evangelical interpreters frequently do not agree on the meaning of the Bible.

This disagreement is so very evident in the contradictory understandings of the Person of Christ as attested to by the varied opinions on forty-one issues discussed herein. I affirm that my conviction, which will sometimes be evident, is that Son in his divinity is not eternally role subordinate to the Father.

**BILL GROVER**

1 Jesus' subordination to the Father occurs only in His human-  
2 ity I believe. Perhaps, I'm wrong. So I am also praying that  
3 Christ will forgive any error I may have made on this or in any  
4 other issue in writing this book. Please find full referencing  
5 information in Works Cited. Please also NOTE: In none of the  
6 forty-one questions am I intending to infer that Jesus Christ is  
7 not fully God and fully man in one Person.



# INTRODUCTION

Defining the Person of Christ would seem to be a priority as Christ is the center of the Christian Faith. Yet despite the 4th through the 7th century ecumenical creeds which were purposed to achieve basic unity of belief about our Lord-- opinions about Jesus' relationship to the Father and the two natures of his person-- are debated by those who are considered evangelical in doctrine.

This book is intended to provide a review of forty -one of the issues argued in evangelical (mostly) theological literature regarding the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. This volume discusses Christ's position in four areas: (1) in the Trinity, (2) in Biblical texts said by some to eternally role subordinate Him to the Father, (3) in the history of theology, and (4) in functional kenoticism. Issues discussed in these areas will cover a total of forty-one questions.

For each question opinions and arguments for both a 'yes' answer and a 'no' answer from a number of sources and scholars will be stated and the strength of some positions will be briefly evaluated. Hopefully this will help to resolve what could be perceived as an inadequacy in the coverage of the doctrine

1 of Christ's Person in popular textbooks in Christian theology.  
2 By "inadequacy" is meant the considerable disagreement be-  
3 tween authors of popular books on systematic theology that  
4 exists and the common lack by such writers to critically in-  
5 teract with the opinions of others with whom they disagree.

6 To illustrate this perceived inadequacy several examples will  
7 suffice. Berkhof believes that the personal ontological attri-  
8 bute of the Son is that the Son is eternally generated (that is,  
9 that the Father in eternity --not in time-- provides the Son with  
10 personal subsistence). Berkhof says that means the Father  
11 is 'first' and that the begetting relationship affects authority  
12 and submission in the Trinity wherein the personal subsis-  
13 tence of the Son is made subordinate to the Father (Systematic  
14 Theology, 88,89)

15 But Erickson not only does not endorse the doctrine of eternal  
16 generation, he also argues that unequal roles in the economic  
17 Trinity (how God relates to the universe) equates to unequal  
18 essences (Christian Theology,308). That contradicts Berkhof's  
19 subordination of the Son.

20 Grudem asserts that some acts and experiences of Christ are  
21 done by Jesus' human nature but not by his divine nature.  
22 (Systematic Theology, 560-562). However, Erickson instead in-  
23 sists that Jesus' natures did not function independently and  
24 that he did not exercise his deity at times and his humanity  
25 at other times." (Christian Theology ,670). One wonders then  
26 if that would mean that God in Christ fell asleep in a boat in  
27 Mark4:38 and that man in Christ holds the universe together  
28 in Colossians 1:17.

It should have become clear to some that a major cause of 1  
contention among theologians is whether some scriptural 2  
texts refer only to the experiences and acts of Christ in one 3  
nature. That point was debated 1500 plus years ago by Cyril vs 4  
Nestorius. And one sees it still argued between theologians to- 5  
day. As will be shown in chapter five, some functional kenoti- 6  
cists appear to posit the limitations of Christ in the one active 7  
nature of Christ instead of distinguishing what Jesus distinct- 8  
ly does in each nature. 9

Grudem expresses the opinion that Christ incarnate did not 10  
empty himself of any divine powers when he was on earth 11  
(Systematic Theology 550,551), and Berkhof opines that Christ 12  
incarnate (that is, Christ's divine nature) remained infinite 13  
(Systematic Theology 334). To these theologians, while the hu- 14  
man nature is limited, the divine is unlimited. But Erickson 15  
holds that by taking on human nature Christ's divine na- 16  
ture no longer experienced omnipresence or omniscience. 17  
(Christian Theology,670) 18

Such disagreement exemplified above only constitutes part of 19  
the problem. The other issue is that it is not uncommon for 20  
theologians to not even reference views other than theirs 21  
about the Person of Christ and energetically interacting with 22  
the evidence supporting those views is rarely ever seen. An 23  
example of this is Berkhof's assertion that it was impossible 24  
for Jesus to sin. (Systematic Theology, 318) However, this theo- 25  
logian does not deal with the contrary opinion that as Christ 26  
was man, it must have been possible for him to sin. (Hodge, 27  
Systematic Theology,457). 28



# **CHRIST'S ROLE IN THE TRINITY**

2

3

Since the 1970s, in America, the question of the eternal role subordination of God the Son to the Father has been increasingly prevalent in the discussions concerning relationships in the Trinity. The two basic positions debated among Evangelicals are that the eternal Son while essentially equal to the Father is eternally subordinate in authority and is obedient to the Father. The contrary view is the position that the Persons in the Trinity are equal in both nature and authority.

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

## **1. Does the name 'Son of God' indicate an eternal role subordination?**

12

13

Scripture seems to apply the term 'Son of God' to Christ with several connotations: to indicate a relationship to the Father (John 1:14,18; Galatians 4:4); to indicate Christ's deity (John 5:18; Hebrews 1); in an official sense (Matthew 27:40; Ephesians 1:3); and, as in reference to his human nature (Luke 1:32,35). The issue here is whether if Christ is 'Son' to the Father, that means he is obedient to the Father.

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

1 YES.

2 Kitano and Grudem supply arguments that 'Son of God'  
3 means subordinate to the Father. Kitano, in a section entitled  
4 'Eternal Sonship' reasons that as Ephesians 1:4-6 states that  
5 the Son is predestined, that means he is eternally subordi-  
6 nate. (Kitano, The Eternal Relational Subordination of the  
7 Son to the Father,105,106). Grudem bases his view on texts as  
8 John 6:37,38 and 8:28,29 where the obedience of Christ to the  
9 Father is evident, and elsewhere Grudem insists that unless  
10 the Son is eternally role subordinate to the Father, the Trinity  
11 has not existed! (Biblical Evidence for the Eternal Submission  
12 of the Son to the Father, 229; Systematic Theology, 251).

13 NO.

14 However, Gregory of Nazianzus in his Fourth Theological  
15 Oration on the Son opines that Christ is called 'Son' because his  
16 essence is identical to the Father's. (Fourth Theological Oration:  
17 On the Son,20) Likewise, both Athanasius and Augustine state  
18 that Christ is the only Son because he is begotten (Athanasius  
19 De Decritis 3.9; Augustine on the Trinity 8.6) (which results in  
20 an equality of essence). The understanding expressed by these  
21 fathers does not attribute subordination to the title 'Son of  
22 God.' Neither does Warfield who writes that equality, not sub-  
23 ordination, is the meaning of 'Son of God.' (Biblical Doctrines,  
24 163) Bess provides data from the Old Testament as 2 Chronicles  
25 25:13 and Nehemiah 3:31 to show that 'son of' indicates mem-  
26 bership in a group not subordination. (The Term 'Son of God' in  
27 the Light of Old Testament Idiom, 17-24) And Erikson, agree-  
28 ing with Warfield and Bess, reminds his readers of John 5:18

where 'Son' is taken to mean equality. (Who's Tampering with the Trinity? 116) 1  
2

With due respect to Grudem and Kitano, the strength of the arguments that 'Son of God' means 'subordinate to God' seems not convincing. How similar phrases are used in the Old Testament surely has a place in understanding phrases in the New Testament. And the Jews' understanding of Jesus' claim of being God's Son in John deserves notice as does the interpretation of the title in the church fathers. That the work of Christ as redeemer is predestined seems not a compelling argument by Kitano as redemption is a result of the Incarnation after the Logos adding humanity to his Person. And to view human relationships wherein a son may obey a father as analogous to immanent relations among the Persons in God seems a stretch. 3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15

**2. Is belief in the eternal role subordination of the Son a denial of Homoousios (oneness of nature)?** 16  
17

YES. 18

Giles argues that a hierarchy among the Trinal Persons would require multiple wills in God which, he say, is classical Tritheism. (Giles, Jesus and the Father, 210). Mc Call believes that were the Son to have the property of subordination which the Father does not, then the Son is of an essence different from that of the Father's.(Which Trinity?, Whose Monotheism?, 179). Citing Agatho and Anselm as authorities, Jowers asserts that there is only one power and one will in God. Therefore, the Father cannot command the Son and 19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

1 the Son cannot obey. (The Inconceivability of Subordination  
2 in a Simple God, 384,385,295,400). Erickson also claims that  
3 were there personal properties which distinguish the Persons  
4 in God, then there are different essences among the Persons  
5 (Who's Tampering, 173).

6 NO.

7 However, others deny that postulating multiple wills in God  
8 is tritheism and that affirming that each Person in God has  
9 personal qualities is denying God's unity. Countering the ar-  
10 gument that affirming personal properties in the Father and  
11 the Son is not orthodox, Gons and Naselli (An Examination of  
12 Three Recent Philosophical Arguments against Hierarchy in  
13 the Immanent Trinity,199) remind their readers that the fa-  
14 thers taught that the personal property of the Father is that  
15 he generates and that the personal property of the Son is that  
16 he is generated. Ware denies that believing the Persons in God  
17 possess personal properties distinctly from the properties of  
18 the divine essence affirms a belief that there are differences  
19 in the divine nature. (One God in Three Persons,247). As the  
20 eternal generation dogma has ecumenical status in the early  
21 creeds, it seems reasonable to admit that there may be per-  
22 sonal properties which distinguish the Trinal Persons.

23 **3. Are there three faculties of will in God?**

24 YES.

25 This issue was raised in Q 2 and there Jowers argues that as  
26 the nature of God is simple, God has only one faculty of will.



The divine simplicity has been understood as “being without parts” and being indivisible or that God’s essence is without composition (Geisler, Systematic Theology, vol Two,39,54; Frame, The Doctrine of God, 225).

However, those Evangelicals asserting multiple wills in God, do not see that assertion as denying the divine simplicity. Strong believes that the tri personality of the divine nature means that there are three consciousnesses and three wills in God. (Strong, Systematic Theology, 326). Claunch admits that belief in the eternal role subordination of the Son commits to three distinct wills in the Trinity which is contrary to both Patristic and Reformed dogma, but those as Ware and Grudem posit will in the Person not in the divine nature. (One God in Three Persons, 88).

Horrell, like Strong, endorses a view of what he calls a “Social Trinity’ in which there are three different centers of consciousness and three wills in God. He points out as evidence for his position that all three Persons manifest intelligence and emotion in Scripture. Horrell alludes to texts as Romans 8:14, John 17:25, and John 5:36,37 to evidence his three wills view. (Complementarian Trinitarianism, 354,355,359) Surprisingly, as the three wills in God tenet is associated with those who affirm an eternal hierarchy of authority in God, which he denies, Erickson is open to the theory that there are three wills in God (Whose Tampering?, 217) .

NO.

1 Seemingly, unlike Erickson, in a more logical manner for those  
2 rejecting the doctrine of the eternal role subordination of the  
3 Son, others deny that there are three wills in God. Cary, for  
4 example, building his case on what he deems to be Nicene  
5 Theology, asserts that the three Trinal Persons work with  
6 only one will and so "...one Person's will cannot be subjected to  
7 another's." (The New Evangelical Subordinationism, 5,6) Giles  
8 thinks that were each Person in God to have his own will,  
9 then the "divine unity is breached." (Jesus and The Father, 10).  
10 However, some may feel that McKinley's argument that were  
11 God to have three wills, discord among the Persons could re-  
12 sult is unreasonable. (A Model of Jesus Christ's Two Wills in  
13 View of Theology Proper and Anthropology, 80). The intel-  
14 ligence of God would not seem to allow division among the  
15 Persons.

16 It is not at all difficult to demonstrate that the early church  
17 fathers taught that there is only one will in God. In Book II  
18 of his Against Eunomius, Gregory of Nyssa contends that  
19 Eunomius' doctrine that the Son's nature was adapted to obe-  
20 dience is "stupid" because the Son's nature instead does not al-  
21 low him to obey or disobey. Thus will is thought by Gregory  
22 to inhere in nature not in Person. (2.11) Gregory of Nazianzus  
23 in his Theological Orations insists that "...the Son cannot have  
24 a special will of his own" because "as we have one Godhead,  
25 so we have one will." (12) John of Damascus is emphatic in re-  
26 peatedly saying that there is only one power, one will, and one  
27 authority in God (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, VIII). And  
28 Augustine denies that the Father does what he wills and the

Son does what he wills because as God has only one nature, he also has only one will. (Sermon to the Catechumens,4)

Whether each Trinal Persons has a will somehow distinct from the Others seems not to establish a strong case that in eternity the Son submits his will to that of the Father's. It only makes that seemingly possible- not necessary. Some, in fact, might see texts as Philippians 2:8 and Hebrews 5:8 as indicating that the Son initiated his obedience to the Father only after incarnating.

**4. Are Trinal relationships in the economic Trinity (God acting in creation) those in the immanent Trinity (God in himself)?**

YES.

Rahner defines that the economic Trinity is "The divine persons as they are revealed and act in salvation history" whereas the immanent Trinity is "The divine persons with respect to one another," and Rahner further believes that "The 'economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity.'"(The Trinity, 1 ,2,23) Torrance argues for the same tenet and asserts that were the economic Trinity not the ontological Trinity, then "...we human beings are left without hope and can have no part in God's saving activity in Christ." (The Christian Doctrine of God, 197) Torrance thinks that the coactivity between the Father and the Son in the economic Trinity is a reflection of the way it is in the ontological Trinity. (198)

1 Dahms asserts that were Christ's submission on earth not  
2 reflective of eternal states, then Christ "misrepresents deity.  
3 (The Subordination of the Son, 364). Shillaker likewise states  
4 that "The God who is known in the economy of salvation cor-  
5 responds to the what God actually is" (The New Evangelical  
6 Subordinationism, 296,297).

7 More specifically, Horrell asserts that Christ's obedience to  
8 the Father in the economic history reflects in some sense his  
9 eternal relationship with the Father. (The New Evangelical  
10 Subordinationism,357).

11 NO.

12 However, many others posit the obedience of Christ to the  
13 Father only in his humanity not in his divine nature. Augustine  
14 speaks quite a bit regarding that in his "On the Trinity." This fa-  
15 ther explains that some things in Scripture relate to Christ as  
16 God and other things to Christ as man. (1.11.22) As God, Christ  
17 is equal to the Father, but as man he is not. (2.1.3) Augustine, in  
18 fact, asserts that were Christ not equal with the Father "in all  
19 things," then he is not equal at all! (6.3.5) Were Augustine right,  
20 the obedience of Christ incarnate would not be a reflection  
21 of relationships in the immanent Trinity. This same division  
22 between how Christ acts and relates to the Father as man and  
23 how Christ acts and relates to the Father as God is seen in the  
24 Damascene's teaching in his Exposition of the Orthodox Faith.  
25 As Christ has two natures it follows that he has two wills and  
26 two energies, and only in his humanity is he said to be obedi-  
27 ent (XIV).

Moderns too as Giles and Jowers take the same position. `The 1  
 former states that “The limitations the Son gladly assumed for 2  
 our salvation must not be read back into the immanent Trinity. 3  
 (Jesus and the Father, 256) While Giles does not exemplify his 4  
 point, I suppose he means that as Christ’s humanity was ig- 5  
 norant, mutable, and mortal, that does not mean that in God, 6  
 the Son has those limitations. Likewise, Jowers points out that 7  
 Christ slept, wept, grew, and died, but that these cannot be 8  
 said to be reflective of his divine nature (The Inconceivability, 9  
 402). Also, Oliphint opines that we should not posit all charac- 10  
 teristics of the economic Trinity onto the ontological Godhead 11  
 (Simplicity, Tri Unity, and the Incomprehensibility of God, 12  
 234). 13

**5. Are operations of the Trinity inseparable? 14**

YES. 15

Several who reject the doctrine of Christ’s eternal role subor- 16  
 dination to the Father agree that if one member of the Trinity 17  
 acts, that is the action of all three Persons. Jowers believes that 18  
 because each Trinal Person shares the same divine will and 19  
 power no divine Person can perform any act that the other 20  
 Persons do not perform. (The Inconceivability ,385). 21

Giles argues from John 5:19 that as the Son can do nothing by 22  
 himself but does what he sees the Father doing, then whatever 23  
 the Father does the Son also does (The Eternal Generation of 24  
 the Son,223). Augustine in on the Trinity (1.4.7) expresses the 25  
 opinion that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit “work indivis- 26  
 ibly.” The corollary to this opinion, in Jowers understanding, 27

1 is that the Son as God cannot submit to his Father: not even  
2 during his earthly humiliation. (The Inconceivability,400).

3 Erickson argues biblically for his preference of the view that  
4 "...actions attributed to one Person of the Trinity should be  
5 understood as the joint decision of all three persons of the  
6 Trinity."(Who's Tampering, 123) He lists texts demonstrating  
7 that all the Persons choose believers, judge the world, and in-  
8 dwell believers.(124-126).

9 NO

10 But Grudem rebuts Erickson's biblical evidence with three ar-  
11 guments. First, the real issue, Grudem believes, is not how the  
12 Trinity relates to the world but how the Persons in the Trinity  
13 relate to each other and he argues that in Jesus' baptism only  
14 the Father spoke the words in Matthew 3:17, "This is my Son,  
15 whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Grudem believes,  
16 then, that God the Son, not the human nature of Christ only,  
17 was being baptized?! Second, Grudem points out that some ac-  
18 tions of the Trinity, like the sending of the Son, are "one-direc-  
19 tional" in that one Person initiates an activity.

20 Grudem exemplifies this concept with Christ suffering  
21 on the cross. To say that the Father also suffered is akin to  
22 Patripassionism which is heresy. And third, Grudem argues  
23 that there would be no difference between the trinal persons  
24 were there to be no difference in how they acted; "then we no  
25 longer have the doctrine of the Trinity" (Doctrinal Deviations  
26 in Evangelical-Feminists Arguments about the Trinity, 19-24).

**6. Is the Covenant of Redemption Biblical?**

1

YES.

2

Reformed theologians teach (1) a Covenant of works which was between God and Adam, (Berkhof, Systematic Theology,215), (2) a Covenant of Grace between God and fallen man, (272) and (3) a Covenant of Redemption ( also called Pactum Salutis) between the Father and the Son which was included in the eternal decree of God ( 265).

3

4

5

6

7

8

Berkhof evidences the last with Scriptures based on four arguments. First, Berkhof argues that Scriptures as Ephesians 1:4 (“He chose us in him before the creation of the world”) demonstrate that redemption was included in the eternal decree. Second, Berkhof states that John 6:38,39 show that Christ had a commission from the Father before his advent. Third, Berkhof states that as there are contracting parties, as in John 6 :38,39, there is a covenant. And fourth that Old Testament texts as Psalm 2:7-9 (see Acts13:33) “... connect up the notion of a covenant.” ( 266).

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

Grudem as well believes in the Covenant of Redemption between the trinal persons though he, unlike Berkhof adds the Holy Spirit to membership in the agreement. It was the Spirit’s part, among other things, to empower Christ to carry out his “ministry on earth.” Grudem, Systematic Theology, 519).

19

20

21

22

23

But this proposition that the Spirit helps Christ to carry out His ministry possibly needs clarifying given another issue in Grudem’s teaching namely that Jesus obeyed the Father in his

24

25

26

1 divine nature (249). However, Jesus' "ministry on earth" in-  
2 cluded obedience to the Father (John 6:38). Yet, if the incarnate  
3 Christ in his divinity retained the use of the attribute of om-  
4 nipotence, as Grudem insists (Systematic Theology,551) then  
5 obviously Christ as God needed not the Spirit's help to obey  
6 the Father. Unless, the obedience occurred only in the hu-  
7 manity, the Spirit's assistance would not seem to be required.

8 Warfield who thinks that while there is a subordination in  
9 the modes of operation in the Trinity, there may not be in the  
10 modes of subsistence. He believes that subordination in the  
11 former may not evidence subordination in the latter. Instead a  
12 Covenant wherein each Person in the Trinity agrees to assume  
13 a role in the saving of mankind may be the cause of the sub-  
14 mission of the Son to the Father (Biblical Doctrines,106,107).

15 NO.

16 However, Letham has reservations about the Covenant of  
17 Redemption. He argues that "it has not received confessional  
18 status, and that picturing "the Trinity as a divine committee"  
19 borders on tritheism. He also asserts that supposing judicial  
20 relations between the persons of the Trinity "...comes close to  
21 breaking the invisible union" (Does God Submit to the Father  
22 in the Invisible Unity of the Trinity?).

23 **7. If Christ is eternally begotten, must that require him to be**  
24 **eternally role subordinate?**

25 The eternal generation or begetting of the Son is established  
26 early in the ecumenical creeds. The Nicene-Constantinopolitan



of AD 325 and 381 reads that Christ is “begotten of the 1  
Father before all worlds.” And, both Chalcedon of 451 and 2  
Constantinople of 680 express the same dogma (Schaff, The 3  
Creeds of Christendom, vol II, 58,62.72). 4

Nevertheless, there are some, as Feinberg, who question the 5  
eternal generation of the Son. Feinberg advances the position 6  
that the tenet is unclear and is not required by Scripture (No 7  
One Like Him,488). Grudem for at least twenty-two years in 8  
print denied the eternal generation of the Son. (Systematic 9  
Theology, 254). But in 2016 at the annual meeting of the 10  
Evangelical Theological Society, he announced that he was 11  
wrong. Buswell also rejects the belief and suggests that “...we 12  
completely drop the doctrine of the eternal generation of the 13  
Son” (Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion, vol I,111). 14

But the question here is not whether the doctrine of the Son’s 15  
eternal begetting by the Father is correct; the question is, 16  
if the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, must the Son, 17  
therefore, be eternally role subordinate? 18

YES. 19

After presenting evidence for the doctrine, Dahms concluded 20  
that “The generation doctrine provides an ontological basis for 21  
the subordination of the Son” (The Generation of the Son,497). 22  
Swain and Allen opine that Christ is obedient because he is 23  
begotten (The Obedience of the Eternal Son, 81). Kitano argues 24  
on the basis of eternal generation that Son must be eternally 25  
role subordinate (The Eternal Relational Subordination of the 26  
Son, 98). And Starke too expresses the opinion that 27

1 eternal generation is the basis for the Son's eternal submission  
2 to the Father (Augustine and His Interpreters,156).

3 NO.

4 Giles and Crisp would disagree with Kitano. Giles who accepts  
5 eternal generation but denies that generation means subor-  
6 dination, declares that he knows of "no informed theologian  
7 who believes that the ontological subordination of the Son is  
8 historical orthodoxy"(The Eternal Generation of the Son,211).  
9 And Crisp, who devotes an entire chapter devoted to evincing  
10 eternal generation, offers the thesis that whereas the eternal  
11 begetting of the Son is a necessary differentiation in God, it  
12 was the mission of Christ to subordinate himself to the Father  
13 *in his human nature* in his earthly humiliation. (my italics-The  
14 Word Enfleshed, 17).

15 **8. As Christ was sent by the Father, does that require Christ**  
16 **to be eternally role subordinate to the Father?**

17 YES.

18 Cowan introduces an ancient Jewish sending practice into  
19 the issue of whether Christ is subordinate because he is sent.  
20 He cites the Midrash that "the sender is greater than the sent."  
21 (Cowan, I Always Do What Pleases Him, 49) Then he referenc-  
22 es texts in John and the Father-Son terminology to support his  
23 position as John 5:19 and 8:29 (50-53).

24 Cowan also alerts his readers to the reasons why several dis-  
25 agree with him, and he counters their arguments. In answer

to the argument that John 5:19 means a unity between the 1  
 Father and the Son, Cowan replies that one sent is clearly in 2  
 John subordinate to the sender. In reply to the argument that 3  
 the Father also defers to the Son as in John 5:27, he replies that 4  
 major commentators in John do not take that text to mean that 5  
 the Father subordinates himself to the Son. His response to the 6  
 argument that Christ's submission was a willing act of his own 7  
 authority, is that Jesus speaking of his authority in John 10:18 8  
 is not inconsistent with his subjection to the Father, and that 9  
 obedience does not mean a lack of unity in two wills (54-58). 10

Keener and Stark also opine that being sent means a subordi- 11  
 nate position to the one who sends. Keener, who thinks Jesus' 12  
 submission is eternal, believes that angels and apostles acted 13  
 on the authority of and were subject to the ones who sent 14  
 them, and such is analogous to Jesus being sent (Subordination 15  
 Within the Trinity 50,48). Starke bases his arguments on 16  
 Augustine in Tractate 20 to the effect that what the Son does 17  
 depends on what the Father does and never the reverse and 18  
 on Calvin in Institutes 1.13.25-26 where Calvin has the Father 19  
 as the beginning of deity and activity. Starke concludes that 20  
 these references establish that as he is sent, Jesus is subordi- 21  
 nate to the Father (Augustine and His Interpreters, 162-164). 22

In the minds of some eternal role subordinationists, it should 23  
 be noted, it was the Son, as God, who was sent according to 24  
 such as Galatians 4:4(Grudem, Biblical Evidence, 244). (See 17) 25

NO. 26

1 Others disagree. Erickson argues that we do not know why it  
2 was the Son who was sent and that perhaps his sending was  
3 a joint decision (Who's Tampering,187,208). It is Belleville's  
4 opinion that "...differing tasks do not imply a hierarchy "and  
5 that "Sending is the language of redemption, not Trinitarian  
6 hierarchy"(Son Christology in the New Testament, 61,73).

7 As referenced in 6, Warfield, suggests that any relational sub-  
8 ordination in the Son may be an effect of a covenant between  
9 the Trinal persons (Biblical Doctrines, 166). And, in regard to  
10 Galatians 4:4, Augustine believes the sending there refers to  
11 "the Word made flesh," and that the Son being sent does not  
12 mean that the Father is greater or that the Son is less (On the  
13 Trinity, 4.20.27-31).

14 **9. As it is the Father who predestines, does that mean that**  
15 **the Son is eternally role subordinate?**

16 YES.

17 Grudem repeatedly advances this argument. It is the Father,  
18 Grudem states, who chose us and predestined us in the Son  
19 according to texts as Romans 8:29 (Doctrinal Deviations, 35).  
20 Grudem also bases his argument against the view that the  
21 Son's subordination only began in the Incarnation by pointing  
22 out that Ephesians 1:3-5 states that as the Father predestinated  
23 us to be in the Son, therefore the Son, as God, was subordinate  
24 to the Father before creation (Biblical Evidence for the Eternal  
25 Submissions of the Son, 232).

26 NO

On the other hand, Erickson lists texts as John 5:21, 15:19 and 1  
 Matthew 11:27 to evidence that Christ also chooses individu- 2  
 als for salvation (Who's Tampering? 124) Erickson affirms 3  
 the same view in his added notes to his systematic (Christian 4  
 Theology, 308). Several creeds affirm predestination by God, 5  
 not merely by the Father as Westminster Shorter Catechism. 6  
 It immediately after, naming the Persons in God does not dif- 7  
 ferentiate between the Persons but instead states that the di- 8  
 vine decree is not exclusively the Father's (Questions 6 and 9  
 7). Another 16th century Reformed creed also makes election 10  
 the work of God, in general, not specifically that of the Father 11  
 (Belgic Confession, art. XVI) 12

Perhaps it should be pondered why these documents do not 13  
 specify that predestination is exclusively the Father's doing. 14  
 Note that in a popular theological dictionary, predestination 15  
 "... refers to the fact that the *Triune God* foreordains whatso- 16  
 ever comes to pass. (my italics). (Reid, Predestination, 870). 17

**10. As the Father creates through the Son, does that mean 18  
 that the Son is eternally role subordinate? 19**

YES. 20

Creation is stated to be by the Father through (*dia*) the Son in 21  
 John 1:1, 1Corinthians 8:6, and Hebrew 1:2. Therefore Grudem 22  
 insists that means the Son as God is subordinate to the Father 23  
 before creation and so these texts directly contradict the 24  
 'temporary submission' view. He thinks Erickson and Giles 25  
 have not discussed these scriptures (Biblical Evidence, 243). 26  
 Dahms uses the same argument asserting that as the Logos 27

1 was the agent of God in creation that implies subordination  
2 (Subordination of the Son, 357).

3 NO.

4 However, it is not so clear to others that if creation is by the  
5 Father through the Son it follows that the Son is in submission  
6 to the Father. Augustine, for example, teaches that as both the  
7 Father and the Son were involved in the creative work, that  
8 means "The Son, therefore, is equal with the Father." (On the  
9 Trinity 1.6.12). Gregory of Nyssa rebukes Eumonius for sug-  
10 gesting that the Son was obedient in creation (6.4). Ambrose,  
11 also while discussing creation, asserts, regarding Christ,  
12 "There is, therefore, no subjection as that of a servant in the  
13 Godhead of Christ," and that Christ's subjection results from  
14 the assumption of a human nature (Of the Christian Faith,  
15 13:163-171). Such opinions by those held in esteem among the  
16 church fathers at least should give one cause to question the  
17 assertion that creation by God demonstrates the Son's role  
18 subordination.

19 **11. As the Son is at the right hand of power or at the right**  
20 **hand of God, does that mean that the Son is of a lower rank**  
21 **in authority?**

22 "seated at the right hand of power" Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69 ;  
23 "seated at the right hand of God" Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1  
24 Hebrews 8:1; 10:12; ;12:2; 1 Peter 3:22.

25 YES

Dahms believes that such texts demonstrate the subordina- 1  
tion of the Son even after his ascension (Subordination of the 2  
Son, 357). Grudem asserts that such verses depict Christ as a 3  
second authority over the universe and the “ongoing primary 4  
authority of the Father” (Biblical Evidence, 248-251). 5

NO. 6

Some experienced exegetes, however, would question the view 7  
that such Scriptures require the role subordination of the Son 8  
as God. Regarding Romans 8:34 Murray expresses the view 9  
that Christ at God’s right hand has *all* authority in heaven and 10  
earth (my italics- Epistle to the Romans, 329). Therefore, the 11  
Son’s authority would not be less than the Father’s. Hughes 12  
believes that Hebrews1:3 is restricted to the Son incarnate, not 13  
the eternal Son, whose subjection to the Father will be discon- 14  
tinued (hence not eternal- Commentary on the Epistle to the 15  
Hebrews, 48). 16

And some theologians as well, besides exegetes, reject the 17  
hermeneutic of Dahm’s and Grudem using biblical proofs. 18  
Bilezikian points to Revelation 3:21 where Christ shares the 19  
throne with the Father and to Revelation 22:3 where both 20  
God and the Lamb share the throne (Hermeneutical Bungee 21  
Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead, 63). And Vos argues 22  
from texts as 1 Kings 10:8, 22:19, and Isaiah 6:2 that it is signifi- 23  
cant that Christ is seated not standing and so Vos concludes 24  
that the divine authority flows over into Christ (Reformed 25  
Dogmatics, vol 3, 236,237). 26





# ***CHRIST IN SUBORDINATE SCRIPTURE***

2

3

NOTE: The query for each of these eight Scriptures is whether or not the eternal role subordination of the Son to the Father is clearly taught in the text.

4

5

6

**12. John 5:18,19. The Son can do only what he sees the Father doing.**

7

8

There are three understandings on the implications of this text. The first is that the Son as God lacks the power to do anything on his own because he is subordinate to the Father. The second is that neither the Son as God nor the Father can act in separation from the other because they are of one nature. The third is that the referent is not the divine nature but Christ incarnate.

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

YES.

16

Keener and Cowan represent the first view. Keener is of the opinion that Christ in this text does not claim equality with God; instead, Jesus is saying that he acts in obedience

17

18

19

1 and only with delegated authority (Subordination Within  
2 the Trinity,42,44). And Cowan asserts that this verse means  
3 that not only is the Son dependent on his Father, but he also  
4 demonstrated total obedience (The Father and the Son in the  
5 Gospel of John,51).

6 NO.

7 The second view has Westcott, Beasley-Murray, and  
8 Augustine as representatives. Westcott states that the essen-  
9 tial unity between the Father and the Son makes it impossible  
10 for any self- determined action on the part of the Son (The  
11 Gospel According to John, 89). Were that correct, then the text  
12 is not dealing with subordination between the divine persons  
13 at all but instead a simplicity within the divine nature (see #5).  
14 Beasley-Murray proposes that “when the first clause is taken  
15 in conjunction with the second, it is recognized as an asser-  
16 tion of identity of action of the Son and the Father” (John in  
17 WBC, no 36, 75). Augustine concurs with that understanding  
18 saying of this text that, “the working of the Father and the Son  
19 is indivisible” (On the Trinity, 2.1.3).

20 The third view is represented by Calvin. Calvin states that  
21 John 5:19 only refers to the Son of God as he was manifest-  
22 ed in the flesh (Commentaries XVII,198). This understanding  
23 clearly is contrary to the opinion that the text informs that  
24 the Son prior to the incarnation, and in his divine nature apart  
25 from his humanity, was obedient to the Father. But as oth-  
26 ers contend that acts of the incarnate Christ cannot be exclu-  
27 sive to one nature alone, (Dahms, Subordination of the Son,  
28 353; Erickson Christian Theology, 670), can the conclusion be

drawn that only in his humanity Christ is subordinate? (see #21)

**13. John 6:38, Christ came from Heaven to do the Father's will.**

YES.

It seems that John 6:38 is thought to pose a strenuous challenge to those who reject the eternal role subordination of the Son. It's popularity among those who espouse the eternal relational subordination of the Son is indicated in an anthology devoted to demonstrating this tenet which has five different contributors discussing this same verse (One God in Three Persons). Elsewhere, Ware who co edits that book asserts that the words in John 6:38 could not express more clearly that the obedience to the will of the Father took place in eternity past as the pre-incarnate Son came from heaven at the will of the Father (Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles,23).

NO.

But Ware's opinion conflicts with the views of those who say that there is only one will in God and that the acts of God are inseparable, (see 3, 5). Both issues are reflected in Chrysostom's thoughts on the text as this father explains the meaning to be that Christ has no will different than that of the Father because the Son and the Father have all things in common (Homilies on the Gospel of John, XLV). And Gregory of Nazianzus argues for the same regarding this very text: as there is one divinity, there is only one will in God (Fourth Theological Oration, 12).

1 To these excellent church fathers John 6:38 does not teach the  
2 eternal role subordination of the Son.

3 Chemnitz, the 16th century Lutheran Christologist, however,  
4 understands the 'my will' in John 6:38 as an allusion to a fac-  
5 ulty in Christ's humanity --not in the divine will-- which re-  
6 sides in human nature of Christ. Chemnitz teaches that wills  
7 inhere in natures not in persons (The Two Natures in Christ,  
8 59,235,236). Under that interpretation, John 6:38 is not evi-  
9 dence of the eternal subordination of the Son.

10 The above comments have summarized two understandings  
11 of "will" mentioned in John 6:38 which do not require that the  
12 Son is said to yield his will to that of the Father's prior to the  
13 Incarnation. These views are expressed by three respected  
14 interpreters of Scripture. Whether these three are correct or  
15 not, I do not see how one can do otherwise than believing that  
16 Ware has over stated his case when he insists that John 6:38  
17 "could not express more clearly that the obedience to the will  
18 of the Father took place in eternity past" and therefore Christ,  
19 as God, eternally submits his will to the Father's will.

20 Doing theology well is difficult; it opens many opportunities  
21 for making mistakes. Should one believe that any who dis-  
22 agrees with him or her is incompetent? Or should one neglect  
23 to even mention those who disagree with him or her and not  
24 instead fairly state and effectively counter their objections?

25 **14. John 14:28. The Father is greater than the Son.**

26 YES.

Kitano is quite convinced that “this text clearly teaches the eternal relational subordination of the Son (The Eternal Subordination of the Son, 99). Dahms would agree, saying that the statement must concern Christ’s essential being (Subordination of the Son,358. Keener, while stipulating that the meaning is not that Father is greater than the Son in nature, contends that it does say that the Father is “greater in position,” and that the Son submits to His will (Subordination Within the Trinity 41,42).

NO.

Some modern theologians, exegetes, historians, and ancients too understand the text to be confined only to Christ incarnate. Buswell asserts that Christ’s words are applicable only to “the days in his flesh, (A Systematic Theology,1:106). And Morris points out that the context is that the *human* Jesus is departing from the earth (my italics) Gospel of John in NICNT, 659). Schaff too believes that the referent is Christ in the state of his humiliation (History of the Christian Church III: 683).In patristics, Athanasius seems in a minority in understanding the text to mean that the Father is greater not in “greatness” but because he begets the Son Four Discourses Against the Arians 1.13.8).

Other fathers as Augustine, Leo, Hilary, Theodoret, and Ambrose all understand that it is only in Christ’s humanity that the Father is greater. Gregory Nazianzus further attributes ignorance and arrogance to those who ascribe John 14:28 and other similar Scriptures to the divinity of Christ instead of seeing that such refer to Christ’s human nature only

1 (Augustine, On the Trinity, 6.10.9 ; Leo, Sermon 78.5; Hilary  
2 On the Trinity, 9.2.3; Theodoret, Dialogues, Testimony of  
3 Amphilochius , Ambrose, On the Christian Faith, 2.8; Gregory  
4 Nazianzus, Third Theological Oration 18).

5

**15. 1 Corinthians 11:3. God is the authority over Christ.**

6

As we pass from John into Paul, disagreement over whether  
7 the New Testament predicates the eternal role subordination  
8 of the Son to the Father is not abated.

9

YES.

10

One would err to derive from Erickson's discussion on George  
11 Knight (Who's Tampering?, 33-36) that in 1977 Knight was  
12 first to introduce the view that 1 Corinthians 11:3 means that  
13 the Son as God is role subordinate the Father. For, 111 years  
14 before that, Godet writes that this text cannot apply only to  
15 Christ incarnate but that subordination applies to "the Divine  
16 being of Christ" as well (Commentary on the First Epistle of St.  
17 Paul to the Corinthians, vol 2,111). Ware too says that the text  
18 does not limit the Father's headship to the humanity of Christ  
19 only (Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles, 22).

20

In Kitano's view, this text is one of the strongest to teach  
21 the eternal subordination of the Son (Eternal Relational  
22 Subordination,102). And Grudem, Kitano's thesis supervisor,  
23 by the way, makes the text significant to his view on gender  
24 relationships-- that equality in nature does not mandate equal-  
25 ity in roles-- by teaching that while the Father and Son are  
26 equal in nature, they are not equal in role. The text teaches,

says Grudem, that the Father has the greater authority though  
the two are equal in deity (Systematic Theology, 459).

NO

However, two counters to the view above often have been  
made. First some have asserted as Bilezikien (Bungee Jumping,  
61) and Erickson (Christian Theology, 307) that *kephalē* (head)  
means “source of” not authority over. But, Grudem’s forty-  
three page rebuttal of Richard Cervin, in my opinion, lays  
a heavy burden of proof on those who deny that ‘head’ in 1  
Corinthians 11:3 does not mean authority over.” (Recovering  
Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 552-559.) But a counter  
to Kitano’s view is proffered by Chemnitz who understands  
“Christ” in this text to refer only to his human nature (The  
Two Natures in Christ, 275).

Those who have read Chemnitz know that the reformer  
tends to establish his understanding on the ancients. While  
Chemnitz here does not cite from patristics to evidence his  
interpretation, a casual search will reveal that some fathers  
also hold that “Christ” in this text refers only to the human  
nature (Augustine, On Faith and the Creeds, 9.18; Ambrose  
Of the Christian Faith 4.3:31-33; Cyril of Alexandria, Epistle  
to Nestorius with the 12 Anathemas). Perhaps it should be  
researched as to whether ‘Christ’ in the New Testament ever  
clearly has only the humanity as its referent and whether the  
immediate context provides any clues on the issue. Such activ-  
ity might tip the judgment toward one or the other opinion.

1 But it is said that Christ was born, (Luke 2:11), died (1 Peter 1:2),  
2 and was resurrected (Acts 2:31). These would seem to indicate  
3 that the term “Christ” could refer to the humanity-not the de-  
4 ity. But that the text only references the incarnated Christ not  
5 the pre incarnate Christ is the opinion of some commentators  
6 as Groscheide (The First Epistle to the Corinthians in NICNT,  
7 251) and Hodge (1 and 2 Corinthians, 207). Were these correct,  
8 then the text would not evidence the eternal role subordina-  
9 tion of the Son.

10 **16. 1 Corinthians 15:28. The Son will be subject to God.**

11 YES.

12 Kovach and Shemm aver that this text demonstrates the un-  
13 challenged reign of God the Father *alone* (my italics *A Defense*  
14 *of the Doctrine of the Eternal Subordination of the Son*,472).  
15 But issue remains, as it was in 11:3, whether the referent is the  
16 divinity or the humanity or both natures in Christ. Dahms  
17 sees no good reason not to make this verse refer to the Son’s  
18 “essential being”( *The Subordination of the Son*, 358)

19 And Hamilton too does not envision Paul here distinguishing  
20 between the incarnate and the divine Logos (*That God May*  
21 *Be All in All*,108). Godet interprets the text as a reference to an  
22 “essential relationship of the Son to the Father in both divine  
23 and human existence” (*First Corinthians*,371). And Kitano in-  
24 sists that this text “makes it impossible to conclude that the  
25 Son’s subordination was limited to the incarnation” *Eternal*  
26 *Relational Subordination of the Son*,107).



NO.

But despite Hamilton’s vision, McCall points out that 1 Corinthians 15:28 cannot imply an eternal hierarchy within the Trinity because the condition described is future and so cannot be read back into eternity past (Which Trinity, 185). Charles Hodge deems it that “the Son” here is not “predicated of the eternal Logos” but of the “Logos as incarnate” (1 and 2 Corinthians, 333). Frame also believes that Paul means that Christ as man will subject himself to the headship of God (The Doctrine of God, 683; that view also is Calvin’s (Commentaries XX.30).

That Christ’s humanity is Paul’s referent in 1 Corinthians is also the opinion of several patristic exegetes. Ambrose distinguishes between Son of man and Son of God saying that in the former in his subjection “under the conditions of the flesh,” Christ delivered up the kingdom to the Father. Ambrose is emphatic that since the Father and the Son are of the same nature, so, therefore, the subjection of the Son to Father occurs only in the “assumed humanity” (Of the Christian Faith 5.14,171,174). Hilary explains the text as meaning that Christ as man has ascended to receive his glory as man our representative (On the Trinity, 1:33). And Augustine, who in the same part, three times states that Christ as God is equal to the Father, and affirms that it is as a creature that the Son will deliver up the kingdom to God (On the Trinity, 1.13.28).

Such references to highly respected interpreters of the Faith may suggest to some that Kitano’s bravado in asserting that 1 Corinthians 15:28 “makes it *impossible* (my italics) to conclude

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

1 that the Son's subordination was limited to the Incarnation"  
2 was immodest. Impossible? Frame, Hodge, Calvin, Augustine,  
3 Ambrose, and Hilary all are guilty of advancing an "impos-  
sible" interpretation? Really?

4  
5 One may be surprised that that comment in the TEDS Th.M.--  
6 and note the Th.M.in the USA is a high masters normally re-  
7 quiring a BA, and three- year M. Div. in preparation, the latter  
8 which includes Hebrew and Greek plus a minimum of anothe-  
9 er year of coursework and a thesis--was passed by Grudem  
10 without any requirement to tone down the presumption a bit  
11 given the contrary and well-established opinions in the two  
12 above paragraphs. But, passing that thesis with such a conclu-  
13 sion on 1 Corinthians 15:28 evidences the need for such a book  
as this.

14  
15 Yet while citing authorities has its place, it is the Scripture, it-  
16 self, which is authoritative. Therefore, contextual clues in the  
17 present passage need to be weighed. In verse 12 Christ is said  
18 to be raised from the dead. In verse 21 Christ is stated to be "a  
19 man." Why should it be assumed that the referent in verse 28  
20 is the divine nature since 'Son' also can reference experiences  
in Christ's humanity (e.g., Luke 1:32; Acts 3:26; Romans 5:10?)

21  
22 Another issue in understanding this text concerns the dura-  
23 tion of Christ's reign in other Scriptures needs to be factored  
24 into the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:28 to determine  
25 if the Bible establishes eternality as an attribute of Christ's  
26 Kingdom. If it does, how add that issue should interface with  
27 the understanding of this Scripture? But Scripture states that  
28 that the rule of Christ and his kingdom is eternal (Psalm 45:6;

Luke 1:33 2 Peter 1:11). Might it be that 1 Corinthians 15:28 1  
means that Christ as man is giving up the Kingdom to the 2  
Trinity (Calvin and Frame above)? Why must “God” in verse 3  
28 mean only the Father? 4

Eventually in this research the difficulty of how the two na- 5  
tures in Christ relate must be broached. Starke identifies the 6  
problem clearly by asking whether a correct understanding of 7  
the incarnational obedience of the Son can withstand a sepa- 8  
ration between the activity of the eternal Word and the as- 9  
sumed humanity (Augustine and His interpreters, 166). That 10  
problem will be reviewed in 21. 11

**17.Galatians 4:4,5. When the right time had come, God sent 12  
his Son, born of a woman to redeem sinners. 13**

YES. 14

Grudem seemingly has a solid basis for criticizing Belleville 15  
for suggesting that ‘God’, not the Father, sent the Son into the 16  
world (‘Son’ Christology in the New Testament, 68). Grudem 17  
reminds his readers of a number of Scriptures which declare 18  
that Christ is the Son of the Father (Doctrinal Deviations, 19  
34). Grudem view that it was the Father, distinctly, who 20  
sent the preexistent Son is in accord with both Calvin and 21  
Augustine (Calvin, Commentaries XXI:18; Augustine (On the 22  
Trinity1:11:22) 23

But the question should not be whether the eternal Son was 24  
sent by the Father, the question rather is was that sending the 25  
result of an obedient submission on the part of God the Son to 26

1 the supreme authority of the Father? And that is a complex is-  
2 sue. As noted in 8, Cowan, among others, argues that sending  
3 in John indicates that the one who is sent is under the author-  
4 ity of the one who sends. And Christ repeatedly as in 5:23 and  
5 12:44, states it was the Father who sent him. Further, in 13:16  
6 Jesus establishes the principle that one sent is not greater than  
7 the one who sends him. So, is Galatians 4:4 uncontroverted  
evidence that Christ as God is subject to the Father?

8

NO

9

10 It is not according to Augustine who in commenting on this  
11 very text confesses that "He was not sent in respect to any in-  
12 equality of power, or substance or *anything* that in him was  
13 not equal to the Father... (he was sent because)... he is a pure  
14 emanation issuing from the glory of the Almighty God"(my  
15 italics-On the Trinity 4.20.27).Is this understanding not in ac-  
16 cord with John 1:18 wherein Christ, who is God, has the mode  
of operation of making God the Father known?

17

18 And Warfield finds cause to base the roles or modes of op-  
19 eration of the Triune persons not in a difference in author-  
20 ity but in the Covenant of Redemption (Biblical Doctrines,  
21 166,167). So, here are two esteemed Christologists who deny  
22 that the Father sending the Son must mean that the Son is role  
subordinate.

23

24 **18. Ephesians 1:3-5. The Father chose us in Christ before cre-  
ation and he predestined us.**

25

YES

Grudem lists a number of other texts which show that God predestined us before the world's creation, in Christ: Romans 8:29; Ephesians 3:9-11;2 Timothy 1:9; and 1 Peter 1:19,20; and Revelation13:8. To Grudem's list, we might add Luke 22:22 and Acts 2:32 and 4:28. So, certainly Scripture affirms, as Revelation 13:8 has it, the Lamb was slain from the creation of the world.

Grudem concludes that these Scriptures "indicate that prior to creation the Son was eternally subject to the planning and authority of the Father..." (Biblical Evidence for the Eternal Submission of the Son, 234).

NO

But if the sacrifice of the Son as God is to be included in the divine decree, and that sending is concerned with an eternal relationship of submission-authority between the Father and the Son, then some may raise an objection to that. That is because it is understood by a number of theologians that no relationship in God is predestined:

\*Berkhof explains that nothing in the divine decree pertains to anything in the essential being of God; nothing in the inner being of God is decreed. Systematic Theology,103;

\*Shedd, teaches that no necessary activity of God pertaining to Trinitarian distinctions can be part of the decree.( Dogmatic Theology I.395,396)

\*Strong stipulates that God's decree has reference only to things outside of God (Systematic Theology, 353).

1 \*Klooster asserts that the necessary acts of God are excluded  
2 from the divine decree (Decrees of God, 303)

3 \* Chafer writes, "God did not however decree... any inher-  
4 ent relationship or assumption of responsibility within the  
5 Godhead (Systematic Theology, unabridged, I.228).

6 Now Grudem is a systematic theologian. As such he surely is  
7 aware that a number of his peers have denied that any eternal  
8 relationship in God is predestined. Yet Grudem fails to even  
9 acknowledge that such views exist among evangelicals, much  
10 less effectively counter them. In my opinion, the predestina-  
11 tion of Christ's obedience instead of being a viable argument  
12 for the Son's eternal relational subordination rather is solid  
13 evidence that the Son's role obedience is not an eternal rela-  
14 tionship in God.

15 **19. Philippians 2:6. While in God's nature, Christ did not grasp**  
16 **at being God's equal.**

17 YES.

18 Burk contends that the Son as God is eternally role subordi-  
19 nate to the Father and argues that 'form of God' and 'equality  
20 with God' are not semantic equivalents. The articular infinitive  
21 "*the* to be equal" is not a grammatical basis to make equal-  
22 ity with God anaphoric to (that is, "taking its meaning from")  
23 *morphe theou* (form of God). Burk asserts that the article func-  
24 tions rather to mark the components of the double accusative.  
25 So, equality in the text is not attributed to Christ, Burk states  
26 (Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6, 82-107).

Others in the same anthology, who concur with Burk's view 1  
on the Son's subjection say 'equality with God' is not predi- 2  
cated to the Son. They contend that equality means identified 3  
with YHWH not equal in authority with the Father (Bird and 4  
Shillaker, Subordination in the Trinity and Gender Roles, 299). 5

This understanding of 'equality with God' is also that of 6  
Grudem's who opines that "The equality this passage talks 7  
about is equality in honor and glory in heaven...it does not 8  
say that the Son was not obedient." (Evangelical Feminism and 9  
Biblical Truth, 409) Both of these interpretations of Philippians 10  
2:6 require a response. These disagree with Burk in that they 11  
posit the equality in Philippians in some manner is Christ's, 12  
but Burk does not. This suggests that the text is more debat- 13  
able than Burk seems to understand. 14

NO. 15

In fact, in contrast to Burk, Erickson and Calvin express the 16  
opinion that equality with God is predicated to the Son in 17  
Philippians 2:6 (Erickson, *The Word Became Flesh*, 477; Calvin 18  
*Commentaries XXI.58*). A number of well-recognized modern 19  
exegetes also hold views contrary to Burk's exegesis in that 20  
they connect 'equality with God to 'form of God (Feinberg, 21  
*The Kenosis and Christology*,31; Hawthorne, *Philippians in* 22  
*WBC*, 84; Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians*, 111,112; 23  
Hellerman, *Philippians*, 111.). For example, Fee writes that it is 24  
clear that Paul intends his meaning to be that being in God's 25  
form is to be equal with God (*Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, 26  
207). I suppose that some of these named are just as competent 27  
in Greek exegesis as Burk. Though, like Burk, none have Greek 28

1 as their native tongue. However, some early church fathers  
2 did.

3 What perhaps should be informative in weighing the validity  
4 of Burk's newly discovered grammaticism is to inquire as to  
5 whether Greek speaking fathers of the early Church grasped  
6 the meaning of the text in the same manner Burk understands  
7 it. Could those esteemed fathers who had Greek as their first  
8 tongue not be expected to be informed on the meaning of  
9 their own language? Yet Chrysostom understands that the  
10 text means that because Christ has God's nature, he, there-  
11 fore, has "this equality with God" (Homilies on Philippians,7).  
12 Athanasius too posits equality with God in Christ on account  
13 of this very text (De Synodis, 49; De Sententia, 10).

14 Regarding the view that equality (*Isos*) with God does not in-  
15 clude having authority with God, first, both Stahlin (*Isos* in  
16 TDNT III:353) and Beyreuther (*Isos* in DNTT 2:500) include  
17 an 'equality of will' in the meaning of *isos* in Philippians 2:6.  
18 Second, the expected contrast of Christ as an obedient servant  
19 to the Father in 2:7,8 would not be Christ as obedient servant  
20 to the Father in 2:6. The contrast would be Christ as sover-  
21 eign Lord. And, third, Grudem's apparent attempt (Evangelical  
22 Feminism and Biblical Truth, 409) to imply that because  
23 Philippians 2:8 does not specify that Christ ever stopped being  
24 obedient, therefore he must have been always obedient is a  
25 *non sequitur*; the text does not state that. And theology is bet-  
26 ter built on what the Bible does actually does say rather than  
27 what it does not say.



**20. Hebrews 5:8,9. Even though he is God's Son, by suffering he learned to obey, and he became the source of our salvation.**

At issue is whether the obedience occurred in the Son's deity or in his humanity.

YES.

Grudem uses the previous references in Hebrews to the Son as involved in creation (1:2), the Son being God on the throne (1:8), and the Son being the express image of God (1:3) as evidence that Hebrews in 5:8 has the Son as God as its referent not the Son as man (Biblical Evidence, 241). And using these seems very appropriate.

NO.

However, Jowers disagrees believing that 'Son' here has Christ's humanity in mind because the Son here is said to learn obedience. Jowers also cites Gregory Nazianzus who states that as the Logos Christ was not obedient nor disobedient for such terms are for servants (The Inconceivability of Subordination, 401).

While Grudem does rightly to use the context of Hebrews to find texts indicating that the Son of God refers to Christ's divinity, the fact is that in Hebrews the title also signifies Christ in his humanity: The Son of God is crucified, 6:6. The Son of God has blood (10:29). And the immediate context of 5:8 indicates that in obedience Christ was perfected (5:9). How is the Son as God, 'perfected'?

1 Further, the exegetes Ellingworth (The Epistle to the Hebrews  
2 in NIGTC, 293) and Hughes (A Commentary on the Epistle to  
3 the Hebrews) concur that it was as man that the Son learned  
4 to obey. Were that true, this text would seem to support the  
5 opinion that it was only in his human nature that the Son of  
6 God obeyed the Father.

7 Further, note the contextual clue: Christ learned obedience by  
8 suffering! Yet House and Geisler insist that God cannot under-  
9 go suffering (The Battle for God, 170). The same is asserted by  
10 Calvin, "God...suffers not" (Institutes 2.14.2). And that divine  
11 impassibility is the logic that Hodge expresses in insisting that  
12 "the suffering of Christ was not the suffering of the divine na-  
13 ture" (Systematic Theology II.395). But think about this: if the  
14 learning of obedience by Christ were attained by suffering,  
15 which suffering God cannot experience, how is that obedi-  
16 ence an act of Christ's deity?

17 Further, House and Geisler have it that God's knowledge is in-  
18 finite (The Battle for God, 21) Grudem believes that God knows  
19 everything from eternity (Systematic Theology, 190). And  
20 Lewis and Demarest teach that God is omniscient having an  
21 unlimited knowledge (Integrative Theology,1:23) But does that  
22 not mean the learning in Hebrews 5:8 cannot be that of the  
23 divine nature of Christ?

24 Yet, it could if one thought that the deity of Christ incarnate  
25 ceased being omniscient, but I don't see Grudem, Geisler or  
26 House teaching that. Lewis and Demarest may be understood  
27 as being a bit confusing on the issue given their comment on  
28 the divine intelligence being "sublimated" (2:344) if by that a

change is meant. I would agree that the human intellect did 1  
not know all the divine intellect did. But in my opinion, and 2  
I think in Calvin's too (Institutes 2.14.2), the Incarnation did 3  
not change the understanding of the Logos in any manner. If 4  
Christ is God having God's omniscience, then how can Christ 5  
as God learn? It seems to me, the learning could only be in his 6  
humanity, and, if so, so was the obedience also not only in his 7  
human nature. 8



# ***CHRIST IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY***

2

3

## **21. Do the Nicene experts Athanasius and Hilary teach the eternal role subordination of Christ?**

4

5

In the year 325, at the Emperor's request, over 300 bishops assembled in Nicaea to attempt an agreement on the nature of God's Son. The council endured considerable division as three positions were represented including Arians, but it was decided that the Son is the eternally begotten "true God of true God" (Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* II:58) Athanasius was a young arch deacon who accompanied the bishop of Alexandria and according to Schaff "evidenced more zeal and insight than them all" (*History of the Christian Church*, III:626,677).

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

A 96 page Introduction (in Schaff and Wace, *NPNF*, 9) to the life and theology of Hilary prefaces the text of this father's *De Synodis*. Hilary was not in attendance in Nicaea, having not been made bishop until 350, however he certainly became familiar with the writings and history of Athanasius, and he agreed with Athanasius' views. In *De Synodis* Hilary defends

16

17

18

19

20

21

1 the Nicene statement by expressing that the Son is begotten of  
2 the substance of the Father, there can be no diversity of sub-  
3 stance between Christ and the Father and in De Trinitate that  
4 Christ is “very God” (De Synodis 3:15; De Trinitate 9:2). These  
5 expressions are the same as in Athanasius (De Decritis 5:20,22;  
6 Against the Arians 2.41).

7 Given their period in church history, theological affinity, and  
8 common adherence to Nicaea, it seems not irregular here to  
9 join them in interacting with Kitano’s assertions.

10 YES.

11 Regarding Athanasius, Kitano argues that as this father agreed  
12 with Nicaea’s eternal generation doctrine, that “can possi-  
13 bly lead to the idea of eternal relational subordination” (The  
14 Eternal Relational Subordination of the Son,14). And about  
15 Hilary, Kitano asserts that this father envisioned two sorts of  
16 the Son’s subjection to the Father, one temporal and one eter-  
17 nal. The latter, Kitano argues, is shown in Hilary’s explanation  
18 of 1Corinthians15:28 wherein the ‘allegiance’ to the Father is  
19 said to be eternal (24).

20 NO.

21 Erickson rightly says that to attribute to Athanasius adher-  
22 ence to the eternal subordination of the Son requires an as-  
23 sumption that the doctrine of eternal generation implies this  
24 (Who’s Tampering, 148). Unfortunately, Erickson does not  
25 elaborate. However, the discussion in #7 provides examples of  
26 those holding to eternal generation but rejecting eternal role

subordination. So, Kitano’s assumption that accepting eternal  
 generation results in accepting eternal role subordination is  
 questionable.

But perhaps instead of deducing subordination from genera-  
 tion, one should deduce it instead from Incarnation. With that  
 sentiment Athanasius likely would agree as he understands  
 it to be in the flesh that Christ was faithful to the Father, and  
 that Christ took on a body so that he could do the Father’s will  
 (Four Discourses Against the Arians 2.14. 8; 2.20.54). NOTE:  
 Athanasius teaches that the assumption of humanity was re-  
 quired for Christ to do the Father’s will. No eternal role subor-  
 dination there.

Some may be disappointed and puzzled by Erickson apparent-  
 ly attributing the lengthy quotation on page 150 of his book  
 -which quotation includes eternal subordination in the con-  
 cept of generation- to Hilary! (Who’s Tampering, 151). The al-  
 lusion is to Hilary’s De Synodis 11. But 11 is not Hilary’s teach-  
 ing! It, in its entirety, is from the “blasphemy” of the Sirmium  
 dogma by Osius and Potamius! Hilary calls this statement “im-  
 pious” in De Synodis 12!

The Sirmium Confession, which was the product of Arians  
 and Semi-Arians, was the subject of anathemas by the Eastern  
 Orthodox bishops in a synod at Ancyra in 358. Hilary found  
 the subordination view expressed in the Sirmium Confession  
 it to be blasphemy (Harnack, History of Dogma IV, V, 75,76).  
 Instead, Hilary’s position is quite clearly represented in his  
 statements that only in his condition as man did Christ subject  
 himself, and that it was only in the form of a servant that he

1 was obedient. Hilary states that “the form of God is not inher-  
2 ent in the form of a servant” (De Trinitate 9.5,14). NOTE: Hilary  
3 states that only as man is Christ obedient!

4 In further reply to Kitano, eternal ‘allegiance’ is not the equiv-  
5 alent of eternal obedience.

6 **22. Is Cyril of Alexandria correct that Christ does not act dis-**  
7 **tinctly and differently through his two natures?**

8 Reading Cyril sometimes presents the difficulty of deter-  
9 mining which of two positions he is advancing. In one place  
10 Cyril distinguishes between the impassibility of Christ’s de-  
11 ity and the suffering of Christ’s humanity (Five Tomes Against  
12 Nestorius, Tome 5). And elsewhere Cyril affirms that Christ al-  
13 lowed his humanity to “obey the laws of its own nature” as  
14 advancing in stature and wisdom (On the Unity of Christ,109).  
15 These appear to mean that only the human nature matured  
16 and suffered.

17 But that seem inconsistent with Cyril’s fourth anathema  
18 against Nestorius at Ephesus in 451 wherein any who applies  
19 some things written in the Scriptures to Christ as a man sep-  
20 arate from the Word of God and applies other biblical refer-  
21 ences to Christ only to the Word, is said to be anathema (Ferm,  
22 Readings in the History of Christian Thought, 162). Of course,  
23 one can change one’s mind, but I assume that the last senti-  
24 ment is Cyril’s true view: Christ, in Cyril’s opinion, does not  
25 act in one nature distinctly.



Further, there is reason to think that Cyril may have at times, at least, perceived that some of the limitations of Christ were not genuine but were instead a pretension by the Logos. A.B. Bruce references the *Adversus Anthromorphitas XIV* in which Cyril proposes that in Mark 13:32 the Logos is pretending not to know (The Humiliation of Christ, 366, 367).

YES.

Some modern Evangelicals also adhere to the notion that the acts and experiences of Christ are not different in the natures. This position has two forms. One, represented by Buswell, is that a 'nature' cannot feel, think or act. It was the Person of Christ-not the human nature only- that thirsted, wept, and died on the cross (Systematic Theology, II:56). But the issue is not whether the nature acts apart from the Person; the issue is whether the Person acts differently in each nature. Erickson, asserts that "The union of the two natures meant that they did not function independently. Jesus did not exercise his deity at times and his humanity at other times (Christian Theology,670).

NO

But that understanding of Erickson's is widely disputed by ancients and moderns. Both Leo and the Damascene write that each nature in Christ performs what is proper to it (Leo Sermon 54.3; John of Damascus Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, 15). Calvin and the Westminster Confession of Faith teach that things Christ does in one nature are not necessarily done in the other (Calvin, Institutes 1:529; Westminster, 8.7).

1 Hodge and Shedd express the view that although in each case,  
2 it is the Person of Christ who is the subject, individual acts can  
be predicated to one or the other nature (Hodge Systematic  
3 Theology II:395; Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, II:328). As Baille, in  
4 his criticism of Cyril writes, if the only subject of Jesus' experi-  
5 ence was God the Son "there seems to be no room left for what  
6 we surely find in the Gospel story" (God Was in Christ,88).

7  
8 This question is obviously significant to understanding the ex-  
9 periences and acts of the Christ of the Gospels, the hypostatic  
union, the economic Trinity, and specifically to the possibil-  
10 ity of the subordination of Christ to the Father being limited  
11 to only his human nature. First, should we understand that  
12 the divinity of Christ became weary in walking (John 4:2)?  
13 Are limitations in the earthly Christ to be read back into the  
14 powers of the pre- incarnate Christ? Or do we suppose that  
15 the universe is held together by Christ's humanity Colossians  
16 1:17)? And, second, does Buswell not err when he insists that  
17 in the Incarnation what God the Son assumed was (merely)hu-  
18 man behavior patterns and that the soul of divinity "became a  
19 human soul." (Systematic Theology II:56 ; I:251).

20  
21 Shall we not instead understand the Incarnation as an addi-  
22 tion of something new with distinct intellect and will rather  
than a changing of the infinite, eternal, and immutable into  
23 something else? And, were it true that the humanity has a dis-  
24 tinct intellect and will through which Christ experiences and  
25 acts, why could not Christ's obedience be posited only in his  
26 humanity?

27

And after the Incarnation are there not two energies in Christ as Constantinople of 681 states: "...we declare that in Christ are two natural wills and two natural operations...two natural operations...a divine operation and a human operation." As Agatho, commenting on the Council, affirms, Christ has two energies and two wills, "He had a human will... (and NOTE)... by which he obeyed the Father." (Agatho, Letter to the Roman Synod).

**23. Does Nestorius teach that Christ is two persons?**

Antiochian Christology, as espoused by Nestorius, puts emphasis on the distinction between the human and divine natures in Christ and differs from Cyril in that Cyril denies individuality to the human nature of Jesus. Experts understand that Nestorius teaches the humanity of Christ to be a complete human, and it has its own *prosōpon*; the Deity has its own *prosōpon* as well (Pannenberg, Jesus-God and Man,191; Loofs, Nestorius, XX) So, does that mean that Nestorius divides Christ into two persons?

YES.

The opinion that Nestorianism and/or Nestorius divides Christ into two persons is commonly taught. (Leo Letter CXIX; Crisp, Divinity and Humanity, 39; Buswell, Systematic Theology, II:50; Blaising, Hypostatic Union in EDT, 540, Chemnitz, Two Natures in Christ, 335). Schaff, for example, argues that because Nestorius teaches that the Incarnation concerned the Logos and a complete man instead of the nature of man, and that the unity was moral not personal, that Nestorius believes

1 in "a duality of person in Christ"(History of the Christian  
2 Church III:718,710).

3  
4 Cyril's understanding of Nestorius' doctrine is contrasted with  
5 his own in a document written in 431 which reads, "We do not  
6 divide the God from the man, nor separate him into parts...  
7 we deprecate the term "junction" (*sunapheias*) as not having  
8 significantly signified the oneness" (Epistle to Nestorius With  
9 12 Anathemas).

9  
10 NO.

11  
12 But others, well read on the issue, question that Nestorius di-  
13 vides Christ into two persons (Grillmeier, Christ in Christian  
14 Tradition, I:509; Bethune-Baker, Nestorius and His Teaching,  
15 45,47; Loofs, Nestorius, 86). McCleod, for example, asserts  
16 "Nestorius almost certainly was not a Nestorian" (The Person  
17 of Christ,182). To help me answer the question, an examina-  
18 tion of a book, believed to be composed by Nestorius, was in  
19 order.

18  
19 In this document, discovered in the 19th century, Nestorius  
20 while in exile due to the condemnation heaped upon him by  
21 the Council of Ephesus of 431, led by Cyril,

21  
22 attempts an explanation of his Christology. Nestorius uses the  
23 name 'Heracleides", according to the translator, to prevent it  
24 from not being read as the name 'Nestorius' might have done  
25 (Nestorius, The Bazaar of Heraclides,33). Bethune-Baker ar-  
26 gues well for the authenticity of this book (Nestorius and His  
Teaching, 27).

My own reading of the “Heracleides’ focused on part two most- 1  
 ly in which Nestorius assails Cyril and defends his own views, 2  
 and for me that part provides direction in deciding the ques- 3  
 tion. Two issues are very relevant, I believe: First, Nestorius re- 4  
 peatedly denies separating Christ into two persons. Nestorius 5  
 affirms his belief that there is only one Son, one Lord, and one 6  
 Christ who is not divided: 7

“I predicate one Lordship...in virtue of the union of one 8  
*prosōpon* , 153 ; That two natures should be united in one 9  
*prosōpon* not two Sons or two Christs... 187 ; One *prosōpon* in 10  
 two *prosōpa* ...both of them are one Son, one Lord. 237.” 11

Second, understanding Nestorius requires grasping his termi- 12  
 nology which sometimes is used differently. The Incarnation 13  
 was a union of two *prosōpa*, meaning personalities (Bethune- 14  
 Baker, Nestorius and His teaching, 51) (not persons); it is 15  
 not a union of natures because the divine nature cannot 16  
 change or be blended and the human cannot be deified. 17  
 By ‘*hypostasis*,’ Nestorius means nature (*ousia*) not person. 18  
 (Nestorius,*Heracleides*, (26,52,54,60,61,119,129,133,137,175). 19

When Nestorius states that in Christ are two *hypostaseis*, 20  
 (which are in natures) unified, I think he does not mean 21  
 there are two persons but that there are two natures. As said, 22  
 these are not joined naturally (because the divine cannot 23  
 mix with the human) but are unified in their personalities. 24  
 The Incarnation was a joining of two personalities. Or better 25  
 worded, I think, the inception of a new (human) personality 26  
 through the Incarnation was added to the one Person. 27

1 That the natures in Christ remain distinct is the Chalcedonian  
2 requirement: "The distinction of natures in no way taken  
3 away the union" (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, II:62) and  
4 that is classic Christology: "The Two Natures are united but  
5 not mingled" (Hodge, *Systematic Theology* II:389). Further,  
6 some church historians posit the 5th century dispute, and the  
7 condemnation of Nestorius, in the improper behavior of Cyril  
8 (Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 188,189).

9 Yet, it has been argued by some moderns that while the hu-  
10 manity of Christ is not a distinct person, to be human does  
11 require something like a distinct human personal center.  
12 Warfield thinks that Christ has dual centers of consciousness.  
13 (The Person and Work of Christ, 258). Shedd too teaches that  
14 our Lord has "two general forms of consciousness" (Dogmatic  
15 Theology II:320). McIntyre seems to reflect favorable on the  
16 two hypostaseis view of Christ (The Shape of Christology, 91).  
17 And Knox avers that humanity without a personal center is  
18 not humanity at all. (The Humanity and Divinity of Christ,  
19 64). It does not seem to be the case that a correct understand-  
20 ing of Nestorius would remove him from concurring with  
21 sentiments as these.

22 **24. Is Chalcedon's two nature doctrine congruent with func-**  
23 **tional kenoticism (which teaches that Christ lost, temporally,**  
24 **the use of some divine attributes)?**

25 The relevant portion of Chalcedon reads,

26 "Our Lord Jesus Christ *perfect in Godhead* and also perfect  
27 in manhood... consubstantial (coessential) with the Father

according to the Godhead and consubstantial with us according to the manhood...one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledge in two natures...the property of each nature *being preserved* in the one Person.” (my italics)

YES.

Feenstra asserts that functional kenotic Christologists can affirm Chalcedon but that a re- evaluation of what divine qualities are essential is required (A Kenotic Christology of the Divine Attributes, 156). One might well wonder if Erickson is a functional kenoticist as he first states that God does not change no matter what occurs because God is perfect and to decrease would mean that He no longer is God. Erickson further states that God is omnipresent and has omnipotence (unlimited power).

But then Erickson asserts that as an incarnate being Christ was limited in the exercise of omnipresence because Christ has a body and that Christ was dependent on the Father to use his own divine attributes. An omnipotent God the Son could not independently use his own attributes (Christian Theology 247,249,290,670,704,705)!

Mc Call,` who believes that functional kenoticism is orthodox, reminds his readers that adherents to this belief system accept the deity, the humanity, and the unity of these natures in Christ, and McCall seems to understand that these affirmations fully meet the of Chalcedon (Modified Kenotic Christology, (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, X, 17). However,

1 as is to be noted in the quotation from the formula above,  
2 Chalcedon requires more than that!

3  
4 NO.

5 Reymond rejects kenoticism's view that the incarnate Christ  
6 was limited in his use of the divine qualities saying that be-  
7 lief is a denial of Chalcedon (A New Systematic Theology, 615).  
8 Crisp defines 'functionalist-kenotic Christology' as the posi-  
9 tion that "involves the Word not exercising certain divine  
10 properties for a period of time. Crisp, after a lengthy appraisal  
11 of that position in connection with the traditional view of the  
12 divine nature including immutability, concludes it not to be  
13 Chalcedonian (Divinity and Humanity,120-149).

14 A direct route, it seems to me, in measuring kenotic  
15 Christology's adherence to Chalcedon has to do with that for-  
16 mula's declarations that Christ is 'perfect in Godhead' and that  
17 the 'property of each nature is preserved.' If Christ on earth is  
18 no longer omniscient or omnipresent, (Feenstra 151,154) how  
19 is he perfect in Godhead? How is the property of his divinity  
20 preserved?

21 Will it suffice for Erickson to argue that Christ's deity was  
22 exercised "only in concert with his humanity" because "he  
23 took upon himself the limitations of humanity" (Christian  
24 Theology, 637). Does that in effect not mean that one Person  
25 in the Trinity is finite but the Others remain infinite? Yet it is  
26 Erickson who asserts that one divine Person cannot have per-  
27 sonal properties which distinguishes him from the other di-  
vine Persons (Who's Tampering, 173), and elsewhere Erickson



affirms that the divine attributes are qualities possessed in 1  
 common by each Person of the Godhead and the attributes are 2  
 permanent (Christian Theology, 236). Yes, I understand that 3  
 Erickson states that Christ’s divine attributes are latent while 4  
 he is on earth. But if God the Son is limited by his humanity, 5  
 how is he unlimited in his deity? 6

The position that some divine attributes are not essential is 7  
 considered in #30. 8  
 9

**25. Does Constantinople (680-681) err in requiring the belief 10  
 of two wills in Christ? 11**

The Definition of the Faith of the Sixth Ecumenical Council 12  
 of 680-681 is that in Christ “are two natural wills and two nat- 13  
 ural operations” which are inseparable. The Council agreed 14  
 with Leo and Agatho that “each form (*morphe*) does, in com- 15  
 munion with the other, what pertains properly to it” (Agatho, 16  
 Letter to the Emperor and to the 125 Bishops of the Sixth 17  
 Council; Leo, Letter 28:4). The creed was deemed necessary as 18  
 Monothelitism (one will) was perceived as an attempt to estab- 19  
 lish monophysitism (one nature). 20

YES. 21

Strong insists that a nature does not have self-determination, 22  
 therefore Christ has a single will. Further, Strong notes that 23  
 Constantinople of 680-681 was never regarded by the Greek 24  
 church as ecumenical, and he believes that two wills equals a 25  
 “double personality” (Systematic Theology, 694,695). 26

1 Westling presents a rationale for reconsidering monothelitism: (1) dyothelitism (two wills), it is claimed by some, 'finds no warrant in Scripture,' (2) John 6:38 means that the Father and the Son have one shared will, (3) persons are conscious, natures are not, (4) there is no biblical warrant for believing that God ensures that councils will not err, (5) "many Protestants only accept the first four ecumenical councils" (6) a complete human nature does not require a human will (On the Viability of Monothelitism for Protestant Theology, 151-170).

9

10 Buswell , appears to feign adherence to the creed by defining a 'will' as a mere behavior pattern" and not substantive entity and asserts that is the likely meaning of Constantinople (Systematic Theology II:54-65). One may wonder if God acting like a human being is a true Incarnation.

14

15 NO.

16

17 John of Damascus reasons that as Christ is the perfect human and the second Adam, in his humanity he must have a human, natural volition. The two wills inhere in the two natures, and the human will obeys Christ's divine will (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith XIII-XV). Hodge argues that the human soul and nature include a human will because he was tempted, and to deny a human will to Christ is to deny he "had a human nature or was truly a man"(Systematic Theology II:389,391,404,405).

24

25 Crisp believes that dyothelitism (two wills) does not result in believing Christ is two persons as it would require demonstrating that a having a human will in distinction from a divine

will “is sufficient for Christ to be a complete human person 1  
 apart from the person of the Word,” and he says that the hu- 2  
 man body and soul rather form a “larger person” not a sepa- 3  
 rate person (Divinity and Humanity,63-65). And Pannenberg 4  
 asserts that as a capability to act is inherent in the intelligent 5  
 function of a nature, “it is clear that a doubleness of nature re- 6  
 quires a doubleness of will” Jesus-God and Man, 293). 7

8  
 Biblically several issues should be noted: Does Hebrews 2:17, 9  
 “he had to be made like his brethren in all ways” imply a hu- 10  
 man will? Does Luke 22:42, “not my will but yours be done” 11  
 indicated that Christ had a human will? If Christ is to be our 12  
 example of obedience, is his having only a divine will a proper 13  
 example since we only have human wills? And as Christ is re- 14  
 peatedly called a man, does that also require a human will? 15  
 (See 28, 32) 16

**26. Should Leonitius of Byzantium’s doctrine of enhypostasia 17  
 (that it, that the divine nature personalized Christ’s human- 18  
 ity) be rejected?**

19  
 Chalcedon in 451 left a gap by not defining who is the real 20  
 ‘personal you’ in Christ and how the two natures exist with- 21  
 out having two hypostases. Leonitius (c.485-543) attempted 22  
 to fill this gap by stipulating that the human nature does not 23  
 have a human personality (*hypostasis*) but rather has the di- 24  
 vine nature as its hypostasis. 25

YES. 26  
 27

1 McIntyre launches three criticisms against enhypostasia. First,  
2 can Christ be truly human with without a personal center, an  
3 ego, around which the human life can move and experience?  
4 Second, can the divine hypostasis function as a human hypostasis? Third, if Christ did not assume a whole humanity, can he  
5 redeem whole humanity? (The Shape of Christology, 97-99).

6

7 Pannenberg, Knox, Ballie, and Torrance express related opinions. Pannenberg suggests that if Jesus was a human individual not in his human nature, but only in consequence of his unification with the Logos, that would make “the completeness of his humanity problematic,” (Jesus-God and Man, 340) And  
8  
9  
10  
11 Knox also thinks that humanity without a human personal  
12 center should not be called humanity at all (The Humanity  
13 and Divinity of Christ, 64). Baille questions the validity of accepting the doctrine of enhypostasia and asks how then could  
14  
15 Jesus have “a human experience of God” (God Was in Christ,  
16 88). And Torrance questions whether the enhypostatic humanity of Christ “could secure the place of the historical Jesus  
17 as the active agent and mediator” (Incarnation,212).

19

20 NO.

21 But the Damascene teaches that the humanity has no subsistence of its own and that the Word is its subsistence  
22 (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, IX). Hodge believes that  
23 “the human nature of Christ, separately considered, is im-  
24 personal” (Systematic Theology II: 391). And, Crisp states that  
25 Christ’s human nature is only personalized or hypostasized in  
26 the Word (Divinity and Humanity,83).

A number of issues should be considered. Is ‘personality’ the same as ‘person’? Is believing that Christ has two personalities a contradiction of Chalcedon? Does Jesus being tempted require a human center of consciousness? Does Christ’s obedience set a good example for us if his obedience was achieved in impersonal humanity by the Logos? If Christ’s humanity possesses a human soul, intelligence, will, and emotion, can that humanity really be impersonal? Can an impersonal humanity fit the portrayal of the Jesus of the Gospels? If Jesus Christ is God just using human faculties, is that a true Incarnation?

Morris presents an interesting comparison of his “two minds” view of Christ with human “split personality” cases. He sees no reason not to use whatever parallel phenomenon we find in psychologically atypical human cases to help us understand the relevant aspects of the Incarnation (The Logic of God Incarnate, 106,107). In comparison, might it be that there are two egos (individual self-awareness) in the one Person of Christ? Does such seem in harmony with the Jesus of the Gospels? Could the term “ego” fit what Nestorius sometimes meant by *hypostasis*?

**27. Does Augustine or Calvin teach the eternal role subordination of the Son?**

It has become common place to claim prominent theologians in church history to support one’s positions. As some would not wish to have their own views considered as being out of orthodox tradition and would like to show their opponents’ views as not in keeping with historical theology, claims relating to classical theologians often are made.

1 YES.

2

3 Starke thinks that as Augustine accepted eternal generation,  
4 he must have accepted eternal role subordination, and Ware  
5 argues the same (Augustine and His Interpreters,106,107).  
6 After chiding those who demonstrate irresponsible scholar-  
7 ship, Grudem in a section intended to demonstrate that the  
8 Christian Church throughout history has affirmed the eternal  
9 role subordination of the Son, lists Calvin as evidence of that  
10 because the reformer identifies the Father as “the beginning  
11 of activity” (Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth, 415,  
12 419). Kitano insists that as Calvin taught the relational order  
13 in eternal generation, he taught relational subordination as  
14 well (The Eternal Relational Subordination of the Son,39).

13

14 NO.

15

16 Giles denies that Augustine affirmed that the preincarnate  
17 Son was subordinate to the Father as Augustine believed that  
18 God has only one will and one set of attributes, and Giles states  
19 that Calvin’s understanding of texts as John 14:28 and1Corin-  
20 thians 11:3 reveal that the reformer did not accept eternal  
21 role subordination (Jesus and the Father, 193,166).

20

21 Erickson notes that Augustine distinguished between what  
22 Christ did in his deity and his humanity, that there is no evi-  
23 dence of eternal functional subordination in Augustine, and  
24 that according to Calvin, texts as1 Corinthians 15:28 reference  
25 the humanity of Christ (Who’s Tampering, 155,163,164). In ad-  
26 dition, a review of the writings of Augustine and Calvin make  
a number of salient points.

Augustine in his Homilies on John states that only as man is 1  
 Christ less than the Father (Tractate 78.2) But does this equal- 2  
 ity of the Son as God with the Father include an equality of au- 3  
 thority? Perhaps so as Augustine holds that the Father and the 4  
 Son work “indivisibly,” and that it is in the form of a servant 5  
 (man) that the Son came to do the Father’s will (On the Trinity, 6  
 1.4.7; 1.12.11). It is as a creature that the Son subjects himself, 7  
 and Scriptures made to subordinate the Son as God are misin- 8  
 terpreted (On the Trinity 1.13.28; 2.1.3). Christ is equal to the 9  
 Father in power, substance and in “*anything else.*” (my italics) 10  
 (On the Trinity 4.19.26;4.20.27) The onus is perhaps on those 11  
 who assert that Augustine teaches the eternal role subordina- 12  
 tion of the Son to counter this cumulative evidence. And that 13  
 means, one might argue, more than appealing to Augustine’s 14  
 doctrine of eternal generation. 15

Calvin understands that in 1Corinthians11:3 God is only the 16  
 head of Christ’s humanity, and that it is also only in his hu- 17  
 manity that Christ delivers up the Kingdom to the Father in 18  
 15:24 (Commentaries XX, 353, 31). Calvin further contends 19  
 that the emptying of Christ, which in context resulted in 20  
 Christ’s obedience, “is applicable only to his humanity” and, 21  
 in fact, Calvin teaches that Christ being servant to the Father 22  
 and not doing his own will also “apply entirety to his human- 23  
 ity” (Commentaries XXI,57; Institutes 2.14.2) 24

In my opinion, these references clearly put Augustine and 25  
 Calvin outside of the dogma that Christ eternally is relation- 26  
 ally subordinate to the Father. 27

28

1 **28. Does Warfield or Charles Hodge teach the eternal role**  
2 **subordination of the Son?**

3  
4 These are two excellent 19th century Reformed theologians who by many are well regarded as knowledgeable  
5 Christologists. It is reasonable to examine their writings to discern whether they clearly express opinions on whether there  
6 is a hierarchy of authority in God wherein the Son is eternally  
7 role subordinate to the Father.

8  
9 YES.

10  
11 Gons, after noting that anti-hierarchicalists (those denying there are ranks of authority among the Persons in God)  
12 claim that Warfield concurs with their position, suggests that Warfield really only was opposed essential subordination and  
13 not opposed to role subordination in the Trinity (Warfield on the Trinity). House in a chapter intended to demonstrate relational  
14 subordination cites Hodge on subordination in the mode of existence as evidence as though the two (relational  
15 subordination and modes of existence) were equivalents (The Eternal Relational Subordination of the Son, 143).

16  
17  
18  
19  
20 The identical text in Hodge is used by Kitano to prove that  
21 “the Nicene Creed, and the Nicene Fathers taught eternal relational subordination within the Trinity” (The Eternal  
22 Relational Subordination of the Son,48). Grudem is another to use the same passage in Hodge to defend Grudem’s assertion  
23 that the Christian Church throughout history has affirmed the subordination of the Son to the Father in role. This passage  
24 of Hodge’s reads:  
25  
26



“The Nicene doctrine includes...the principle of the subordina- 1  
tion of the Son to the Father...The subordination intended is 2  
only that which concerns the mode of subsistence and opera- 3  
tion...The Creeds...assert the distinct personality of the Father, 4  
Son, and, Spirit...and their consequent perfect equality, and 5  
the subordination of the Son to the Father...as to the mode of 6  
subsistence and operation.” 7

(Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology I:460-462). 8

NO. 9

Erickson rejects the opinion that Warfield embraces the view 10  
that the Son as God is role subordinate, but Erickson asserts 11  
that Hodge “holds to the eternal subordination of the Son to 12  
the Father” (*Whose Tampering?* 57,58,137). Giles, on the other 13  
hand, takes a view opposite to Erickson on Hodge (*Jesus and 14  
the Father*, 37). 15

An examination of Warfield’s and Hodge’s writings is in order. 16

Warfield questions that modes of operation in the Trinity 17  
are caused by modes of subsistence as they may only be due 18  
to an agreement among the Persons (see #6), and he contin- 19  
ues to state that the earthly work of the Son “throws doubt 20  
on the inference ...of an eternal relation of subordination in 21  
the Trinity.” Warfield continues to explain that subordinist 22  
passages may “rather find their full explanation in the facts 23  
embodied in doctrines of the Covenant, the humiliation of 24  
Christ, the two natures of his incarnate Person” (“Trinity” in 25  
*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*). Such comments

1 may cause many, me included, to believe that Gons incorrect-  
2 ly infers from Warfield's writings.

3  
4 As to Hodge, were one wishing to determine whether un-  
5 equal modes of operation and subsistence to Hodge means un-  
6 equal authority in the immanent Trinity, one should examine  
7 Hodge's Christology in volume two of his systematic. For here  
8 Hodge clearly teaches that Christ's role subordination only  
9 occurs after the Incarnation: "It is as the God-man that he is  
10 economically subject to the Father...neither the obedience nor  
11 the suffering of Christ was the obedience or suffering of the  
12 divine nature." (Systematic Theology II: 394,395). The stated  
13 basis for Hodge's view is that the divine nature is immutable.  
14 The divinity cannot begin to be obedient. The context, then,  
15 demonstrates that Hodge does not see the obedience of Christ  
16 incarnate to be an extension of a preincarnate status; his obe-  
17 dience is in his humanity only.

18 **29. Is Hodge correct that Christ could have sinned (but did**  
19 **not!)?**

20 Hodge believes that Christ was tempted, and there was, there-  
21 fore, the metaphysical possibility that he should have yielded.  
22 Hodge makes no defense and no discussion of that remark  
23 (Systematic Theology II,405).

24 YES.

25 Ullman states that Christ must have had the possibility of sin-  
26 ning because his nature was human; Ullman also counters  
27 three arguments against the position that Christ could have

sinned: (1) to the argument that Christ's developing maturity, as in Luke 2:52, making sinning a liability, Ullmann replies that gradual growth does not require sinfulness, (2) to the argument that Christ's messianic plan was not developed early in Christ's life, Ullmann replies that Jesus from the beginning sought "a divine kingdom" and that was equivalent to speaking of his plans, and, (3) to the argument that being tempted demonstrates sinfulness, Ullman replies that temptation in itself is not evil (49,145-165).

NO.

To others it would not seem possible for Christ to have sinned because he is divine as well as human. Shedd admits that temptation could have entered through Christ's humanity, but Shedd nevertheless insists that "The omnipotence of the Logos preserves the finite human nature from falling" (Dogmatic Theology, II:333). Grudem Systematic Theology, 539) and Lewis, and Demarest (Integrative Theology 2:347) concur with Shedd's rationale agreeing that the divine nature prevented the human nature from sinning.

But to some this opinion that Christ could not sin because he is God might present difficulties. It is true that some patristic thought reflected in Constantinople presents the human will of Christ always in subjection to His own divine will: "these two natural wills are not contrary the one to the other...his human will follows...as subject to his divine will" (The Definition of the Faith, Session XVIII). Yet the formula does not specify that the human will must yield to the divine.

1 Were the humanity of Christ unable to do other than obey,  
2 is that humanity so controlled by deity truly human? And if  
3 Jesus could not sin because he is God, can his faithful obedi-  
4 ence be our good example? Can there even be real temptation  
5 if there is no possibility of yielding? And do the temptations  
6 of our Lord in the Gospels appear to be to one who knows he  
7 cannot fall in actual sin because one of his natures is divine? If  
8 Christ could mature, suffer, and die, which things God cannot  
9 do, is it not logical to argue that he could sin as well? Note that  
10 Scripture clearly teaches that Jesus did not sin!

11 **30. Is the Reformed view on the communication of attributes**  
12 **to be preferred over the Lutheran?**

13 The Lutherans teach that there are three genera of the com-  
14 munication of attributes" (1) the genus idiomaticum is that  
15 attributes of the natures are always ascribed to the whole  
16 person, (2) the genus Maiestaticum is that the divine na-  
17 ture shares omni attributes as omnipotence, omnipresence,  
18 and omniscience with the human nature, and, (3) the genus  
19 Apotelesmaticum is that the activity and operation of each na-  
20 ture is common to both natures (Pieper, Christian Dogmatics  
21 II: 143,152,243).

22 YES.

23 In contrast to the Lutheran view, the Reformed position, as  
24 Hodge explains, is that while the attributes of each nature  
25 are predicated to the whole person, there is no sharing of at-  
26 tributes between the natures (Systematic Theology II:392).  
Hodge presents three arguments against the Lutheran view:

(1) In attempting to explain how two natures are joined in one person, the Lutherans are attempting “to explain the inscrutable,” (2) The Lutheran view is only necessary because of Luther’s view on the Lord’s Supper, and, (3) The Lutheran view is unsatisfactory because it curtails the activity of the Logos to the incarnate Christ, misapplies texts referencing the divinity to the humanity, and fails to understand that attributes cannot be separated from the substances which they express (413-417).

NO.

However, Hodge has not countered some of the arguments provided by the Lutherans for their dogma. Pieper devotes nearly 150 pages in explanation and defense of the Lutheran view. Much of Pieper’s, a Lutheran, defense can be summarized in arguments that the Reformed position: (1) By separating the actions of the two natures in Christ contradicts Scripture which states that the humanity of Christ is an organ or instrument of the divinity in texts as 1 John 3:8, John 6:51, and Ephesians 4:10 ; such Scriptures show that the work of the divinity and the humanity are inseparable.

Further Pieper argues, (2) The Reformed view debases the divine knowledge of the humanity of Christ which reveals God as in John 1:18, (3) fails to realize that only if the divinity is united with the humanity can it impart infinite value to Christ’s sufferings, (4) rejects the practical importance of the united action of the two natures as Christ being present with the church and with believers as in Matthew 28:18,19 ,(5) is contrary to the personal union of God and man in Christ as

1 taught in texts as Colossians 1:19 and 2:9. (6) disregards patristic  
2 opinion as expressed by Leo and John of Damascus to the ef-  
3 fect that each nature in Christ participates in the actions of the  
4 other (Christian Dogmatics II:248,251,256,259,268,269).

5  
6 In my opinion, the Lutheran genus Maiestaticum—that the  
7 divinity of Christ shares all attributes with the human-  
8 ity of Christ—clearly is non-Chalcedonian. As a reminder,  
Chalcedon requires the belief that:

9  
10 “...the only begotten Son [of God] must be confessed to be in  
11 two natures, unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, insepara-  
12 bly [united] and that without the distinction of natures being  
taken away by such a union, but rather the peculiar proper-  
13 ties of each nature being preserved.”

14  
15 But if the human nature is the recipient of divine attributes,  
16 how is the humanity preserved? How is the human nature  
17 kept distinct from the divine nature if it has the same powers  
as the divine nature?

18  
19 Nor does the Lutheran view appear to be compatible with  
20 Constantinople 680-681 which has it that each nature does  
21 what properly pertains to it. How does being omnipresent,  
omnipotent, or omniscient properly pertain to being hu-  
22 man? Most certainly, in my opinion, the experiences and acts  
23 through either nature should be predicated to the one Person  
24 who experiences and acts, but the qualities of one nature, the  
25 divinity, should not be attributed to the other nature.

26  
27

# ***CHRIST IN FUNCTIONAL KENOTICISM***

By 'functional kenoticism' I refer to the position that in the Incarnation Christ gave up certain divine properties or the use of them while retaining properties essential to being God.

## **31. Can God change or give up the use of his divine attributes?**

YES.

McClain surmises that the eternal Son of God incarnate emptied himself, and God the Son then speaks, acts, and knows nothing except as empowered by the Father through the Spirit (Doctrine of the Kenosis in Philippians 2:5-9,10). Erickson thinks that the incarnation required one Person of the Trinity to be restricted to a physical location and to not consciously know what the other Trinal Persons know. Being human and incarnate required God the Son to be ignorant and spatially limited (Making Sense of the Trinity, 637,670,705). Feenstra argues that in the light of the Incarnation, the concept of God should be reevaluated and concludes that some

divine attributes are not essential to being God (A Kenotic Christology of the Divine Attributes,151).

NO.

But Warfield cautions that to suggest that God takes on the limitations of man and was functioning only through a special consciousness with limited power and knowledge is “purely speculative” and does not match the Jesus of history who has a “double consciousness, divine and human” (The Person and Work of Christ, 260). According to Calvin, Christ as God incarnate “works always for himself, knows everything, and does all things after the counsel of his own will.” Further Calvin insists that it is absurd to believe that the body of Jesus enclosed the boundless essence of the Word of God and instead Calvin asserts that God the Son never abandoned heaven (Institutes 2.13.4; 2.14.2).

Many Evangelical systematic theologians agree that God’s nature cannot be separated from the divine attributes. For example:

\* Strong teaches that God’s attributes inhere in the divine essence and are inseparable from the idea of God (Systematic Theology 244,245).

\* Reymond insists that the divine attributes are essential to the nature of God (Systematic Theology, 161).

\*Lewis states that without his attributes God would not be what he is-God! (God, Attributes of, 451)

And Scripture appears to ascribe the omni attributes to God:



\* Omniscience: God declare the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46:9,10); God has manifold wisdom (Ephesians 3:10); God knows the very hairs on our heads (Matthew 10:30).

1

\*Omnipotence: God is 'almighty' (Genesis 17:1; God's power is exceedingly great. (Ephesians 1:19: With God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

2

\* Omnipresence: God is everywhere (Psalm 139:7). God fills heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:13). In God we live and move (Acts 17:27,28).

3

And further, evangelical theologians insist that God does not change. He does not change even in the Incarnation! Berkhof, affirms that. (Systematic Theology, 59). But beyond mere affirmation, Geisler provides what to me is a sound argument which is that the divine nature did not become human. Rather it was the divine Person who assumed a human nature in addition to his divine nature. (Systematic Theology Two, 109, 110). Were that correct, clearly limitations in Christ are not attributable to a reduction in powers by the divine nature but are only consistent with the experiences of Christ's human nature.

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

Again, as adherence to Constantinople (680-681) requires:

13

14

" two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, inseparably, indivisibly to be recognized... the properties of each nature being preserved...a divine operation and a human operation... each form does in communion with the other what pertains properly to it ...the Word, namely, doing that which pertains to the Word, and the flesh that which pertains to the flesh...we will

15

16

17

18

19

1 not admit (just) one natural operation in God and the creature  
2 as we will not exalt into the divine essence, nor will we bring  
3 down the glory of the divine nature to the place suited to the  
4 creature.”

4 Two interesting questions surface and are, among others, dis-  
5 cussed below 1. Are the attributes as omniscience, omnipo-  
6 tence, and omnipresence relative to the existence of the uni-  
7 verse only, not to God’s existence before creation, and if so, are  
8 they essential to the divine Being or might the act of God in  
9 creating and God’s divine decree suggest that God’s omni at-  
10 tributes exist in him as capabilities apart from the beginning  
11 of creation? 2. Must the Incarnation end the Logos’ presence  
12 and activities throughout the universe confine him within  
13 restrictive humanity or could it be understood instead that  
14 Scriptures as Mark 13:32 have only Christ’s human nature as  
15 their referent? (see #21)

16 **32. Does teaching that Christ gave up some divine powers to**  
17 **incarnate, best prevent ascribing to Christ a split personality?**

18  
19 YES.

20 Some years ago while guest speaking to a group of theology  
21 students in Sacramento, I said that sometimes it appears in the  
22 Gospels that Christ acts as God and other times acts as a hu-  
23 man being. A student replied, “So, Christ is a schizophrenic!”  
24 Was that a ridiculous comment? Yet, Van Driel, while not de-  
25 fending or countering it, states that an argument against the  
classical view is that it suggests that “Christ has something of  
a split personality” (The Logic of Assumption,268).

Writers as Warfield, Wiley, and Shedd might be viewed by some as providing fodder for such an accusation. Warfield instructs us that in Christ are distinct dual centers of consciousness (The Person and Work of Christ, 258). Wiley in explaining how the two natures in Christ relate writes, "The varying modes of consciousness pass quickly from the divine to the human...," ( Christian Theology II, 181) And Shedd maintains that in the incarnate Christ "there was a continual fluctuation of consciousness, according as the divine or human nature was uppermost..."( Dogmatic Theology II, 321). To be fair, these writers do affirm the oneness of the Person in Christ which is that of the Logos.

NO.

But Morris feels that ascribing something like a split personality to Christ is not necessarily negative as Christ entered into the Incarnation with its effects voluntarily, and the Incarnation was done to attain goals important to God (The Logic of God Incarnate, 107). Possibly two issues are relevant. First the human nature in Christ is said to include an intellect and will and be an objective entity which acts, but that nature is personalized by the Logos (Hodge, Systematic Theology II,387,389,391). The divine nature has its own intellect, will, and energy also. While there are two acting natures, the Person of the eternal Logos is viewed as the subject of the experiences and actions of each nature.

Yet second, 'consciousness' can be defined as "a lived experience" or "the manifold sensations, perceptions, and ideas one has" (Revonsvo and Kappinnen, The Concept of Consciousness

1 in Neuroscience, 25; Holt, The Concept of Consciousness, 184).  
2 Were the human nature, to have will and intellect distinctly  
3 from the divine, perhaps it follows that Christ's human nature  
4 does have its own consciousness. Could our Lord be genuinely  
5 human were he not to have a human consciousness? (Dare I  
6 say, a human ego?)

7  
8 Consequently, if true, then in Christ there are two modes of  
9 consciousness, seemingly each which has its own lived expe-  
10 rience; it should not seem surprising, then, if there is an obvi-  
11 ous 'split' in the powers,

12 experiences and activities of the two consciousnesses. This  
13 diversity is demonstrated in Scripture; one can compare, for  
14 instance, Mark 13:32 with John 16:30 and 21:17.

15 The Person of Christ, unlike human persons, has two natures  
16 as Chalcedon, the standard for orthodox Christology, requires.  
17 Having two natures through which a person acts and experi-  
18 ences is aberrant in human makeup. But Christ is both true  
19 man and true God. The issue is, does functional kenoticism's  
20 reduced deity truly affirm the ramifications of that two- na-  
21 ture dogma?

22 **33. Is functional kenoticism's unifying Christ a tendency to-**  
23 **ward Monophysitism (one nature)?**

24 YES

25 Criticism of older types of kenoticism by Bruce and Bailie take  
26 the form of accusing kenoticists of suggesting that the Logos  
27

turns himself into a human nature instead of adding a human nature to his Person (Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, 96; Baille, *God Was in Christ*, 96). Macleod thinks that “much of the language of kenoticism is monophysitic” (*The Person of Christ*, 109). And Reymond denounces the modern kenotic view of Erickson that places certain limitations on the functioning of Christ’s divine attributes because that view makes Christ perhaps more than man but not quite God (*Systematic Theology*, 615,616).

NO.

Yet Buswell appears to deem his Christology as Chalcedonian because he accepts that Christ is both God and Man. But, Buswell teaches that Christ’s single active divine consciousness continuously “held” itself by allowing it (the divine consciousness) to grow and develop intellectually. That is, Buswell is saying that the divinity experienced like a human. (*Systematic Theology II:30,31,55,56*).

This seems to echo Cyril of Alexandria writing that the divinity feigns ignorance in Mark 13:32 (*Adversus Anthropomorphitas* in A.B. Bruce, *The Humiliation of Christ*, 366,337). In both, in my opinion, there is a failure to understand Christ as both unlimited God and limited man. The human nature simply is made a pattern of behavior of the divine (*Systematic Theology II:30,31,55,56*).

Davis defends his kenotic view saying that he believes in a truly divine and truly human Christ, and he urges his readers to see his view as Chalcedonian (*Is Kenosis Orthodox?*

1 115,121,135). However, is believing that Christ is both God and  
2 man sufficient to satisfy the Chalcedonian formula of two dis-  
3 tinct natures in Christ?

4  
5 It is not! Waheeb and Sarkissian of the non-Chalcedonian  
6 Coptic Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church, respect-  
7 fully, are able to affirm the deity and humanity of Christ as  
8 well but they adamantly deny the two distinct natures doc-  
9 trine (Orthodox Christology,341-356). The non-Chalcedonian  
10 churches instead aver that Christ is one nature which is both  
God and man (342).

11  
12 The issue would seem to be defining what is included in the  
13 natures of Christ and how the natures are related to each oth-  
14 er and to the Person. The functional kenoticist, Evans, rejects  
15 that Christ has two minds, divine and human, and that the  
16 divinity's mental life and physical life both (NOTE: BOTH!) de-  
17 pended on a physical brain and central nervous system and  
18 was therefore limited in knowledge and by time, physical  
power, and space (Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God,  
199,211).

19  
20 Morris, on the other hand, believes that Christ has two minds.  
21 The divine mind contained the human but was not contained  
22 by the human; this view, he argues, avoids understanding  
23 Christ as "a dressed up man" (The Logic of God Incarnate, 103).  
This, in my opinion, is biblically and theologically the correct  
24 view.

25

26 **34. Can Christ possess both divine omni attributes and hu-  
man attributes?**

YES.

Athanasius teaches that even while in the body, Christ was quickening the universe (Incarnation of the Word, 17; note Colossians1:17). Calvin explains that the Son as God cannot be enclosed by his body as his essence is boundless (Institutes 2.13.4). Crisp asserts that the limitations of humanity do not restrict the deity (Divinity and Humanity, 150,151). And Morris affirms that the two- mind view of Christ allows both human and divine qualities (The Logic of God Incarnate, 103).

Again, as expressed already, germane to this issue is the classical view that God cannot lose his attributes as they are equivalent to his essence. Even Erickson, who thinks that the Incarnation limited Christ's powers, states that God's attributes constitute what God is (Christian Theology, 276,670). Frame insists that each attribute is necessary to God's being (The Doctrine of God, 226). And Hodge maintains that God's attributes and his substance are inseparable, that the divine attributes are essential to God, and that they exist independently of the existence of the world (Systematic Theology I:367,368).

NO.

Nevertheless, Feenstra represents kenotic Christology as resisting some divine qualities being attributed to the incarnate Christ because they are incompatible with humanity, and so a revision of what attributes are essential to God may be required (A Kenotic Christology of the Divine Attributes, 151,153). Davis seems bold to assert that it is impossible for the

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

1 same being to have both infinite and finite properties as liv-  
2 ing forever vs living for a time or being omnipotent vs being  
3 non- omnipotent (Is Kenosis Orthodox, 116). Erickson's opin-  
4 ion that the Incarnation required the deity of Christ to be lim-  
5 ited by the humanity has already been referenced (Christian  
6 Theology 670,671).

7 However, what has not as yet been stressed in this little book  
8 is the immutability of God. Scripture seems to teach that the  
9 divine nature cannot change:

10  
11 Psalm 102:27, God remains the same.

12  
13 Malachi 3:6, God does not change.

14  
15 James 1:17. God does not vary

16  
17 This dogma is often taught by classical theologians:

18  
19 Strong, the nature, attributes, and will of God are exempt from  
20 change. (Systematic Theology, 257)

21  
22 Berkhof, God is devoid of all change in being and perfections  
(Dogmatic Theology, 58),

23  
24 Hodge, God is absolutely immutable in essence and attributes  
(Systematic Theology I:390).

25  
26 But, if God the Son is immutable, how could he mature (Luke  
27 2:40,52)? How could he suffer and die (Luke 23:46)? He could  
28 because such experience are confined to his human nature-  
in my opinion. And as for Davis' insistence that two sets of



qualities in one Person is an “impossibility,” Davis has not 1  
proven that. Besides, our God is a God of impossibilities. 2

**35. Was the Son, in his Divine nature, ignorant of some things 3  
while on earth? 4**

A common response will be an allusion to Mark 13:32 where 5  
Jesus states that even he (the Son) does not know the day of 6  
his return. But one should ask whether ‘Son’ as used by Christ 7  
must indicate only his divine nature. Yet as ‘Son,’ Christ was 8  
born (Luke 1:35) and as Son he died (Romans 5:10), so it should 9  
not be thought improper that Christ’s being called ‘Son’ can 10  
distinctly pertain to his humanity. 11

Then too, it is common for both ancients and moderns to 12  
teach that Christ has two intelligences- human and divine. As 13  
Chemnitz states, the human nature understands with a con- 14  
scious mind (The Two Natures in Christ, 223), and Shedd says 15  
the humanity of Christ has reason and rationality (Dogmatic 16  
Theology II:312,313). Were Christ to possess a human intelli- 17  
gence (note Luke 2:52), which is seemingly required to be hu- 18  
man, as well as a divine intelligence, it does not seem unrea- 19  
sonable that he could not know in his humanity much of that 20  
which he knows in his deity. 21

YES. 22

Nevertheless, Fee prefers the view that Christ emptied him- 23  
self of omniscience in order to become human (The New 24  
Testament and Kenosis Christology, 34), and van Driel con- 25  
firms that that view is shared by modern kenoticists who 26

1 often suggest that the Word gave up omniscience in order  
2 to become man (The Logic of Assumption, 34). Erickson is on  
3 board with this position as he maintains that as God (note as  
4 God!), Christ genuinely did not know the time of his second  
5 coming because Christ accepted limitations on the function  
6 of his divine powers (Christian Theology 673,670). To me, it is  
7 astounding that Erickson can assert that God the Son did not,  
8 while on earth, know consciously what the Holy Spirit and  
9 the Father knew (Making Sense of the Trinity, 60).

10 NO.

11

12 The opposite position is adhered to by Geisler who in com-  
13 menting on Matthew 24:36 distinguishes what Jesus knew  
14 as man from what he knew as God (Systematic Theology  
15 vol 2, 307). Reymond also opines that as God, Christ's knowl-  
16 edge on earth remained infinite but as man finite (Systematic  
17 Theology, 618). And, John of Damascus, who posits all limita-  
18 tions of Christ to the humanity only, taught the identical view  
19 saying that in Christ are two sorts of understanding-human  
20 and divine (Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, 4,13). Further,  
21 John's Gospel appears to affirm Jesus' omniscience on earth  
22 by the exclamations of Jesus' disciples: "now we can see that  
you know all things" (16:30); "Lord, you know all things" (21:17).

19

20 To some it may appear that Fee and Erickson are not commit-  
21 ted to the dogma of Chalcedon that Jesus Christ is

21

22 "perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood...in two natures...  
the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by  
the union...the properties of each being preserved."

How Christ can be perfect in Godhead having the properties of his deity in no way taken away but is instead ignorant of some things in His deity to me is preposterous.

I think functional kenoticists are not affirming Christ's two active natures. Erickson takes the position that sometimes Jesus' divinity knew and sometimes it did not; Classical theologians instead view any finite understanding in Christ as occurring only in Jesus' humanity. Recall that Erickson avers that Christ does not experience or act in one nature only: "Jesus did not exercise his deity at times and his humanity at other times." (Christian Theology,670). I think Erickson creates a number of problems for himself in interpreting Scripture and integrating theology by assuming that position.

**36. Was Christ's divine nature confined in a body?**

YES

Fee writes that because God the Son chose to live a human life, that required him to give up some divine prerogatives including omnipresence (The New Testament and Kenosis Christology, 34). In his 1991 book Erickson explains that Christ, as required by having a physical body, limited himself to restrictions in locations (The Word Became Flesh, 561). As said before, Erickson teaches that Christ's humanity limited his divinity.

NO

1 In contrast, Calvin calls the position that Christ gave up the  
2 use of omnipresence absurd! (Institutes 2.13.4) And in Shedd's  
3 view, the incarnate Word has all the properties of the Word  
4 before the Incarnation (Dogmatic Theology II:309). And Frame  
5 argues that Christ even incarnate remains omnipresent based  
6 on Matthew 18:20 and Ephesians 1:21-23. (The Doctrine of  
7 God, 677). Grudem, in my opinion, soundly argues that God  
8 the Son never gave up the divine attribute of omnipresence.  
9 (Systematic Theology, 551).

10  
11 To be clear, Erickson maintains that God the Son could cease  
12 using a divine attribute but still retain it latently (Christian  
13 Theology, 670). But, in my view, to not actively use the attri-  
butes of God equates to not being God.

### 14 **37. Did Christ's divine nature suffer?**

15  
16 As functional kenoticism tends to diminish the distinc-  
17 tions between the natures in Christ (van Driel, The Logic of  
18 Assumption, 268; Morris, The Logic of God Incarnate, 34), this  
19 question should be considered.

20 YES

21  
22 In 431, The twelfth anathema of the Council of Ephesus de-  
23 clared that: "The Word of God suffered in the flesh." To my sur-  
24 prise, Frame argues that it was the Person of Christ which suf-  
25 fered, not just the human nature, consequently, Frame says,  
26 the divine nature suffered too (The Doctrine of God, 613).

27 NO

Chemnitz, a Lutheran Christologist, writes that the divine nature “is incapable of suffering.” (The Two Natures in Christ, 121). Hodge teaches that the suffering of Christ was not that of the divine nature, but it was of a divine Person. ( Systematic Theology, II:395). Likewise, Shedd explains that it would be wrong to say that the divine nature suffered because while the acts of either nature can be ascribed to the Person, they need not to be ascribed to the other nature (Dogmatic Theology, II:323).

**38. Does Philippians 2:7 teach that as God Christ gave up any attribute or the use of one?**

YES

Evans believes that in the Incarnation the Son emptied himself of some divine prerogatives and became finite. (Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God, 196). Likewise, Davis thinks that Christ gave up some divine powers and became truly human which required him to relinquish some divine properties which are inconsistent with being human (Is Kenosis Orthodox?, 166).

NO

However, Jowers , in a 2006 article in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, contends that it is a false assumption that Philippians 2:7 requires that Christ emptied himself of anything. Jowers argues that The Pauline usage of *kenoun* in such texts as Romans 4:14, 1 Corinthians 1:17; 9:15,

1 and 2 Corinthians 9:3 indicate that the verb 'empty' is used  
2 metaphorically not literally.

3 A number of exegetes have rejected the view that the texts  
4 should be understood as meaning that Christ gave up any  
5 divine attribute: Hawthorne rejects that hermeneutic say-  
6 ing Paul is alluding to an addition not a subtraction of any-  
7 thing (Philippians, 88). Hellerman calls the notion that Christ  
8 according to Philippians gave up anything a false assump-  
9 tion (Philippians 114). And Fee in NICNT contends that the  
10 view that Christ must have emptied himself of something is  
11 not in keeping with Paul's usage of kenosis (Philippians 210).  
12 Feinberg states that the adversative conjunction *alla* makes  
13 it grammatically impossible that Christ laid aside the form of  
14 God and Feinberg cites the view that to give up the equality  
15 with God is logically impossible because it would entail Christ  
emptying himself of deity. (Trinity Journal, 42).

### 16 **39. Did Christ's exaltation restore Christ's use of divine** 17 **attributes?**

18 As functional kenoticism portrays Christ as losing some divine  
19 powers on incarnating, the question arises, does Scripture sug-  
20 gest that Christ in being glorified regained these qualities.

21 For example, it is apparently is understood by some that  
22 Christ's resurrected body assumed powers that it had not be-  
23 fore possessed. The Scripture seems to state, for example, that  
24 it could pass through physical walls (John 20:26) and could dis-  
25 appear (Luke 24:31).

YES

1

While not compatible with the issue of the divine nature losing or regaining powers, Pieper, more efficiently interactive than many, argues that partly due to Christ's "heavenly life" (post resurrection), Jesus's divine qualities as omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence are communicated to Christ's human nature. Pieper bases the last omni attribute on Ephesians 4:10 where Christ is said to fill the universe. Pieper argues that the text must have the humanity as its referent, because the deity in Christ always did fill the universe. (Christian Dogmatics II:157,168).

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

The kenoticist, Evans, suggests that in an uninterrupted Incarnation extending into eternity a glorified body might result in Christ again being restored to a possession of the traditional divine powers he lost in becoming human (Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God, 201). Erickson also understands that the limitations on the humanity imposed on the divinity were not permanent (Christian Theology, 637).

12

13

14

15

16

17

NO

18

19

In contradiction to the position endorsed by Pieper, Raymond counters that Christ's humanity in no way was altered even in its glorified state. (Systematic Theology, 618), and Hodge, while agreeing that Christ's humanity is exalted in dignity and worth rejects the view that exaltation caused the humanity to be divine. (Systematic Theology II:397). Theologians, as Grudem Systematic Theology, 551), who deny that the divinity ever lost any divine powers, do not address the question of

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 the divinity regaining powers. In my view, as God is eternal  
2 and unchangeable, Christ as God, cannot lose or regain divine  
3 attributes.

4 **40. Is God limiting himself in creation and providence corollary to Christ emptying himself?**

6  
7 YES

8 Rice, an Open Theist, who believes that God does not assume  
9 full control of the universe, explains his opinion that Christ  
10 becoming human reveals things about the character of God:  
11 (Biblical Support for a New Perspective, 37, 39,40). Evans too  
12 thinks that God's self-emptying in Christ reveals that God  
13 limits himself. The incarnation is a "window" revealing God's  
14 self-limitations (Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God,  
15 202-205).

16  
17 NO

18 But Scriptures appears to teach that God is changeless: Psalm  
19 102: 26,27: The earth and the heavens will wear out, but God  
20 remains the same. (Hebrews 1:10).

21 Geisler and House mount a number of philosophical argu-  
22 ments to counter the teaching that God is mutable including  
23 that as God is pure actuality, he has no potential to change; as  
24 God is perfect, he cannot acquire anything new; and, as God's  
25 Being is a necessity, God is unchangeable (108,108).

26  
27



**41. Is Kryptic (also spelled with a 'C') Christology a better option than Kenotic Christology?**

YES

A.B. Bruce understands the exination doctrine of Reformed Christology to be that upon incarnating, God the Son was hiding his glory and his divine attributes not self- emptying himself of these (The Humiliation of Christ, 125). In like manner, Calvin is convinced that Christ's glory was concealed from the world (Institutes 1.13.26). Crisp clarifies two aspects of Kripsis Christology: (1) the use of divine attributes through the human nature of Christ was for a time restricted, (2) there was never any restriction of the use of divine attributes through the divine nature of Christ. (Divinity and Humanity, 150).

NO

The functional Kenoticist likely would reject such teaching as he/she would argue that Scripture teaches that Christ is unified (Evans, Kenotic Christology and the Nature of God,199). And, of course, Erickson is adamant that the deity of our Lord only functions in conjunction with his humanity (Christian Theology, 671)

But as for me, I agree with Calvin that to transfer acts of Christ's human nature to Christ's divine nature could contribute to destroying (the teaching of) Christ's divinity (Institutes 2.14.4).

**BILL GROVER**

1 Perhaps I'm wrong. As I prayed at the beginning, God forgive  
2 me where I err.

3  
4 Bill.

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

# WORKS CITED

	1
	2
	3
	4
Athanasius De Synodis	5
Athanasius De Decritis	6
Augustine <i>On the Trinity</i> .	7
----- . <i>On Faith and the Creed</i> .	8
Ambrose. <i>Of the Christian Faith</i> .	9
Baille, D.M. <i>God Was in Christ</i> (N.Y.: Scribners,1948).	10
Beasley-Murray, George. <i>John in WBC</i> . (Waco: Word, 1983).	11
Bess, Herbert. "The Term 'Son of God' in the Light of Old Testament Idiom" <i>Grace Theological Journal</i> (Spring, 1965.)	12
Belgic Confession of Faith	13
Bellville, Linda. "'Son' Christology in the New Testament" in <i>The New Evangelical Subordinationism?</i>	14
Berkhof, Louis. <i>Systematic Theology</i> . (Carlise, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2003 reprint).	15
	16
	17
	18
	19
	20
	21
	22
	23
	24

- 1 Bethune-Baker, J.F. *Nestorius and His Teaching: A Fresh Examination of the Evidence* (Eugene, Or: Wiph and Stock, 1998).

- 3 Bilizekian, Gilbert. "Hermeneutical Bungee Jumping: Subordination in the Godhead " *JETS* 40.1 (March, 1997).

Bird, Michael F. and Robert Shillaker "Subordination in the Trinity and Gender Roles; A Response to Recent Discussion" in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism*.

Breuther, Erich. "Isos" in *DNTT* vol 2, Colin Brown, ed. (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1971), 500.

Bruce, Alex. B. *The Humiliation of Christ*. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1905).

Burk, Denny. "Christ's Functional Subordination in Philippians 2:6: A Grammatical Note with Trinitarian Implications" in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism?*

Buswell, James Oliver. *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976).

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion* vol I. transl. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1979).

----- . *Calvin's Commentaries* vols XV, XX, XXI. Transl. William Pringle. (Grand Rapids: Baker 2003 reprint).

Cary, Phillip. "The New Evangelical Subordinationism: Reading Inequality in the Trinity" in *The New Evangelical*

- Subordinationism*, Dennis W. Jowers and H. Wayne House eds  
(Eugene, Or.: Pickwick, 2012). 1
- Chafer, Lewis Sperry. *Systematic Theology unabridged edition*  
(Dallas: Seminary Press, 1947).
- Chemnitz, Martin. *The Two Natures in Christ*, transl J.A.O. 2  
Preus (Saint Louis: CHYH, 1971 reprint). 3
- Chrysostom. *Homilies on Philippians*. 4
- Claunch, Kyle. "God is the Head of Christ" in *One God in*  
*Three Persons*, eds. Bruce Ware and John Starke Wheaton: 5  
Crossways,2015.). 6
- Cowan, Cristopher. "I Always Do What Pleases Him" in *One*  
*God in Three Person*. 7
- Crisp, Oliver. *Divinity and Humanity* (Cambridge: University 8  
Press,2007). 9
- \_\_\_\_\_ and Fred Sanders. *Christology Ancient and Modern*  
(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013) 10
- \_\_\_\_\_ *The Word Enfleshed* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016). 12
- Cyril of Alexandria. *On the Unity of Christ*, transl. J.A. Mc 13  
Gurkin (Crestwood, N.Y.: St Vladimir's Press, 1995). 14
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Five Tomes Against Nestorius and Other*  
*Works* transl. members of the English Church, publisher and 15  
date not identified). 16
- 17
- 18

**BILL GROVER**

- 1 Dahms, John. "The Generation of the Son," JETS 32.4 (December,  
2 1989). 503-518.
- 3 ----- . "The Subordination of the Son" JETS 37.3  
4 (September, 1994), 365-379.
- 5  
6 Davis, Stephen. "Is Kenosis Orthodox" in *Exploring Kenotic*  
7 *Christology*, C. Stephen Davis, ed. (Oxford: University Press,  
8 2006)
- 9 Ellingworth. Paul. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NIGTC (Grand  
10 Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993).
- 11 Erickson, Millard J. *The Word Became Flesh*. (Grand Rapids:  
12 Baker, 1991).
- 13 ----- . *Making Sense of the Trinity*. (Grand Rapids:  
14 Baker, 2000).
- 15 ----- . *Who's Tampering With the Trinity?* (Grand  
16 Rapids: Kregel, 2009).
- 17 ----- . *Christian Theology*. 3rd edition (Grand  
18 Rapids: Baker, 2012)
- 19 Evans, C. Stephen. "Kenotic Christology and the Nature of  
20 God" in *Exploring Kenotic Christology*, C. Stephen Evans, ed.  
21 (Vancouver, B.C. : Regent College Publishing, 2006).
- 22 Fee, Gordon D. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* in NICNT (Grand  
Rapids: Eerdmans's, 1995)

----- . “ The New Testament and Kenosis Christology” 1  
in *Exploring Kenotic Christology.* 2

Feenstra, Ronald. “A Kenotic Christological Method for 3  
Understanding the Divine Attributes” in *Exploring Kenotic 4  
Christology.* 5

Feinberg, John. “The Kenosis and Christology.” *Trinity Journal* 6  
(1980), 23-46. 7

Ferm, Robert L. *Readings in the History of Christian Thought* 8  
(N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston,1964). 9

Frame, John. *The Doctrine of God.* (Phillipsburg: P&R, 2002). 10

Geisler, Norman L. and H. Wayne House. *The Battle for God* 11  
(Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2001). 12

----- . *Systematic Theology Vol II* (Minneapolis: 13  
Bethany House,2003). 14

Giles, Kevin. *Jesus and the Father.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 15  
2006). 16

----- .*The Eternal Generation of the Son.* (Downers Grove: 17  
IVP, 2012). 18

Gons, Philip. “Warfield on the Trinity” philgons. 19  
com2011/08warfield-on-eternal subordination-in-the-trinity, 20  
accessed 9-1-18. 21  
22

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ and Andrew Naselli. "An Examination of Three  
2 Philosophical Arguments Against Hierarchy in the Trinity in  
3 *One God in Three Persons*.  
4 Grillmeier, Aloys. *Christ in Christian Tradition vol One* Transl.  
5 John Bowden (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975 reprint).
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ . vol II transl. John Cawte and Pauline Allen  
7 1995
- 8 Gregory of Nyssa. *Against Eunomius*.  
9  
10 Gregory of Nazianzus. *Fourth Oration: On the Son*.
- 11 Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. (Grand Rapids:  
12 Zondervan, 1994)
- 13 \_\_\_\_\_ . *Evangelical Feminism and Biblical Truth*.  
14 (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2004).
- 15 \_\_\_\_\_ . "Biblical Evidence for the Eternal  
16 Submission of the Son to the Father" in *The New Evangelical*  
17 *Subordinationism* Dennis Jowers and H. Wayne House, eds  
18 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012).
- 19 \_\_\_\_\_ . "Doctrinal Deviations in Evangelical-  
20 Feminist Arguments About the Trinity" in *One God in Three*  
21 *Persons*.
- 22 Hamilton, James. "That God May be All in All" in *One God in*  
*Three Persons*.



Harnack, Adolph. <i>History of Dogma vols IV and V.</i> (N.Y.: Dover n.d.).	1 2 3
Hawthorne, Gerald. <i>Philippians WBC 43</i> (Waco: Word,1983).	4
Hellerman, Joseph. <i>Philippians in Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament</i> (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2015).	5
Hillary. <i>On the Trinity.</i>	6 7
----- . <i>De Synodis</i>	8
Hodge, Charles. <i>1 and 2 Corinthians</i> (Carlise, Pa: Banner of Truth Trust,1978, reprint).	9 10
----- . <i>Systematic Theology vols I, II.</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981reprint)	11 12
Holt, Edwin B., <i>The Concept of Consciousness</i> (N.Y.: Mac Millan, 1914).	13 14
Horrell, J. Scott. “Complementarian Trinitarianism: Divine Revelation Is Finally True to the Eternal Personal Relations” in <i>The New Evangelical Subordinationism?</i>	15 16
House, H. Wayne. “The Eternal Relational Subordination of the Son to the Father in Patristic Thought” in <i>The New Evangelical Subordinationism.</i>	17 18 19
Hughes, Philip. <i>Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews</i> (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977).	20 21 22

- 1 John of Damascus. *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*.  
2  
3 Jowers, Dennis. "The Meaning of *Morphe* in Philippians 2:6,7  
4 JETS 49/4, (December 2006).  
5 ----- "The Inconceivability of Subordination Within a  
6 Simple God" in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism*.  
7  
8 Keener, Craig. "Subordination Within the Trinity: John 5:18 a  
9 1 Corinthians 15:28" in *The New Evangelical Subordinationism*.  
10  
11 Kitano, Kenji. "The Eternal Relational Subordination of the Son  
12 to the Father" an unpublished Th.M. thesis (*Trinity Evangelical  
13 Divinity School 1999*).  
14  
15 Kovach, Stephen and Peter Shemm. "A Defense of the Doctrine  
16 of the Eternal Subordination of the Son" *JETS* 42.3 (September,  
17 1999) 462-477.  
18  
19 Klooster, Fred H. "Decrees of God" in *Evangelical Dictionary of  
20 Theology*. Walter A Elwell, ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989).  
21  
22 Knox, John. *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*. (Cambridge:  
University Press, 1967).  
  
Leo. Letter 28  
\_\_\_\_. Sermon 54  
  
Lewis, G.R. "God, Attributes Of" in *Evangelical Dictionary of  
Theology*. Walter A Elwell, ed. ( Grand Rapids: Baker,1984).  
  
22

Lightfoot, J.B. *St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974 reprint). 1  
2

McCall, Thomas. *Modified Kenotic Christology, the Trinity, and Christian Doctrine*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation ( Calvin Theological Seminary, 2004). 3  
4

----- . *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). 5  
6

McIntyre, John. *The Shape of Christology* ( Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998). 7  
8

McKinley, John. "A Model of Jesus Christ's Two Wills in View of Theology Proper and Anthropology" *SBJT* 19.1 (2015) 69-89. 9  
10

McClain, Alva. "Doctrine of the Kenosis in Philippians 2:5-8" *Grace Journal* 8.2 (Spring 1967) 3-13. 11  
12  
13

Macleod, Donald. *The Person of Christ*. (Downers Grove:IVP,1998). 14  
15

Morris, Leon. *The Gospel According to John*. *NICNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971). 16  
17

Morris, Thomas V. *The Logic of God Incarnate* (London: Cornell University Press,1986). 18  
19

Nestorius. *The Bazaar of Heracleides* (USA: Beloved Publishing,2015). 20  
21

- 1 Loofs, Friedrich. *Nestorius and His Place in the History of*  
2 *Christian Doctrine*. (Cambridge: University Press, 1914).
- 3 Oliphant, K. Scott. "Simplicity, Triunity, and the  
4 Incomprehensibility of God" in *One God in Three Persons*.
- 5 Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Jesus God and Man*. Lewis L. Wilkins  
6 and Duane A. Priebe trans. ( Philadelphia: Westminster,  
7 1977)
- 8 Pieper, Francis. *Christian Dogmatics vol II* (Saint Louis:  
9 Concordia,1951).
- 10 Rahner, Karl. *The Trinity*. transl. Joseph Donceel ( N.Y.  
11 *Crossroad*,2002).
- 12 Reid, W.S. "Predestination" *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*,  
13 Walter A. Elwell, ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984),870.
- 14 Revonsuo, Antti and Malti Kampinnen. *The Concept of*  
15 *Consciousness in Philosophy and Neuroscience* (Hillsdale, U.K.  
:1994)
- 16 Reymond, Robert. *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian*  
17 *Faith*. (Nashville: Nelson, 1998).
- 18 Rice, Richard. "Biblical Support For a New Perspective" in *The*  
19 *Openness of God* (eds. Clark Pinnock and others (Downer's  
20 Grove: Intervarsity,1994).
- Sarkissian K.V. "Orthodox Christology" in *The Theology of*  
*Christ* , Ralph J. Tapia, ed. (N.Y. : Bruce Publishing, 1971).



- 1 Ullmann, Carl. *The Sinlessness of Christ* (London: Forgotten  
2 Books, 2015 reprint).
- 3 Van Driele, Edwin Chr. "The Logic of Assumption" in *Exploring*  
4 *Kenotic Christology*.
- 5  
6 Vos, Geerhardus. *Reformed Dogmatics vol III* (Bellingham, Wa:  
7 Lexam, 2014 reprint)
- 8 Waheeb, A. Giurgis. "Orthodox Christology" in *The Theology*  
9 *of Christ*, Ralph J. Tapia, ed. (N.Y.: Bruce Publishing, 1971).
- 10 Ware , Bruce. "Equal in Essence, Distinct in Roles: Eternal  
11 Functional Authority and Submission Among the Essentially  
12 Equal Divine Persons of the Godhead" in *The New Evangelical*  
13 *Subordinationism?*
- 14 \_\_\_\_\_ . "Does Affirming an Authority-Submission  
15 Relationship in the Trinity Entail a Denial of the Homousios"  
16 in *One God in Three Persons*.
- 17 Warfield, Benjamin Breckinridge. "The Trinity" in *The*  
18 *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. vol V James Orr  
19 ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956 reprint) 3012-3022.
- 20 \_\_\_\_\_ . *The Person and Work of*  
21 *Christ*(Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970).
- 22 \_\_\_\_\_ . *Biblical Doctrines*. (Grand  
23 Rapids: Baker 2003 reprint).
- Westminster Shorter Confession of Faith

**THE CHRIST OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE**

Wiley, H. Orton. *Christian Theology, vol II* (Kansas City, Beacon Hill, 1952). 1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

**BILL GROVER**

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23



