

- **1 Cor. 15:28**—"But when all things shall have been subjected to him, **then also the Son himself will be subjected to him** that subjected all things to him, **that God may be all in all.**"

That is:

But when all things shall have been subjected to him, then also [*that is, 'at that time also,' as always*] the Son himself [*the Son in manhood*] will be subjected to him [*the Father*] that subjected all things to him, that God [*the Triune God, not the Father only, but Father, Son and Holy Spirit*] may be all in all.

As perfect man Christ has a human will, held in inscrutable union with His divine will. His human will was, and always will be, in absolute and perfect submission to the Father. "For I am come down from heaven, not that I should do My will, but the will of Him that has sent Me." "Lo, I am come (in the book-roll it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God." "*Though being Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.*" "For let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who, subsisting in the form of God, did not esteem it an object of rapine {as something to be snatched at or seized to His own advantage or enrichment} to be on an equality with God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondman, taking His place in the likeness of men; and having been found in figure as a man, humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross." It is in this connection that we may appropriately, and reverently, speak of subordination, of higher and lower ranks. "My Father is greater than I." (Cf. also 1 Cor. 11:3, "the Christ is the head of every man, but woman's head is the man, *and the Christ's head God.*") *As Son in manhood* He took a subordinate, dependent place, taking the form of a servant, subject to the Father's will—though being, as ever, "God over all, blessed forever" (Rom. 9:5).

"Perhaps the word 'Son' is found in 1 Cor. 15:28 to give those who desire to lower His glory [*or assert that 'Son' indicates inferiority*] some mere show of proof of their insubject notion. I do believe the Word is so written as to confirm unsubject hearts in their disbelief of truth, a solemn thing for each of us to think about. . . . The next thing we note is the context. It is about the second man and last Adam, not about Sonship in deity. It is about the reign as *man*. Thus, to claim that Sonship in deity is meant is to go against the context. And what the text does show is that He will eternally retain the manhood. . . . He was subject [*as man*] before the eternal state is brought in, but here we see that, as man, He will be subject in the eternal state also, but God [*the Triune God*]—*Father, Son, and Spirit*—will be all in all." (R.A. Huebner [RAH])

"But how are we to understand the words in the same chapter, 'Then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all' (1 Cor. 15:28)? Does not this mean, it is asked, that some change will take place in the relationship of Christ to the Father? Or that His humanity will, in some unexplained way, be reabsorbed into the Godhead? No, it means the very opposite. The Lord has for ever 'taken upon Himself the form of a servant,' and as such He became subject to the Father. He is 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever' and can never change. The order of the words in the Greek, as the late Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, has pointed out, is important. They should read, not 'Then shall the Son also,' but 'Then also shall the Son' be subject. 'Also' qualifies the word 'then' not 'the Son.' The words, far from denoting a change, preclude it. Then no less than before shall the Son [*as man*] continue to be the servant of Jehovah, and as such reign over the new heaven and the new earth." (W. Hoste)

"When the time comes that the Lord will deliver back the kingdom to the Father [*15:24*], all will have been fulfilled in new creation. Creation will be brought back to God in a perfect condition, and every trace of the serpent's work will be removed. The expression here [*in 15:28*] has perplexed some . . . In what sense shall the Son be subordinate? When the Son of God came into this world, He entered, He took, a subordinate place, and He will retain it always. The thought is that, having accomplished the work of redemption and restoration for which He became man, He will not give up, but retain the subordinate place in incarnation that He took. The thought is exceedingly precious. Think of it: if the Lord should cease to be man after having brought to pass all that God has purposed and designed, *the very link that brings God and man together would be gone!* . . . We see, then, that Christ has assumed a subordinate position that *Deity* might be displayed. It is His delight thus to glorify God." (C. Crain)

Now compare the following for the significance of *His name* and *eternal relationship to the Father*—that is, *the Son of God, eternal Son of the eternal Father, co-equal in every way in the eternal relations of the Triune Godhead*:

“And as they went to bring his disciples word, behold also, Jesus met them, saying, Hail! And they coming up **took him by the feet and worshiped him.** Then Jesus says to them, **Fear not;** go, bring word to my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me. . . . But the eleven disciples went into Galilee to the mountain which Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, **they worshipped him:** but some doubted. **And Jesus coming up spoke to them, saying, All power has been given me in heaven and upon earth.** Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them to **the name [not ‘Names,’ but the singular Name of the fully revealed God, the Triune Name] of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** And behold, **I am with you** all the days, until the completion of the age” (Matt. 28:9-10, 16-20)

“But Jesus answered them, ***My Father worketh hitherto and I [the Son] work.*** For this therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he had not only violated the Sabbath, but also said that **God was his own Father [in such a manner as to be] making himself equal with God.**” (John 5:17-18)

“That all may ***honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*** He who *honours not* the Son, *honours not* the Father who has sent him.” (John 5:23)

“I ***[the Son]*** and the Father are ***one.*** The Jews ***therefore*** again took stones that they might stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewn you of my Father; for which work of them do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for **blasphemy**, and because thou, being a man, ***makest thyself God.*** Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ‘Ye are gods’? If he called *them* ‘gods’ to whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), do ye say of him ***whom the Father has sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am Son of God?*** (John 10:30-36)

“The Jews answered him, We have a law, and ***according to our law he ought to die, because he made himself Son of God.***” (John 19:7)

“He that beholds me ***[the Son],*** beholds him ***[the Father] that sent me.***” (John 12:45)

“Jesus says to him, Am I so long a time with you, and thou hast not known me, Philip? **He that has seen me *[the Son] has seen the Father;*** and how sayest thou, Shew us the Father?” (John 14:9)

“I ***[the Son]*** came out from ***[Gr. para, from with]*** the Father and have come into the world ***[‘being the Son, He both willed and submitted to be sent, and being sent, He did the will of Him that sent Him’];*** again I leave the world and go to the Father.” (John 16:28)

“And now glorify me, thou **Father, along with thyself, with the glory which I [the Son] had along with thee before the world was [i.e., in eternity past, before the beginning of time/creation].**” (John 17:5)

“**Father,** as to those whom thou hast given me ***[the Son],*** I desire that where I am they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, **for thou *[the Father]* lovedst me *[the Son]* before the foundation of the world [i.e., in eternity past, before the beginning of time/creation, in the eternal communion and intimacy of the Godhead the Father’s love ever dwelt in complacent affection upon ‘the Son of His love.’]**.” (John 17:24)

“**Grace** shall be with you, ***mercy, peace from*** God the Father, ***and from*** the Lord Jesus Christ, ***the Son of the Father,*** in truth and love.” (2 John 3)

“That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes; that which we contemplated, and our hands handled, concerning **the Word of life;** (and the life has been manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and report to you ***the eternal life [the eternal Son], which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us.***) And we know that **the Son of God** has come, and has given us an understanding that we should know him that is true; and **we are *in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*** Children, **keep yourselves from idols.**” (1 John 1:1-2, 5:20-21)

“God [God as such, the (now fully revealed) Triune God] having spoken in many parts and in many ways formerly to the fathers in the prophets, at the end of these days has spoken to us **in the person of the Son** [the Son become flesh, the Son in manhood], whom he [the personal God as such] has established heir of all things, **by whom [by the Creator-Son] also he made the worlds** [Gr. *aiones*, lit. “ages,” meaning the Son made ‘the whole created universe of time and space’; and since the Son created the ages of time, the Son is therefore timeless, the eternal Son]; **who being** [inherently being in His Divine Person in manhood; the God-Man being] **the effulgence of his glory** [the radiance of God’s intrinsic splendor and perfections, the outshining of Divine excellence in display] **and the expression of his substance** [the exact expression and representation of the essential nature or being of God], and **upholding all things by the word of his power** [i.e., upholding ‘ALL things’ by the Son’s own word of power, and thus His own Omnipotent, Almighty utterance of power!], having made by himself the purification of sins, set himself down on the right hand of the greatness on high.” (Heb. 1:1-3)

“But as to **the Son** [the Father says in Ps. 45:6], **Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever**, and a sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. . . . And [as to the Son, the Father says in Ps. 102:25-27], **Thou in the beginning, Lord [Jehovah, the Self-Existent, Uncreated, Ever Existing, Eternal One, who caused the ‘beginning’ of all things to begin], hast founded the earth, and works of thy hands are the heavens.** They shall perish, but thou continuest still; and they all shall grow old as a garment, and as a covering shalt thou roll them up, and they shall be changed; but **thou art the Same** [another Divine title of the only true God, Jehovah, meaning ‘the self-existent one who does not change,’ in contrast to all creatures who are such as are indeed changeable], and thy years shall not fail.” (Heb. 1:8, 10-12)

“**Though he were Son** [i.e., ‘notwithstanding the fact that he was the Son,’ and thus not in a place of obedience or subjection, but co-equal in every way in the eternal relations of the Triune Godhead], he learned obedience from the things which he suffered [on earth as the God-Man].” (Heb. 5:8)

“For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the most high God [recorded in Genesis 14], who met Abraham returning from smiting the kings, and blessed him; whom Abraham gave also the tenth portion of all; first [‘Melchisedec’] being interpreted is King of righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is King of peace; [who is further ‘interpreted’ as being] **without father, without mother, without genealogy; having neither beginning of days nor end of life**, but [that is, the Holy Spirit designed the inspired historical record of Gen.14 to omit any such references, so that Melchisedec’s person and priesthood would serve as a type and thus be] **assimilated to the Son of God, abides a priest continually** [our Lord, in regard to His Manhood, **did** have ‘mother,’ ‘genealogy,’ ‘beginning of days’ and ‘end of life,’ **but absolutely not so** in regard to His deity as **the eternal Son of God**, who as such has neither beginning nor end, being Himself **the Eternal Life** in His Person, who in this sense was thus ‘without father’ too, i.e., in the sense of being without any derivation or source of origin/life/existence, but is **Eternal, Timeless and Self-Existent**].” (Heb. 7:1-3)

“Herein as to us has been manifested the love of God, that **God has sent his only-begotten [monogenes, meaning only, unique, one-of-a-kind and most-deeply-loved] Son into the world**, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son a propitiation for our sins.” (1 John 4:9-10)

“**No one has seen God at any time; the only-begotten [monogenes, meaning only, unique, one-of-a-kind and most-deeply-loved] Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.**” (John 1:18)

The eternal Sonship of Christ is not dependent on the notion of the “eternal generation” of the Son, which latter I reject. But the truth of His eternal Sonship itself is absolutely vital!

“While I hold to eternal relationships in the Godhead, I reject the metaphysical speculations about ‘the eternal generation of the Son,’ ‘begotten before all worlds,’ eternal procession’ of either the Son or the Spirit, or *any thought of subordination within the Godhead*. The notion that when one rejects ‘eternal generation of the Son,’ therefore he must also reject the eternal Sonship, is absurd. The eternal Sonship is not dependent on metaphysical speculations based on misunderstanding of certain scriptures and confusion about ‘only begotten Son.’” (RAH)

Note on “only-begotten” (Gr. *monogenes*): *Monogenes* occurs a total of nine times in the NT, five of which are used in reference to Christ (and only in the writings of John: John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9). It means *only, unique, one-of-a-kind and most-deeply-loved*, and as such speaks of God the Son’s *underived, unacquired, unique, eternal relationship* with the Father. ***Monogenes* carries no inherent notions of being “generated” or “begotten” (which are entirely different words in the original Hebrew and Greek, and never used of Christ as to His eternal Sonship in the Godhead, but only in relation to the manhood taken into His Person as, e.g., in Psalm 2:7 and Luke 1:35).** This is evident from the fact that our Saviour is and always remains the *Monogenes* Son even with the *myriad* of believers who have indeed been “*begotten*” as children of God through the new birth and given the place of sonship as “*sons of God.*” Moreover, compare the use and meaning of *monogenes* in **Heb. 11:17—along with the Hebrew equivalent in Gen. 22:2** (on which Heb. 11:17 is based)—in regard to Isaac in relationship to Abraham: “By faith Abraham, when tried, offered up Isaac, and he who had received to himself the promises offered up his ***only-begotten {monogenes}***” (Heb. 11:17). “And he [God] said [to Abraham], ***Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, Isaac,*** and get thee into the land of Moriah, and there offer him up for a burnt-offering on one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen. 22:2). But Abraham clearly had *more than one* son; in fact, Ishmael was his *first* son, born 13 years earlier! Isaac was thus Abraham’s “only-begotten” in the sense of being the *unique, one-of-a-kind and most-deeply-loved son in relationship* with his father Abraham!

Christ is “the Son in the highest possible character, the only-begotten Son, distinguishing Him thus from any other who might, in a subordinate sense, be son of God. ‘The only-begotten Son, *which is* in the bosom of the Father.’ Observe: not *which was* [nor ‘*which came to be*’], but ‘*which is*’ [‘*the one being*’]. He is viewed as retaining the same perfect intimacy with the Father, entirely unimpaired by local or any other circumstances He had entered. Nothing in the slightest degree detracted from His own personal glory, and from the infinitely near relationship which He had had with the Father from all eternity.... Under all changes, outwardly, he abode as from eternity the only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father.” (William Kelly)