



COUNCIL OF EPHESUS

June - July, 431

200+ Fathers in Attendance

...We confess, then, our lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God perfect God and perfect man of a rational soul and a body, begotten before all ages from the Father in his godhead, the same in the last days, for us and for our salvation, born of Mary the virgin, according to his humanity, one and the same consubstantial with the Father in godhead and consubstantial with us in humanity, **for a union of two natures took place**. Therefore we confess **one Christ, one Son, one Lord**. According to this understanding of the **unconfused union**, we confess the holy virgin to be the mother of God because God the Word took flesh and became man and from his very conception united to himself the temple he took from her. As to the evangelical and apostolic expressions about the Lord, we know that theologians treat some in common as of one person and distinguish others as of two natures, and interpret the god-befitting ones in connexion with the godhead of Christ and the lowly ones with his humanity.

COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON

Oct 8 - Nov 1, 451

370+ Fathers in Attendance

So, following the saintly fathers, we all with one voice teach the confession of **one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ: the same perfect in divinity and perfect in humanity, the same truly God and truly man**, of a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father as regards his divinity, and the same consubstantial with us as regards his humanity; like us in all respects except for sin; begotten before the ages from the Father as regards his divinity, and in the last days the same for us and for our salvation from Mary, the virgin God-bearer as regards his humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only-begotten, acknowledged in **two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation; at no point was the difference between the natures taken away through the union, but rather the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person and a single subsistent being; he is not parted or divided into two persons, but is one and the same only-begotten Son, God, Word, Lord Jesus Christ**, just as the prophets taught from the beginning about him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself instructed us, and as the creed of the fathers handed it down to us.

KEY VIEWS REFUTED BY THE COUNCILS

Arius	Arius taught that there was a time when the Son did not exist. He had a beginning, and was not co-eternal with the Father. The Father and the Son were not of the same essence (<i>ousia</i>). The first council at Nicaea in 325 settled that, contra Arianism, Christ is fully God ("consubstantial [<i>homoousion</i>] with the Father").
Apollinarius	Apollinarius, struggling with how to conceive that the divine became human, suggested that the man Jesus had in place of a human mind the divine <i>Logos</i> . This seemed to be a denial of the full humanity of Christ. The council at Constantinople in 381 affirmed that the Son "became human" and maintained that, contra Apollinarianism, Christ is fully human.
Nestorius	Nestorius, insisting that God cannot suffer, questioned theories about the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. He resisted notions of a strict union between the divine and human natures, believing they must remain divided. The council at Ephesus in 431 settled that in Christ, "a union of two natures took place." Contra Nestorius, Christ is one person, without separation or division.
Eutyches	Eutyches, in part responding to Nestorius, taught that Christ natures were mixed. Perhaps Christ was one person whose divine and human natures were co-mingled into a single nature that was not strictly divine or human, or perhaps his human nature was subsumed within the divine. The Chalcedonian Formula of 451 corrected Eutychianism by maintaining both the divine and human natures of Christ, without confusion or change: "the property of both natures is preserved and comes together into a single person."

THE CHALCEDONIAN FORMULA MARKED THE BOUNDARIES FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY:
 THE "ONE AND THE SAME ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, GOD, WORD, LORD JESUS CHRIST" IS
 FULLY GOD AND FULLY HUMAN, ONE PERSON IN TWO NATURES.

THE NICENE-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED

We believe in one God the Father all-powerful,
maker of heaven and of earth,
and of all things both seen and unseen.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all the ages,
light from light, true God from true God,
begotten not made,
consubstantial with the Father,
through whom all things came to be;
for us humans and for our salvation
he came down from the heavens and became incarnate
from the holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, became human
and was crucified on our behalf under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered and was buried
and rose up on the third day in accordance with the scriptures;
and he went up into the heavens
and is seated at the Father's right hand;
he is coming again with glory to judge the living and the dead;
his kingdom will have no end.

And in the Spirit, the holy, the lordly and life-giving one,
proceeding forth from the Father,
co-worshipped and co-glorified with Father and Son,
the one who spoke through the prophets;
in one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.
We confess one baptism for the forgiving of sins.
We look forward to a resurrection of the dead
and life in the age to come. Amen.