

**Luke 1:35**     **The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee** - This conception shall take place suddenly, and the Holy Spirit himself shall be the grand operator. The power, *δυναμις*, the miracle-working power, of the Most High shall overshadow thee, to accomplish this purpose, and to protect thee from danger. As there is a plain allusion to the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the waters, to render them prolific, [Gen 1:2](#), I am the more firmly established in the opinion advanced on [Mat 1:20](#), that the rudiments of the human nature of Christ was a real creation in the womb of the virgin, by the energy of the Spirit of God.

**Therefore also that holy thing (or person) - shall be called the Son of God** - We may plainly perceive here, that the angel does not give the appellation of Son of God to the Divine nature of Christ; but to that holy person or thing, *το ἅγιον*, which was to be born of the virgin, by the energy of the Holy Spirit. The Divine nature could not be born of the virgin; the human nature was born of her. The Divine nature had no beginning; it was God manifested in the flesh, [1Ti 3:16](#); it was that Word which being in the beginning (from eternity) with God, [Joh 1:2](#), was afterwards made flesh, (became manifest in human nature), and tabernacled among us, [Joh 1:14](#). Of this Divine nature the angel does not particularly speak here, but of the tabernacle or shrine which God was now preparing for it, viz. the holy thing that was to be born of the virgin. Two natures must ever be distinguished in Christ: the human nature, in reference to which he is the Son of God and inferior to him, [Mar 13:32](#); [Joh 5:19](#); [Joh 14:28](#), and the Divine nature which was from eternity, and equal to God, [Joh 1:1](#); [Joh 10:30](#); [Rom 9:5](#); [Col 1:16-18](#). It is true, that to Jesus the Christ, as he appeared among men, every characteristic of the Divine nature is sometimes attributed, without appearing to make any distinction between the Divine and human natures; but is there any part of the Scriptures in which it is plainly said that the Divine nature of Jesus was the Son of God? Here, I trust, I may be permitted to say, with all due respect for those who differ from me, that the doctrine of the eternal Sonship of Christ is, in my opinion, anti-scriptural, and highly dangerous. This doctrine I reject for the following reasons: -

1st. I have not been able to find any express declaration in the Scriptures concerning it.

2dly. If Christ be the Son of God as to his Divine nature, then he cannot be eternal; for son implies a father; and father implies, in reference to son, precedency in time, if not in nature too. Father and son imply the idea of generation; and generation implies a time in which it was effected, and time also antecedent to such generation.

3dly. If Christ be the Son of God, as to his Divine nature, then the Father is of necessity prior, consequently superior to him.

4thly. Again, if this Divine nature were begotten of the Father, then it must be in time; i.e. there was a period in which it did not exist, and a period when it began to exist. This destroys the eternity of our blessed Lord, and robs him at once of his Godhead.

5thly. To say that he was begotten from all eternity, is, in my opinion, absurd; and the phrase eternal Son is a positive self-contradiction. Eternity is that which has had no beginning, nor stands in any reference to Time.

Son supposes time, generation, and father; and time also antecedent to such generation. Therefore the conjunction of these two terms, Son and eternity is absolutely impossible, as they imply essentially different and opposite ideas.

The enemies of Christ's Divinity have, in all ages, availed themselves of this incautious method of treating this subject, and on this ground, have ever had the advantage of the defenders of the Godhead of Christ. This doctrine of the eternal Sonship destroys the deity of Christ; now, if his deity be taken away, the whole Gospel scheme of redemption is ruined. On this ground, the atonement of Christ cannot have been of infinite merit, and consequently could not purchase pardon for the offenses of mankind, nor give any right to, or possession of, an eternal glory. The very use of this phrase is both absurd and dangerous; therefore let all those who value Jesus and their salvation abide by the Scriptures. This doctrine of the eternal Sonship, as it has been lately explained in many a pamphlet, and many a paper in magazines, I must and do consider as an awful heresy, and mere sheer Arianism; which, in many cases, has terminated in Socinianism, and that in Deism. From such heterodoxies, and their abettors, may God save his Church! Amen!