

MY DEAR SIR,

IN compliance with your request, I proceed to make some remarks on the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship.

If the words *Eternal Son* be taken in the meaning in which they are understood in the conventional language of mankind, they without doubt, imply a positive self contradiction. Can any man deny, that *Son* implies a *Father*? or that *Father* implies, in reference to *Son*, precedence of existence as a person? If these questions must be answered in the negative, then, it incontrovertibly follows, that as *Father*, in reference to *Son*, implies precedence of existence, so *Son* in reference to *Father*, implies subsequence of existence; therefore, he who is a *Father*, must, in point of actual personal existence, necessarily be older than his *Son*. Such is the universally acknowledged meaning of these terms, and if we do not use them in their precise signification, we shall only wander in the land of chimeras and impose on mankind, by asserting that we know what we in reality know not. The impropriety, therefore, of the title *Eternal Son*, must be obvious. *Eternal*, signifies duration without beginning, as well as without end. But I have proved that *Son*, in reference to *Father*, implies subsequence of personal existence, and consequently, that he who is a *Son* cannot as such be eternal. Therefore, when we assert that the two first persons in the *Trinity* are co-existent, and yet speak of them in terms which incontrovertibly imply precedence in the one and subsequence in the other, we either mean to assert the following palpable contradiction: viz. that these two persons are co-existent and not co-existent, or we totally pervert the established meaning of the terms, and use the most contemptible quibbling to maintain a false and dangerous tenet. A very judicious author,* who has written in defence of this title, informs us that, "it would be difficult if

* The Editor of *Doddridge's Lectures*, published in 1801.