

## Eternal Submission of the Son? (2)

By Sam Powell

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**First Reformed Church**

9882 Garden Hwy  
Yuba City, CA 95991

**Website:** [reformedyubacity.org](http://reformedyubacity.org)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/reformedyubacity](http://www.sermonaudio.com/reformedyubacity)

The topic this morning is going to be the nature and person of Christ. As you recall a couple of weeks ago or, I think a month ago, we began discussing this doctrine that has been coming out of the church for about 20 or 30 years known as the eternal subordination of Christ, that the second person of the Trinity, we've got to be clear when we say this, the second person of the Trinity, they teach, is eternally subordinate to the first person of the Trinity. This is a very common teaching among the evangelical world. It was first popularized by the systematic theologian Wayne Grudem who, I believe, teaches at Dallas Theological Seminary, and it has been espoused at that seminary and it has been taking off from there. There are also Reformed writers that have been espousing it and teaching it and I would submit that it is unorthodox, in fact, the church has actually declared it to be heretical and we need to stand up and we need to say what it is when we're talking about this.

So there is when you're talking about the Trinity, there is an orthodox doctrine in keeping the distinction of the persons. We have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and in the Bible they always appear in that order so the orthodox have always talked about the order within the Trinity, the Father, then the Son, then the Holy Ghost, that's always the order, but they've been very careful to not go any further than that because to go any further than that is to introduce something beyond the persons of the Trinity. This gets a little complicated and what's important in our study is to remember what the Bible teaches and don't go beyond that to try to explain anything else. We would never use descriptions of things on this earth to describe the Trinity because that can never reach into the recesses of the hidden Trinity. It only comes by revelation. The church has always gotten that.

So we talk about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and one thing that Wayne Grudem does is he says the word "father" and the word "son" mean something in the world, a son is always subordinate to his father. We see that in Scripture and since the son is subordinate to the father, they have used those terms on purpose to describe the son and the father to teach the son is eternally subordinate to the father. I'd say, no, what that's doing is that's using an earthly term to describe something beyond Scripture. The Scripture uses "son" and "father" when it's talking about the eternal Trinity to talk about the Son being the very nature of God, not eternally subordinate to God. What I want to do today is I want to talk about why saying that the Son is subordinate to the Father actually is introducing another God into the Trinity and it's a rejection of the full deity of Jesus

Christ and it's simply going right back to Arianism. Arianism said that Jesus was a creature, the first and the greatest of all creatures, but he wasn't truly God in every sense of the word. We would say that the Scripture teaches that Jesus is the one true eternal God.

The first place that I want to start with this is in Isaiah 55 which seems a very strange place to start but you're going to have to bear with me and we will get there. I think one of the reasons this false teaching is brought in is because the church is not as well taught as it should be on the doctrine of the Trinity. In Isaiah 55, I just want to read the whole chapter.

1 Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut; 2 I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: 3 And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.

Pause right there before I go on reading. Remember, this is important, remember that every time you see the word "Lord" here...yes? ("What chapter are you in?") 45, Isaiah 45. What did I say? Did I say 55? Sorry, 45. Isaiah 45. Thank you. My age is getting me again.

In Isaiah 45, remember when we're reading through this that every time we see the word "LORD" in all capital letters, it's a translation of the Hebrew name for God which we say in our language, Jehovah. It's a translation of the Hebrew word, it's only four letters, it's the holy personal name of God himself and Jehovah is revealed as the God of Israel. "I am the God of Israel." He takes Israel as his own special people and he says, "I am your God. You will be my people," and then he also teaches that Jehovah, the Lord God, is the only God. He is the Creator of heaven and earth. He's the only God there is. All the other nations have their gods, Israel has Jehovah as their God, but Jehovah is also the God of all the nations. This is important in this teaching.

Now, what this chapter is about, this was written about 100 years before these events actually happened. Cyrus was the king of Persia that eventually defeated the Babylonians, came through on the river barge, on the river underneath the city where the guards inside the city actually opened the gates for Cyrus and Cyrus floated through and plundered the underneath of the city before he came up. He describes it perfectly in these first three verses that we just read exactly what Cyrus did which is why modern critics today say that this chapter could not have been written until after the events because how on earth would Isaiah have known Cyrus' name. But the point of the chapter is God decreed it, God did it, therefore God calls it by name. That's the whole point that we're going to see as we go through. So if it was written afterwards, then this isn't the word of God and the

whole point is not being made. If you're falling that, anyway. We are getting to the eternal nature of Jesus Christ in just a moment.

Verse 4,

4 For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name [speaking of Cyrus]: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me. 5 I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. 7 I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil [that word is not moral evil, by the way, it's calamity, disaster]: I the LORD do all these things. 8 Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it. 9 Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? 10 Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth? 11 Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. 12 I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. 13 I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts. 14 Thus saith the LORD, The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine: they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God. 15 Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour. 16 They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. 17 But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end. 18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else. 19 I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the LORD speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. 20 Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. 21 Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from

ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. 22 Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. 23 I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. 24 Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. 25 In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

Now, we could spend all day plowing through every word of the Hebrew but what is clear when you first read this, how many gods are there? One. And who is that God? Jehovah. "I am the Lord. I am God. I declare things from the beginning. I know of no other gods. I know of no other, everything else is idols, it's pure folly to build something out of wood and bow down to it and say save us. I carry you. I decree it from the beginning. I am the one, I do my will. I do all of my good pleasure. I am God. There is none else." Everybody see how clear this is? And to prove that, he is determining by name the king of Persia who is going to set free the captives who are captured by Babylon and this is before Babylon was even a nation. This was way, way, way, way before any of this happened and God said, "There is no one else that declares the future." And why does God declare the future? Because God does the future. Why does God do the future? Because of his own good pleasure. Now, with this, Jehovah God is there any hint that Jehovah God submits to anyone? No, he does all of his good pleasure. He does everything that he decrees. There is only one will in God for there is only one God. That's very clearly taught in Isaiah 45.

Now with that in mind, go to Philippians 2 which most of you thought and said, "Oh yeah, I see where he's going." Go to Philippians 2:5,

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Let's pause there and see exactly what Paul is saying there. The first thing is that he says, "Who, being in the form of God." This was, well, if you think about it, it's a Greek way of saying he is, everything that pertains to God, everything that pertains to God and what we know about God is ascribed to Jesus Christ. Who is Jesus Christ? The name Jesus is that man born of Mary in a manger in Bethlehem, Jesus of Nazareth. That man, okay, "Christ" is the word that means "anointed." He is the fulfillment of all the prophecies, the heir to

the throne of David particularly, also our great priest and our great high prophet, Jesus Christ. Remember, Christ is a title, not a name. It's not his last name, it's a title. Jesus the Messiah. This one born of Mary, is actually true God. Everything that you can say about God you can say about Christ and therefore, and here the modern translations, I believe, are wrong, therefore he didn't think it was a crime to be equal with God and he declared himself to be equal with God throughout his walk on the earth. "I am God himself," Jesus said. "Before Abraham was, I am." And yet he was, Paul's overall point is as human beings what we try to do is we try to grab on the preeminence and make ourselves first in everything and he says, "No, no, instead of that, be like Christ." Who was Christ? Christ was actually God and yet for our salvation, for our good, he humbled himself, took upon himself the form of a servant, a slave, the lowest of the low, born in a manger; the lowest of the low, complete poverty in a back woods area of Judah which was a back woods province of Rome. And he did that and he humbled himself because he was obedient to God. Not as the second person of the Trinity as we will see, but in his form as Jesus Christ, the God-man. Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man is true God and true man which means everything you can say about God you can say about Jesus, and everything you can say about man you can say about Jesus except sin which is what we're seeing, which is why we've got to be wise when we go through this.

So when we are talking about "he emptied himself," chapter 2, verse 7, "he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." When did Jesus become obedient? He became obedient when he was found in fashion as a man. He submitted himself as a man. When you talk about the submission of Christ, you're talking about his human nature and, of course, his human nature is ascribed to the person so when you say Jesus Christ submitted, you're talking about him as a Mediator, not as eternal and true God.

So when Jesus came to earth, until the Holy Spirit was poured out and your heart was converted when you looked at Jesus you saw just a man and not a spectacular man, just an ordinary man, and when he was crucified, what you saw was a criminal and a slave. But who was this man? Because he was obedient unto death, God raised him from the dead and highly exalted him. Who is he talking about? He's talking about Jesus who is true God and true man. Highly exalted him, given him a name which is above every name. And what name is above every name? The name of God himself. That every knee would bow and now he quotes that amazing passage we just read in Isaiah 45, that passage that there is no other God, there is no other Savior, there is no other true God anywhere. Jehovah, the Lord, is God. And at the end of that he says that, "the day will come when every knee will bow and every tongue will swear by my name, saith the Lord." And in this passage, he says, "every knee will bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."

What do you say when you say Jesus Christ is Lord? You're actually saying two things and this is due to the confusion of the Greek language which is where wisdom comes in. Many years before Christ came, in Hebrew, the word "Jehovah" which is four letters, Yahweh is the probable pronunciation, it's four letters in the Hebrew. That name became

so holy to the Hebrews that every time they saw it in the manuscript, they said "Adonai," which means "my Lord." My Lord is my Master, my Owner, my King, the one who has the right to command me. That's what a Lord is. And every time a good Hebrew saw that in the Old Testament in their Bible, they would pronounce it Adonai, which, by the way, those vowel markings are still in the Hebrew manuscript which is where we get Jehovah from, it has the vowels of Adonai and the consonants of Yahweh and it's all put together. Is everybody following this so far? Adonai means my Lord. About 300 years before Christ, in the Greek language they translated the Old Testament into Greek and when they translated this word "Yahweh," they used the Greek word "kyrios" which means "Lord"; they followed the old Hebrew tradition. So when the Greek Septuagint, every time they translated the Greek word or the Hebrew word "Yahweh," they translated it "Lord."

Now, that was the translation that was used by the church when the New Testament was given in Greek and so all the quotations from the Old Testament are in the Greek translation of the Old Testament which was the Septuagint. I told you this was pretty hard to follow. What this means is the Greek word "kyrios" in the New Testament can mean two things: one, it can mean the original meaning of kyrios which is "my Lord, my master, my commander or sir." When you talk to a superior, you refer to him as Lord. The other thing it means in all the Old Testament quotes is "Jehovah" just like our word Lord. So in this passage when we confess that Jesus is Lord, we're saying something far more than confessing that Jesus is our Master and our Owner. He is our Master and our Owner but this means something far more than that. What we mean when we say "every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord," is that he is the one true eternal God; the God of Israel; the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob; he's the voice in the burning bush; he's the voice that thundered from Mount Sinai. He's the one true eternal God. That's what this passage means.

Now, with that in mind, go to Romans 10, a very famous passage but I want to look really close at it here. Let's start in verse 9. Romans 10:9,

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Have you all heard this verse before somewhere? Very famous verse. Let's look at what's actually being said. In the Greek, the arrangement of the words, a better translation of the first phrase which fits the context better is, "if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Okay, and when you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, first, let's look at each one of those words. The word "confess" means "to say the same thing," homologeō, that's what it means. It means to echo the same thing. It doesn't just mean blather, it means to say the same thing. Say the same thing as what? Say the same thing as the holy Scriptures is the context of that. We're confessing the truth and what is the truth? That Jesus is Lord. Again, does Paul here mean that we are confessing that Jesus is our Master and our Owner which could be true and could also fit the context, or is he

saying that Jesus is Jehovah himself which would be true and would fit the context?  
What does Paul mean by it?

Well, let's look at the rest of the context, "and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Now he's explaining it, verse 10,

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

The mouth follows what the heart believes. Have you got that so far? So in verse 10, or verse 11, he says,

11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

To be ashamed is to lose all your hope, to die in your sins. If you believe on Christ, if you believe on the Lord Jehovah, you will not be ashamed. That's the stumbling block that was set before the Jews. The Jews will stumble at it but if you believe the Lord, you will be established, you will be firm. And so Paul is explaining what he says, what it means to confess that Jesus is the Lord and to believe that God has raised him from the dead. He's saying, "If you believe on him, you will not be ashamed."

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

Now it sounds like he has changed the subject but look at the text that he is quoting here in the very next phrase in verse 13,

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Now, once again, this word "Lord" is kyrios, the same word but he's quoting Joel 2 and in Joel 2, remember Joel is promising the day of the Lord which will come and who will stand in the day of the Lord when God's wrath is poured out upon sinners and the world is wiped away, this judgment is coming. And in that day of the Lord when judgment is poured out upon the world, Joel says, "But whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah will be saved." Now, that word is unequivocal; it does not mean Lord or master, it means Jehovah God. What Paul is saying here is if you call upon the name of Jehovah, you will be saved and he's using that as a proof text; this is what he means when he says, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Jehovah and believe in your heart that God hath raised him from the dead, you will be saved." So what is the confession that Paul is commanding us to do? It's to believe that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, that the day of the Lord is coming and we have no hope and call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and we will be saved because whosoever believeth on the cornerstone laid in Zion will never be ashamed and whoever will call upon the name of Jehovah will be saved. So if we call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, he doesn't take us to the Father, he is Jehovah and therefore we will be saved.

Now, Peter said that Paul wrote some things that are hard to understand. This is one of those things that needs to be memorized, meditated on. You need to look at all the Old Testament quotes. Part of the problem in America is we're used to proof texting things which means we throw around Bible verses that prove the point we want to make and whoever runs out of Bible verses first loses. That's not how we're to study Scripture. That's not how the New Testament writers used it. The New Testament writers would quote a snippet of Scripture so that we would go back and study the whole context of what was being said. So when Paul said "whoever shall call upon the name of the Lord will be saved," he's expecting us to go back and study Joel and find out what that means in context and how it applies and then by the power of the Holy Spirit, your eyes will open and you'll say, "Oh, that's what it means to confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus." When you're confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Jehovah, that's the same thing as calling upon the name of the Lord in the book of Joel and whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. But how are we to call upon the one that you've never heard about? And how will you hear about the one that's never been preached? That's when he goes on in that famous passage: faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. It's the declaration that Jesus is Jehovah. So what's at stake when you say that the second person of the Trinity is eternally subordinate to the first person of the Trinity is the very Gospel itself.

I'm going to use an illustration. If you are a salesman, you're selling insurance and you go to the house and you believe in your heart that a woman is eternally submissive to her husband, she has no authority in her home whatsoever, all she does is completely obey the will of her husband, you knock on the door, the woman opens the door and what do you say? "Is the man of the house home?" Do you see that? You're not going to talk to the woman. She has no say. So also if you believe that the second person of the Trinity is eternally subordinate to the Father, when you call upon Jesus, your viewpoint is the same view that the Roman Catholic Church would have about Mary. "Hey, while you're up there, could you tell God that..." Does everybody follow what I'm saying? This is exactly the mistake that Philip made when he said to Peter, or when he said to Jesus in John 14, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough." And what did Jesus say? "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." That's what's at stake. You're not coming to an employee when you come to Christ. You're not coming to an eternally subordinate one when you come to Christ. You've come to God himself. There's no place else to go. When you have seen Christ, you've seen the Father.

There are two errors that we need to avoid when it comes to the Trinity. One is the confusion of the persons and so when you're talk about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the church has always been very clear to make sure those three are separated and so that's when you start talking about order and you say, well, every time it's always mentioned the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and they speak to one another, they commune with one another, they fellowship with one another, they have a perfect fellowship, they are true persons. So it's one mistake to say it's just three names for the same God. We don't believe that. The other mistake is to ascribe attributes to the persons that make them three different Gods. This is why we say there are not three Almighty



Beings. There is only one Almighty Being. There are not three willing Beings. There is only one willing Being. There is only one will in God. What's my proof of that? Can you find any passage in the entire Bible that talks about the wills of God? It's always the will of God, the good pleasure of God, singular. There is only one will in God. Now, when Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, became a man, he took upon himself a true human will and so then he could say, "Not my will but thine be done." He's speaking as our Mediator, not as the second person of the Trinity. This is where it gets really confusing but we have to speak with sobriety and introducing subordination into the second person of the Trinity makes another will in God and now you've got three Gods. Are you following this?

It's a huge problem and we've got to avoid it. There are not three wills in God, there's only one, and yet the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the Father. The Father begot, begets, the Son is begotten. The Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Father and the Son breathe out the Spirit. Now, what all those words mean, I'm not even going to begin to try to explain, I'm simply going to say what Scripture teaches and with that, I can open this up for any questions. Are there any questions?