The DISTINCTION Between the FATHER AND SON

STEVEN RITCHIE
Hebrews 2:14, 17 NIV - “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- …. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way …”

1 Timothy 3:16 states that “God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit …”
Luke 1:35 NASB – “The HOLY SPIRIT WILL COME UPON YOU and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and FOR THAT REASON the holy child shall be called THE SON OF GOD.”

Matthew 1:20 NASB – “… the child who has been conceived in her is OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

The scriptures inform us that the Holy Spirit of God who descended upon the virgin in Luke 1:35 and Matthew 1:20 “shared in their humanity.” Hebrews 2:14-17 proves that someone pre-existed to partake of flesh and blood in order to “share in their humanity.”

Who then is the He who partook of flesh and blood in Heb. 2:14? Who then is the He who was manifested in the flesh in 1 Timothy 3:16? Who then is the He who pre-existed the life of Abraham in John 8:58? Who then is that “Yahweh who” would “become” our
“salvation” as “the stone which the builders rejected?” Psalm 118:14-23 says Yahweh, but Mark 12:10-11 says Jesus. And who is the One who’s “holy arm” was “revealed” as a true man. Isaiah 52:10 and Isaiah 53:1 says Yahweh, but John 12:37-39 says Jesus.

The Son of God could not have pre-existed as a Son because the word “Son” means an “offspring” or an “inheritor.” Only a true offspring of someone else can be a real Son.

That is why Hebrews 1:5 cites 2 Samuel 7:14 to prove that God the Father said, “I will be a Father to him, and HE SHALL BE A SON TO ME.” Hence, God the Father said in the Old Testament that He would be a Father to the Son and that the Son would be a true Son to the Father in the prophetic future rather than in eternity past. For Heb. 2:17 states that the He who partook of flesh and blood was “made fully human in every way” just like all men are.

God as God never had a mother, but “God with us” as a true man (a true offspring of God) could have a mother. Therefore we know that there is a definite distinction between God as the omnipresent Father whose Holy Spirit has always filled “heaven and earth” (Jer. 23:24), and that “God with us” (Matthew 1:23) who was “manifested in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16) as a real man.

Hence, the only true God is the unchangeable Father (Malachi 3:6) outside of the incarnation, while the Son of God is the offspring of God as that same God with us inside the incarnation as a true man who was miraculously conceived and born by the Holy Spirit of that only true God Himself.

If Jesus is not God who also became man, then how is it that Jesus can now hear and answer prayer (John 14:14)? How is it that Jesus now “fills all things” (Ephesians 4:10). And how is it that Jesus’ Spirit now indwells all true believers who have faith in him (John 14:16-18; Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9)?

When God became a man “He had to be made like them”, “fully human in every way” (Heb. 2:17 NIV), in order to save humanity. Since God is not ontologically a man (Numbers 23:19), we know that the Son of God could not be God as God, but only God with us a true and legitimate man.

Wherefore, inspired scripture proves that the Holy Spirit of God who became a man via incarnation through the virgin was made exactly like all men, with a human spirit as well as a human body.

This explains how Jesus had a true human nature who could actually experience temptations. This also explains how Jesus had a genuine ability to pray and have a loving relationship with God as his Father just as any true man could.
Early Christian writers such as Ignatius and Mathetes who were taught by the original apostles within the first century, did not believe that the Son of God always existed as a Son. Ignatius had taught that “God (had) become (a) man (Ephesians 7:2)” rather than a Son becoming a man.

Ignatius of Antioch wrote to the Ephesians (7:2)
“There is One Physician both physical and spiritual, born and unborn, God become man, true life in death, sprung both from Mary and from God, first subject to suffering, and then incapable of it. - Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Ignatius’ seven genuine epistles to the churches in Asia Minor in the early second century (about 100-117 A.D.) prove that the early Christians of Asia who were taught by the original apostles, also believed that the Son of God is “God become man” by being “sprung both from Mary and from God.” Since the churches of Asia Minor were in fellowship with each other, it is highly unlikely that there teachings differed from that of Ignatius and the original apostles. Wherefore, the Apostolic teaching of the earliest Christians was that God became a true man who “sprung both from Mary and from God.” This means that the Christ child was formed from Mary’s human DNA united with the indescribable divine DNA (with male chromosomes) provided by the Holy Spirit when God incarnated Himself as a man through the virgin. For Jesus could not have been born as a man if he was merely a clone of his mother.
In the 11th chapter of his Epistle to Diognetus, Mathetes presents himself as “having been a disciple of Apostles, I come forward as a teacher of the Gentiles, ministering worthily to them.”

Mathetes wrote in his Epistle to Diognetus Chapter 11, “This is He who, being from everlasting, is TODAY CALLED THE SON …”

Notice that Mathetes speaks of Christ as being the “He” who is “from Everlasting, is today called the Son.” According to Mathetes, the Son was not called the Son until “today.” Mathetes identified the Son as the Father in his Epistle to Diognetus chapter nine.

So according to Mathetes (who was a disciple of the original apostles), the Son is the man who “is today called the Son”, but the “He who” was “from everlasting” is the Father. “GOD being manifested as A MAN (THE SON – 1 Tim. 3:16), and man displaying power as God. But neither was the former a mere imagination (GOD before being manifested as a man), nor did the second imply a bare humanity (THE SON); but the one was absolutely true (GOD), and the other an economical arrangement (THE SON). Now THAT RECEIVED A BEGINNING (the Son) which was perfected by God.”

Ignatius to the Ephesians Chapter 19

Ignatius had identified the Son as “an economical arrangement” rather than as a living pre-incarnate Son before “God” was “manifested as a man.” He described the Word (logos) as an impersonal “THAT” before it receiving “a beginning” as the child born and son given. The apostle John did the same in 1 John 1:1 when he opened his first epistle by saying, “THAT which was from the beginning” rather than “He who was from the beginning.”

There is not a single early Christian writer on record (before the mid third century) who ever believed that the Son always literally existed as a Son throughout eternity past! Therefore the historical data proves that there were no true Trinitarians within the first few centuries of the early Christian era.
Hebrews 1:3 (KJV) informs us that Jesus as a Son is the Father’s Person “reproduced” as the express image of the Father’s “Person” as a human person.

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person …” Heb. 1:3

Rather than being the brightness of His own glory and the exact image of His own divine person, Jesus as the Son of God the Father is the brightness of God the Father’s glory and the exact image of God the Father’s person as a human person.

“He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature …” Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

Hebrews 1:3 informs us that the Spirit of God reproduced an exact “imprint” of God’s divine “Person” and “Nature” to form the person called the Son of God. The Greek word “CHARAKTER” proves that Jesus as a fully human Son was “reproduced” as an exact “imprint” or “copy” of the Father’s HYPOSTASIS – “Person, Substance, Nature” as a fully complete human being. For the Son could not have always existed as a reproduced copy of the Father’s Personal Substance and Nature without having a beginning.

Hebrews 2:14-17 proves that the Son was “reproduced” as an exact “copy” of the Father’s Person, Substance, and Nature by being “made like” them (like all humans), “fully human in every way.” This explains how Jesus was able to be pray and be tempted just like all men.
There is not a single scripture in the Bible to prove that the Son was literally “made” before his virgin conception and birth through the virgin. Jesus as a Son is called “the firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15)” in the same sense that he is called “the Lamb slain from the creation of the world” in Revelation 13:8. Just as Jesus could not have been literally slain twice (once before creation and a second time after his birth), so Jesus as a Son could not have been born twice either.

1 Peter 1:20 proves that the Son was “foreknown before the creation of the world.” A foreknown Son could not have always existed before being “foreknown.” Matthew 1:20 and Luke 1:35 proves why the Son of God was called a Son in the first place. He was called a Son because of his virgin conception and birth from the virgin. Therefore the Son became a living Son by being granted life from the Father through his birth.

John 5:26 – “For as the Father has life in Himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”

If the words of inspired scripture mean anything, then the Son of God could not have always existed as a Son before being “granted” a “life in himself.”
Romans 8:29-30 – “Those whom He FOREKNEW (Proginosko), He also PREDESTINED to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that he would be THE FIRSTBORN AMONG MANY BRETHREN. And those whom He predestined, He also .... called ... justified ... and .... glorified.”

Romans 8:29-30 also informs us when the “foreknown (1 Peter 1:20)” Son became a living Son. Jesus as a Son is called “the firstborn among many brethren” because he was born first in God’s mind and plan before God’s elect were born in God’s mind before creation. For the Son of God and God’s elect were already “foreknown” and “predestined” (Ephesians 1:4-5) before the creation of the world.

Hence, the Son is called “the firstborn among many brethren” long before the “many brethren” were actually born. Therefore God’s elect were already predestined to be “conformed to the image of His Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29) “before the creation of the world” (Ephesians 1:4) actually took place.

Wherefore, the Son of God was already “the firstborn among many brethren” in the foreknowledge of God, just as Christ’s brethren were also “born” after the “firstborn” in God’s predestined plan. Romans 8:30 concludes by saying, “And “those whom he predestined, he also called” … “justified and” … glorified (past tense).”

These scriptural facts prove that God’s elect were already called, justified, and glorified before they were actually born on the earth.

Therefore God’s elect were already born after “the firstborn” (Christ) by already being “conformed to the image of His Son” as “the firstborn among many brethren” before the actual creation began (Ephesians 1:4;
After God had become a man through the virgin, the Holy Spirit of the only true God the Father continued to be the omnipresent Holy Spirit, even after the Spirit of God imprinted Himself as a human spirit to become the man Christ Jesus.

For Hebrews 1:3 proves that Jesus is a reproduced copy of the Father’s substance of Being as a genuine human being. Although the Father’s substance of Being was copied, the Father’s Holy Spirit continued to exist as the unchangeable God who continued to fill heaven and earth.

The newly formed man Christ Jesus was able to be tempted as a fully complete human being just as he could pray as a fully complete human being. Therefore, Jesus could not be God with us as God, but rather, Immanuel, “God with us” (Matthew 1:23) as a true man.
God was not a man before the incarnation (Numbers 23:19) and He is not literally a man after the incarnation either. For the flesh of Jesus is not literally God; nor is the human spirit of Jesus literally God. For when God became a man, He became something distinct from God, a true man (a son).

1 Tim. 2:5 proves that there is only One true God the Father and one mediator between God and men, “the MAN Christ Jesus.” Thus we have One divine Person (the Father) and one human person (the Son). Heb. 1:3 proves that the human Son was made as the exact “imprint” of the Father’s substance of being as a human being in the incarnation via the virgin. Therefore Hebrews 1:3 proves that the Son is “the radiance of His glory (the Father’s glory) and the express image of His Person (the Father’s Person)” as a fully complete human person. This proves that the deity of Jesus could not be another distinct divine person apart from “the only true God (John 17:3)” the Father.

Trinitarian theology depends upon the personal distinction between God (the omnipresent Spirit of the Father) and His only begotten child born and son given. Yet these distinctions do not support a coequal and coeternal Son Person. The Word and the Spirit are simply manifestations or emanations of the only true God the Father (John 1:1; John 1:14; John 4:23-24; John 14:24; John 17:3) who also incarnated Himself as the man Christ Jesus.

The Son became known as “the eternally begotten Son” through the writings of men like Augustine of Hippo (385-430 AD) who explained Psalm 2:7 by writing, “Your years are one day, and YOUR DAY IS NOT DAILY, but today; because your today yields not tomorrow, for neither does it follow yesterday. YOUR TODAY IS ETERNITY; therefore YOU BEGET THE CO-ETERNAL SON, to whom You said, ‘THIS DAY HAVE I BEGOTTEN YOU.’”[Ps 2:7]
Psalm 2:7 says, “You are my son, this DAY (yom) have I BEGOTTEN (yawlad) you.” BEGOTTEN is translated from the Hebrew word, yalad (yaw-lad): “to bear, bring forth, beget.”

Could the Son of God have been “ETERNALLY BEGOTTEN?” or “ETERNALLY BORN on an ETERNAL DAY?” The scriptural answer is NO, but Augustine said YES!

THE FATHER CAN BE IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AT THE SAME TIME

God did not limit His Existence in the Son as if it was His headquarters to rule as the King of heaven and earth. God said that all of heaven is His throne (Isaiah 66:1) and that “the heaven of heavens cannot contain” Him (1 Kings 8:27) because His Eternal Spirit “fills the heavens and the earth (Jer. 23:24).” Only the omnipresent Spirit of God can simultaneously operate as the Father in heaven while manifesting Himself in the body of Jesus as a human being. It is in this sense that the Father became a completely human Son while never having to change or lose any of His divine attributes as the only omnipresent Father who continued to “fill heaven and earth (Jeremiah 23:24).” For Jesus is not God the Father with us as God the Father in a physical body, He is God the Father with us as a fully complete man with a human spirit (Heb. 2:17 / 1 Tim. 2:5).
AN ALLEGED OMNIPRESENT SON WOULD MEAN THAT A HEAVENLY SON AND AN EARTHLY SON SIMULTANEOUSLY EXISTED

Most Trinitarian scholars allege that the Son as a distinct divine person was both in heaven and on earth at the same time (John 3:13). Yet an alleged Trinitarian omnipresent Son Person in heaven with God the Father would have to be able to speak and act in heaven while simultaneously existing on earth as a man. Thus there would have to be a Heavenly Son Person speaking and acting in heaven while an Earthly Son Person was independently speaking and acting on the earth as a man.

Now if Trinitarian theologians can think of an alleged omnipresent Son speaking and acting in heaven while He was on earth as a man, then it is not impossible to believe that the Father could speak and act in heaven while simultaneously speaking and acting on earth via His incarnation in Christ at the same time (John 14:7-10, 24). “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).” For the omnipresent God can certainly speak and act in heaven and on earth at the same time.

It is hard to imagine how an alleged coequal “God the Son” would have been unable to act and speak in the heavens while he dwelt on the earth as a man. If an alleged “God the Son” could act and speak in heaven while dwelling on the earth as a man, then the Trinitarian doctrine also sounds like two Son Persons: One as a Heavenly Son Person and another as an earthly son person. If Trinitarians can think of an alleged “Heavenly Son” acting and speaking in heaven while dwelling on the earth as a man, it is not hard to think of our “Heavenly Father” being able to speak and act from heaven while also speaking and acting on the earth as a genuine man.
CHAPTER 6
ONE INVISIBLE GOD AND
ONE VISIBLE MAN

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Colossians 1:15
Psalm 110:1 - “YAHWEH said to my Lord (ADON), sit at my right hand until I make
your enemies the footstool of your feet.” Here we have One Yahweh Person and one
human son person rather than two co-equal Yahweh Persons. If Jesus had eternally
existed as an alleged God the Son beside the Father throughout eternity past, then why
did the Father say to the son, “sit at my right hand” if he was already at the Father’s right
hand to begin with?

Peter cited Psalm 110:1 in Acts 2:34-35 to show that a post incarnational Jesus would
ascend into heaven as a human son to fulfill this prophecy.

“For it was not David who ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, but he himself says: “The
LORD (YHWH) said to my Lord (Adon), sit at my right hand, until I make your
enemies a footstool for your feet.” Acts 2:34-35

Wherefore, just as 1 Tim. 2:5 says that there is only “One God (the Father) and one
mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,” so Psalm 110:1 says that there
is only One Yahweh (the Father) and one fully human son who is that God and Father
with us as a true man (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 9:6).
THE LAMB OF REVELATION 5

Revelation 5:6-9 “... in the midst of the throne ... stood a lamb as it had been slain, having SEVEN HORNS and SEVEN EYES ... And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne ... And they sang a new song saying, you are worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for you were slain, and HAVE REDEEMED US TO GOD BY YOUR BLOOD ...”

Here we have only One God Person on the throne and one man person who took the book from the God Person seated on the throne.

Note the use of the words “stood a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes.” This vision speaks not of Christ’s deity, it speaks symbolically of his humanity as the Lamb of God.

Wherefore, we have one God and one Man in this passage of scripture: not two God Persons but One God Person and one man person.

Also notice that this ONE MAN PERSON has “REDEEMED US” TO ONE “GOD” PERSON. It does not state that a second divine Person called God redeemed us to another first divine Person called God. Thus there is clearly a distinction between Christ’s true humanity and God’s divinity.
COULD JESUS AS A SON HAVE BEEN JUST A MAN, OR A CREATED ANGELIC BEING?

If Jesus is not God who also became man, then how is it that Jesus can now hear and answer prayer as God?

“If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.” John 14:14
If Jesus is not God, then how is it that Jesus now “fills all things” (Ephesians 4:10).
“He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.” Ephesians 4:10

If Jesus is not God, then how is it that Jesus’ Spirit now indwells all true Christian believers as the omnipresent Spirit (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:9; John 14:16-18; 2 Cor. 3:17)?

“Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” Galatians 4:6

“You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.
But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” Romans 8:9

“… the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you …” John 14:17-18

“Well the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” 2 Corinthians 3:17

What created angel or human being can be omnipresent (everywhere present) like God while not being God?

For Yahweh God Himself declared in Isaiah 46:9 that “There is NONE LIKE ME.” “I am God, and there is no other; I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE LIKE ME.” Isaiah 46:9