

THE PERSON OF CHRIST
Part II: The Ancient Church (cont.)

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I. INTRODUCTION.

With the previous lesson our study has assumed a new course of direction; that is, we are now placing focus upon the incarnate person of Christ. In the period of the Fathers and Apologists little advancement in the doctrine took place, although they did isolate two natures in Christ, they did not speculate as to the union of those natures. In the era of the theologians the articulation of the orthodox doctrine of Christ incarnate became a reality. Apollinarius postulated that the union was real, organic, but Christ lost His true humanity. Apollinarius' view was rejected, but no alternative view stated at Constantinople. Harnack wrote (*History*. IV, 164-65): "And it was still permissible to hold this view of the unity (moral view of Paul of Samosata), for though the doctrine of Apollinarius' had been repudiated, no fixed idea was thereby arrived at as to the nature of the union of the divine and the human. All the conceivable forms in which the conception of the union of the divine and the human might be put, were still at anyone's disposal." Orr wrote (*The Progress of Dogma*, 181): "By the rejection of the Apollinarian View the Church declared that Christ was possessed of a true and unimpaired humanity—had as truly a human soul as a human body. But this only raised in a more acute form the question of how this union of the divine and human in His Person was to be conceived."

With this background, our purpose is to investigate the struggle of the church to accurately articulate the relationship of the two natures in Christ.

II. THE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF ANTIOCH AND ALEXANDRIA.

In the Eastern Church, the rivalry between the patriarchs of the major cities (Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria) was quite acute; each sought to gain prestige over the others. This factor must be understood in the entire theological controversy as Orr has noted (*Progress*, 182): “In the Nestorian controversy, no doubt many secondary and often condemnable factors were at work. Among them we may notice the deep-seated jealousy that subsisted between the rival patriarchates of Alexandria and Constantinople, and the growing veneration of the Church for the Virgin Mary.”

A. The Antiochian School of Theology

The Antiochian scholars, such as **Theodore of Mopsuestia**, stressed a literal hermeneutic and biblical exegesis particularly in the Gospel accounts thus placing a large emphasis on the true humanity of Christ. Klotsch wrote (*History of Christian Doctrine*, 74): “The Antiochian School distinguished sharply between Christ as Son of God and Christ as Son of Man giving the human nature of Christ a more distinct recognition. As critics and masters in the grammatico-historical exegesis the Antiochians were specially interested in the character of the historical Christ as portrayed in the Gospels.”

N.B. This is why the Antiochians clashed with Apollinarius, who aligned with Alexandrian Theology. The Apollinarian position destroyed Christ’s true humanity as the Athanasian position on “*homoousia*” was thought to obscure it. This is why they so opposed Docetism also!

Within the Antiochian School Theodore of Mopsuestia (ca. 350–428 A.D.) was the most prominent scholar (He was also the teacher of Nestorius.). In essence this leader understood the union of natures to be moral within one person and used marriage as an illustration. Orr explained Theodore thusly (*Progress*, 184-85): “But there is another mode of the presence of God by which He draws nearer to some than to others, according to their moral dispositions—a mode of indwelling which Theodore describes as one of God’s good pleasure (*kat eudokian*). It is the peculiar relation of moral fellowship in which God stands to those who are fitted for it by the spirit of trust and obedience. It is thus God dwells in believers; thus, in a unique and pre-eminent way, the Logos dwelt in Christ. The union here is of the most perfect kind conceivable. The human spirit of Jesus so perfectly appropriates the divine as to become entirely with it. Christ’s thinking and willing as man are truly the thinking and willing of God in Him, yet is human nature not thereby annulled, but rather raised to its highest degree of perfection. On the other side, the divine Son so entirely appropriates and unites the human nature with Himself as to make it the organ of His personal manifestation. Through this union, further, the humanity is made to share, after the ascension, in all the glory and dominion of the Logos. This, it will be felt, is an exceedingly able attempt to solve the problem of the unity of the divine and

human in Christ—one, also, not without its elements of value. It involves the recognition, elsewhere so often wanting, of the affinity of the divine and human which makes true union possible, and is a praiseworthy attempt to do justice to the ethical factor in Christ's development. Yet, with all its ingenuity, it will be felt also that it never really gets beyond the most perfect form of moral union of two persons originally distinct. Theodore practically admits this by the term he uses to describe it."

A general summary of Antiochian Christology is given by Klotsch who wrote (*History*, 74): "In order to preserve the integrity of the two natures they asserted only a combination of the two personal natures through their unity of will; and in their combination the two natures are one person. It is not a natural, but a moral union. The man Jesus desires what God desires. The union began at the conception. It differs from the union of God with the prophets and saints in that God operates in Christ as in his own Son. This union has become an indissoluble one, the indwelling Logos conducting Jesus to perfection which is attained through the ascension of Jesus. As the divine cannot be said to have really become man, divine honor inasmuch as his human nature shares in the honor, glory and dominion which belong to the Logos. Mary, the Mother of the man (*Anthropotokos*), can, properly speaking, not be called *Theotokos*, since God did not become man. She can only in a metaphorical sense be called Mother of God, since God was in the man who was being born."

N.B. The Antiochians differed with the Samosatians, followers of Paul of Samosata, only in that they maintained that the Logos in Christ was a person, not a force. That is, he (a man) became god-intoxicated.

B. The Alexandrian School of Theology

The Alexandrian School continued the theological spirit of Athanasius, which tended to Apollinarian Christology, by greatly subordinating the human to the divine and, like the Antiochians saw a complete union of the divine with the human. Orr wrote (*Progress*, 182): "The Alexandrian School—from the first, as we saw, of an idealistic and speculative character—received about this time a mystical tinge from Syria which disposed it to look predominately at the divine, or transcendental, side of Christ's Person, and to view the humanity in, if not absorbed by, this higher side."

N.B. A proper stress on "*homoousia*" in Christ's preincarnate being became an blinder in the discussion of his incarnate being, thus obscuring to Alexandria a proper view of Christ's humanity.

1. **Athanasius** (*ca.* 295–373 A.D.), an Apollinarian in Christology, taught that the Logos, who was God from all eternity, became a man. "He became man, and did not come unto man . . . as in former times the Logos

used to come into each of the saints (*Oration*. III, 30).” And again (*Oration*. III, 31): “The Logos bore the infirmities of the flesh, as his own, for his was the flesh: and the flesh ministered to the works of the Godhead, because the Godhead was in it, for the body was God’s.” Thus, the Logos became the head, representative, and proxy of mankind. In fact, God himself entered humanity. By means of the union of the Godhead with the manhood in Christ the leading back of mankind to God was made possible.

N.B. Athanasius’ “restitution theology” places him as heir to Irenaeus’ “recapitulation theology.” Athanasius did not escape the charge of Docetism, nor anyone in the Alexandrian tradition.

2. **Gregory of Nyssa** (*ca.* 395 A.D.) and the other Cappadocians followed in the track of Athanasius putting stress on the union as a transformation of the human into the divine (Apollinarianism) though they were willing to discriminate “*in abstracto*” two natures. Gregory of Nyssa stated (*Against Eunomius*, 5): “But if we are to discuss the other points in the same way, let us consider what it is that dies, and what it is that empties itself. The Godhead ‘empties’ Itself that It may come within the capacity of the Human Nature, and the Human Nature is renewed by becoming Divine through its commixture with the Divine. For as air is not retained in water when it is dragged down by some weighty body and left in the depth of the water, but rises quickly to its kindred element, while the water is often raised up together with the air in its upward raise, being molded by the circle of air into a convex shape with a slight and membrane like surface, so too, when the true Life that underlay the flesh sped up, after the Passion, to Itself, the flesh also was raised up with It, being forced upwards from corruption to incorruptibility by the Divine immortality. And as fire that lies in wood hidden below the surface is often unobserved by the senses of those who see, or even touch it, but is manifest when it blazes up, so too, at His death (which He brought about at His will, Who separated His soul from his Body, Who said to His own Father ‘Into Thy hands I commend My Spirit,’ Who, as He says, ‘had power to lay it down and had power to take it again’), He Who, because He is the Lord of glory, despised that which is shame among men, having concealed, as it were, the flame of His life in His bodily Nature, by the dispensation of His death, kindled and inflamed it once more by the power of His own Godhead, fostering into life that which had been brought to death, having infused with the infinity of His Divine power that humble first-fruits of our nature, made it also to be that which He Himself was —making the servile form to be Lord, and the man born of Mary to be Christ, and Him Who was crucified through weakness to be Life and power, and making all that is piously conceived to be in God the Word to be also in that which the Word assumed, so that these attributes no longer seem to be in either

Nature by way of division, but that the perishable nature being, by its commixture with the Divine, made anew in conformity with the Nature that overwhelms it, participates in the power of the Godhead, as if one were to say that mixture makes a drop of vinegar mingled in the deep to be sea, by reason that the natural quality of this liquid does not continue in the infinity of that which overwhelms it.”

Gregory of Nazianzus (329–89 A.D.) took the position that in the incarnation, the humanity of Christ had, by the process of mixing or commingling, entirely disappeared in the divinity. He compared the divinity and humanity of Christ to the sun and the stars; the sun shines with such brilliancy as practically to extinguish the stars.

N.B. The point of this discussion is to provide a setting to understand the attempted solutions to solving the problem of the two natures in Christ. Antioch stressed humanity, while obscuring deity, and Alexandria the reverse. Both were correct in what they asserted, wrong in what they denied! The two cities were inevitably on a collision course because of:

1. Ecclesiastical rivalry.
2. Different hermeneutics (literal versus speculative).
3. Different starting points in theology (Alexandria in soteriology and Antioch in the Gospels).
4. Different stresses on Christ's person.

III. THE NESTORIAN CONTROVERSY AND EPHESUS.

A. The clash between Nestorius and Cyril.

In summary of what has been stated and to prepare a departure point for our studies Gonzalez wrote (*History*. I, 363): “The rejection of the theories of Apollinarius was in no way a solution of the Christological problem. The Cappadocians themselves, although they were convinced that it was necessary to condemn the elderly Laodicean theologian, did not have a clear alternative to offer. Although Alexandrine Christology suffered a severe blow in the condemnation of Apollinarius, it was still a very strong current in Eastern theology, and it necessarily had to collide with Antiochene Christology. Furthermore, the fifth century marks a further step in the process by which the Church of the humble and crucified Lord became involved in struggles for prestige and power which were no less bitter than those that took place in Byzantine court. All the great Christian sees—Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and

Constantinople—were struggling against their rivals in an attempt to gain preponderance, and each of them in turn allowed these political interests to influence its theological decisions.”

1. **The View of Nestorius.** In 428 A.D. the Antiochene Nestorius (d. ca. 451 A.D.) came to occupy the patriarchal see of Constantinople. Harnack stated (*History*. IV, 180-81): “The bishop of the capital just because he was the bishop was an object of jealousy to the Alexandrian Patriarch and as an Antiochian he was doubly so.”
 - a) In his zeal for orthodoxy Nestorius not only persecuted Arians, Apollinarians, Novations (a schismatic purist’s movement arising from the persecution of 250), and Macedonians, but violently attacked any who spoke of Mary as “mother of God” (*theotokos*). Nestorius would accept *Christokos*, but not *theotokos* because in the title “bearer of God”, as applied to Mary, he saw a confusion of the divine and the human in Christ. He wrote (quoted in Ayer, 501, because his writings are only fragmentary):

“Is Paul a liar when he speaks of the godhead of Christ and says: ‘Without father, without mother, without genealogy’? My good friend, Mary has not born the godhead, for that which is born of flesh is flesh . . . A creature has not born the Creator, but she bore a man, the organ of divinity; the Holy Ghost did not create God the Word, but with that which was born of the Virgin He prepared for God the Word, a temple, in which He should dwell.

“Whenever the Holy Scriptures make mention of the works of salvation prepared by the Lord, they speak of the birth and suffering, not of the divinity but of the humanity of Christ; therefore, according to a more exact expression the holy Virgin is named the bearer of Christ [*Christotokos*].

“If any one will bring forward the designation, ‘*Theotokos*,’ because the humanity that was born was conjoined with the Word, not because of her who bore, so we say that, although the name is not appropriate to her who bore, for the actual mother must be of the same substance as her child, yet it can be endured in consideration of the fact that the temple, which is inseparably united with God the Word, comes of her.

“Each nature must retain its peculiar attributes, and so we must, in regard to the union, wonderful and exalted far above all understanding, think of one honor and confess one Son . . . With the one name Christ we designate at the same time two natures . . .

. The essential characteristics in the nature of the divinity and in the humanity are from all eternity distinguished.

“God the Word is also named Christ because He has always conjoined with Christ. And it is impossible for God the Word to do anything without the humanity, for all is planned upon an intimate conjunction, not on the deification of the humanity.”

N.B. Is Nestorius’ claim valid? How could any human give the divine nature to the Logos? Mary did not conceive the deity of Christ, that was implanted. No woman has ever conceived the soul of an infant, the immaterial part. The woman is said to be the mother of the whole child commonly although we know technically that it is impossible. The best way to express this is that Mary is the mother of the humanity of Jesus.

- b) It must be stated that Nestorius waged his complaints in a most unholy manner, evidencing his hostile opinion of all non-Antiochene theologians. Harnack stated that he was “naively self-conceited, storming and shortsighted, but sincere and not without noble traits.” Gonzalez said (*History*. I, 364): “Nestorius was not a prudent man, and that which could have been limited to some difficulties ended in tragedy.”
- c) The essential point of view of Nestorius, then, is that he dissolved the unity of the personality of Christ. As against the view of the assumption of a human nature by a divine Person (Apollinarianism), Nestorius held that there were two natures, a divine and a human, subsisting in the closest moral union. The Logos inhabited the humanity, which had a personality of its own.

N.B. As Apollinarianism denied duality in Christ’s nature and affirmed unity, Nestorius affirmed duality, but practically denied their unity.

2. **The View of Cyril of Alexandria.** Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, was a zealous defender of the authority of his bishopric, as well as a convinced partisan of Alexandrian Christology. Nestorius offered him the opportunity to stress the unity of Christ and reaffirm the authority of his see over Constantinople. Harnack wrote (*History*. IV, 181-82): “Cyril took advantage of the excitement in the Capital, which would perhaps have quieted down spite of some unruly priests and monks, in order to stir up the Egyptian monks, the Egyptian clergy in Constantinople, and the imperial ladies. The result was an angry correspondence with Nestorius,

who was, moreover, protected by the Emperor. Cyril wrote in a more dignified way than his rival, but the hierarchs since the days of Cyprian had always known better how to take up an outwardly dignified attitude than their opponents. The narrow-minded patriarch of the capital was characterized by a simple pride. He expressed himself in an inconsiderate and imprudent way in his letters, and his conduct in his diocese was no less inconsiderate and imprudent, for there he went on with the work of deposition and attacked 'Apollinarianism' as if it had been a red rag."

Cyril called a council at Alexandria in 430 A.D. in which he set forth the teaching of Nestorius in the form of "Anathemas." A few of the twelve are before us:

- "I. If any one shall not confess that the Emmanuel is in truth God, and that therefore the holy Virgin is Theotokos, inasmuch as according to the flesh she bore the Word of God made flesh; let him be anathema."
- "II. If any one shall not confess that the Word of God the Father is united according to hypostasis to flesh, and that with the flesh of His own He is one Christ, the same manifestly God and man at the same time; let him be anathema."
- "III. If any one after the union divide the hypostases in the one Christ, joining them by a connection only, which is according to worthiness, or even authority and power, and not rather by a coming together, which is made by a union according to nature; let him be anathema."
- "IV. If any one divide between the two persons or hypostases the expressions in the evangelical and apostolic writings, or which have been said concerning Christ by the saints, or by Himself concerning Himself, and shall apply some to him as to a man regarded separately apart from the Word of God, and shall apply others, as appropriate to God only, to the Word of the Father; let him be anathema."
- "V. If any one dare to say that the Christ is a god-bearing man, and not rather that He is in truth God, as an only Son by nature, because 'The Word was made flesh,' and hath share in flesh and blood as we have; let him be anathema."
- "VI. If any one shall dare to say that the Word of God the Father is the God of Christ or the Lord of Christ, and shall not rather confess Him as at the same time both God and man, since according to the

Scriptures the Word became flesh; let him be anathema.”

“VII. If any one say that Jesus is, as a man, energized by the Word of God, and that the glory of the Only begotten is attributed to Him as being something else than His own; let him be anathema.”

N.B. Cyril was influential at the imperial palace in Constantinople because of the wealth of his city (gold). Gonzalez wrote (*History*, I, 365), “With these resources, Cyril obtained the support of some high authorities who were more interested in gold than in theology.”

N.N.B.B. Gonzalez notes (*History*, 1:367), “This, however, did not end the controversy, for many theologians claimed that Cyril’s twelve anathemas against Nestorius were themselves heretical. Thus, the controversy that at first had to do only with Nestorius, now involved Cyril himself. Rome, with a Christological tradition that was very different from that of Alexandria, found Cyril’s document very embarrassing.”

B. The Council of Ephesus (431 A.D.).

1. The controversy took a “universal twist” when both patriarchs appealed for support from the bishop of Rome (Celestine). Celestine supported Cyril for several reasons: (1) the undesirable emergence of Constantinople as the “New Rome”, (2) Nestorius’ kind treatment of Pelagius, and (3) the historical policy of Rome to support Alexandria. Nestorius was condemned by a Roman Synod in 430.
2. The stage was, thus, set and the emperor (Valentinian III) called a general council for 7 June 431 (the Third Ecumenical Council). With Nestorius not present, the council convened and immediately condemned him. The declaration stated: “The holy synod said: Since in addition to other things the impious Nestorius has not obeyed our Citation and did not receive the most holy and God-fearing bishops who were sent to him by us, we were compelled thereto by the canons and by the letter of our most holy father and fellow-servant Celestine, the Roman bishop, we have come, with many tears, to this sorrowful sentence against him: Our Lord Jesus Christ whom he has blasphemed, decrees through the present most holy synod that Nestorius be excluded from the episcopal dignity and from all priestly communion.”

When Nestorius and John of Antioch arrived four days later, they convened a separate counter-council and condemned Cyril and the previous council. The emperor, however, sided with the Cyril-Celestine opinion and condemned Nestorius.

N.B. For Celestine's support, Cyril readily condemned Pelagius. The issue in the West was Pelagianism; Nestorianism was tangential to the other higher issue.

3. As for Nestorius, he was sent away to a monastery in Antioch, later to Petra, and a desert oasis in the Libya. He did live beyond the Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.) in which he believed that his own doctrine was vindicated. Was he really a heretic? Or, was he condemned for his lack of tact and Cyril's ambition and political ability?

IV. THE EUTYCHIAN CONTROVERSY AND CHALCEDON.

As in the Apollinarian controversy, Nestorius's view of Christ was condemned, but no positive, declarative statement was issued. The debate, therefore, continued.

A. The Clash between Dioscurus and Flavian.

1. **Dioscurus succeeded Cyril in 444 A.D.** and attempted, like his predecessors, to make the Alexandrian See the dominating institution in the church of the East. In brief Heick wrote (*History*, I, 183): "He persecuted the Antiochians, labored to do away with the doctrine of the two natures and favored creeds which had an Apollinarian bias." Harnack told us (IV, 190-91): "The Alexandrian bishops from Athanasius to Dioscurus have something in common. They strove to make themselves the masters of Egypt and the leaders of the Church of the East. Their resistance to the power of the State was not less strong than their hatred of the parvenu, the bishop of New Rome, whose aspirations after power they wished to put a stop to. We can only compare them with the great Popes, and the comparison is so far a just one inasmuch as they aimed at making Egypt a sort of independent ecclesiastical State."

N.B. At this point, Antioch and Constantinople were discredited so Dioscurus pressed the advantage. The deathblow, he conceived, was the case of one Eutyches, a monk of Constantinople.

2. **Eutyches (ca. 378–454 A.D.)** began teaching that after the incarnation Christ had only one nature, two natures being consubstantial, a mixture of both.

N.B. This view would seem to appeal to the Alexandrians because of the historic stress on "*homoousia*" and Apollinarianism. Documentation for Eutyches' view of Christology is almost totally lacking. Leo I, who characterized him as "quite rash and ignorant,"

stated (*Epistle. V, 28*): “That man Eutyches must be considered as totally lacking in this mystery of the faith. He did not recognize our nature in the only-begotten-Son of God, neither through the lowliness of His mortal state nor through the glory of His Resurrection. And Eutyches did not fear the sentence of the blessed Apostle and Evangelist John, saying: ‘Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, is of God. And every spirit that severs Jesus is not of God, but is of Antichrist.’ What is meant by ‘severing’ Jesus if not the taking away from him of His human nature and nullifying by the foulest imaginings the mystery through which alone we have been saved? But, being in the dark about the nature of Christ’ body, he is of necessity also ignorant about the passion because of the same blindness. But when Eutyches answered the questions put to him at your investigation, saying, ‘I confess that our Lord had two natures before they were united, but I confess that after the union He had one nature,’ I am amazed that so absurd and so perverse a profession was not corrected by any rebuttal on the part of the judges and that a totally insipid and blasphemous statement was passed over as if nothing to give offense was heard. The fact is that it was as impious to say that the only-begotten Son of God had two natures before the Incarnation as it was blasphemous to assert that He had a single nature after the Word was made flesh.”

N.B. Thus, Christ was of one nature in which the humanity and deity were deprecated (“of two natures, not in two natures”), a commingling of the two into one.

3. **Flavian, patriarch of Constantinople**, had Eutyches condemned by a local synod and he, then, appealed to the bishops of the main Sees for support. Dioscurus apparently felt that his appeal to Rome would seal the victory for Alexandria (i.e., historical president and mutual desire for the supremacy of his see). Flavian’s examination of Eutyches is as follows:

“Archbishop Flavian said: Do you confess that the one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is consubstantial with His Father as to His divinity, and consubstantial with His mother as to His humanity?”

Eutyches said: When I intrusted myself to your holiness I said that you should not ask me further what I thought concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

The archbishop said: Do you confess Christ to be of two natures?

Eutyches said: I have never yet presumed to speculate concerning the

nature of my God, the Lord of heaven and earth; I confess that I have never said that He is consubstantial with us. Up to the present day I have not said that the body of our Lord and God was consubstantial with us; I confess that the holy Virgin is consubstantial with us, and that of her our God was incarnate

Florentius, the patrician, said: Since the mother is consubstantial with us, doubtless the Son is consubstantial with us.

Eutyches said: I have not said, you will notice, that the body of a man became the body of God, but the body was human, and the Lord was incarnate of the Virgin. If you wish that I should add to this that His body is consubstantial with us, I will do this; but I do not understand the term consubstantial in such a way that I do not deny that he is the Son of God. Formerly I spoke in general not of a consubstantiality according to the flesh; now I will do so, because your Holiness demands it

Florentius said: Do you or do you not confess that our Lord, who is of the Virgin, is consubstantial and of two natures after the incarnation?

Eutyches said: I confess that our Lord was of two natures before the union [i.e., the union of divinity and humanity in the incarnation], but after the union one nature I follow the teaching of the blessed Cyril and the holy Fathers and the holy Athanasius, because they speak of two natures before the union, but after the union and incarnation they speak not of two natures but of one nature.”

B. The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.).

In reality Dioscurus was to learn that the brink of victory only revealed impending disaster for himself and his See. The bishop of Rome supported Constantinople, not Alexandria.

N.B. The reason for this change of support is twofold:

1. In spite of the rivalry with Constantinople (New Rome) the Alexandrian support of Eutyches was clearly given to condemned Apollinarian overtones. Flavian was correct in opposing Alexandria.
 2. Also, Leo's opponent in the rivalry of the bishoprics was not Constantinople, but Alexandria. If Constantinople defeated Alexandria, only Rome would be unblemished theologically.
1. **The Council of Ephesus (Robbers), 449 A.D.** was an attempt to deal with Eutyches' view, but was chaired by Dioscurus before 130 bishops by

imperial appointment. Flavian was so violently treated that it may have contributed to his death a few days thereafter. Eutyches was declared orthodox, the Flavian party was silenced, and Leo's letters were not read prompting Leo to call it "the robber's synod."

N.B. The emperor died within a year and the empress, Pulcheria, was a strong advocate of Leo in the West. Bishops deposed by Dioscurus were allowed to return and the new patriarch was a follower of Leo's views!

2. **The Tome of Leo** was a letter sent by **Bishop Leo of Rome** (d. 461 A.D.) to be read at Ephesus in 449. Although it was not read, it became the essential declaration of orthodox Christology. Leo argued for two distinct natures after the union. He wrote: "Without detracting from the properties of either nature and substance, which came together in one person, majesty took on humility; strength, weakness; eternity, mortality; and to pay off the debt of our condition inviolable nature was united to passable nature, so that as proper remedy for us, one and the same mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, could both die with the one and not die with the other. Thus in the whole and perfect nature of true man was true God born, complete in what was His and complete in what was ours. . . . The nature of the Lord was assumed from the mother, not sin; and in the Lord Jesus Christ, born of the womb of the Virgin, because His nativity is wonderful, yet is His nature not dissimilar to ours. For He who is true God, is likewise true man, and there is no fraud since both the humility of the man and the loftiness of God meet. For as God is not changed by the manifestation of pity, so the man is not consumed [absorbed] by the dignity. For each form [i.e., nature] does in communion with the other what is proper to it [*agit enim utraque forma cum alterius communione quod proprium est*]; namely, by the action of the Word what is of the Word, and by the flesh carrying out what is of the flesh. One of these is brilliant with miracles, the other succumbs to injuries. And as the Word does not depart from equality with the paternal glory, so the flesh does not forsake the nature of our race."
3. **The Council of Chalcedon (451 A.D.)**, the Fourth Ecumenical Council, a gathering of 520 bishops, witnessed the condemnation of Dioscurus and the affirmation of Leo's Tome as Orthodox Christianity (one person, two perfect natures, without confusion). The Definition of Faith reads: "Following the holy Fathers, we all with one voice teach men to confess that the Son and our Lord Jesus Christ is one and the same, that He is perfect in godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, of a reasonable soul and body, consubstantial with us as to His manhood, in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten of His Father before all worlds according to His godhead; but in these last days for us and for our

salvation of the Virgin Mary, the *Theotokos*, according to His manhood, one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten Son, in two natures, unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of natures being preserved and concurring in one person and hypostasis, not separated or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and Only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning have spoken concerning Him, and as the Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us, and as the creed of the Fathers has delivered us.”

N.B. The orthodox triumph of Leo I was a remarkable victory for his See. Antioch and Constantinople had been discredited over Nestorianism, Alexandria over Eutychianism. Rome’s prestige was unblemished (remember the succession theory of truth!).

V. CONCLUSION.

The purpose of this lesson has been to delineate the struggle that the church endured in its attempt to understand the incarnate person of Christ. Nestorius erred in driving a wedge between the natures with only a moral union, hence denying unity. Eutyches erred by denying the separation of natures, he stressed unity too far. Through these struggles, the orthodox position emerged through the theological insight of Leo of Rome who articulated, in the tradition of Tertullian and Jerome, as well as Augustine, the Orthodoxy of the Chalcedonian Creed. The theological struggles were somewhat motivated by rivalry and jealousy as the major Sees jockeyed for power. Rome, alone, emerged victorious in 451 A.D.