

FOREWORD

The true church of our Lord Jesus Christ is built on the believing confession of this divinely revealed and infinitely precious truth: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). This statement, revealed to the apostle Peter by God the Father, came in response to our Lord’s question, “Whom say ye that I am?”

By definition an evangelical Christian affirms, among other things, the absolute and eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. But Satan, the archenemy of God’s people, is determined to confuse our understanding of this foundational truth and undermine our commitment to it. I, together with the authors of this book, believe that understanding and commitment are beginning to wane in connection with the question of the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ our Lord.

If the second person of the triune godhead was not the Son of God until His incarnation, as some are now teaching, then the first person was not the Father until nearly two thousand years ago. One evangelical theologian who held this view recently speculated that “when the divine decision was made with regard to the incarnation, any of the three members of the Trinity could have accepted the various roles.”¹ One wonders how according to this view there could even be first, second, and third persons in the godhead. One heresy seems to invite another.

And there *is* another. If the second person did not become the Son of God until the incarnation, was He truly

deity before that moment? This question is highly relevant because, as the authors of this book have convincingly shown (from such passages as John 5:18; 10:30-39; 19:7), the Jews clearly understood Jesus' claim to be the Son of God to be a claim to absolute deity, "making himself equal with God" (John 5:18).

All such dangerous speculations have been swept away by George W. Zeller and Renald E. Showers in their masterful presentation of the eternal Sonship of Christ our Lord. They have demonstrated that even such familiar and precious verses as John 3:16 become almost meaningless if the Father was not the Father and the Son was not the Son until the incarnation. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," Scripture tells us. How could the Father have done this if He had no Son to give?

May God be pleased to use this book to uplift the hearts of His people everywhere to worship, honor, and serve the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Holy Spirit—one God—blessed forever.

John C. Whitcomb
Winona Lake, Indiana