



Henotikon

- Monophysitism spread throughout the East.
- A decree of union, called the Henotikon, was drawn up and sent to Egypt and Libya. The document proclaimed that the only true faith was that of Nicaea as confirmed by the First Council of Constantinople and the Council of Ephesus.
- The Henotikon was acceptable to the Monophysites, but many Monophysites wanted an outright condemnation of the Council of Chalcedon and the Tome of Leo.
- The Monophysites took over the East and created a division with the West, which remained loyal to Chalcedon.

Monophysitism vs Chalcedonianism

- There were continued efforts to reconcile Monophysitism with Chalcedonianism.
- A document was drawn up that condemned the writings of several fifth century Antiochene bishops who were considered to be pro-Nestorian. Because the writings were divided under three headings it became known as the Three Chapters.
- Pope Vigilius issued the Judicatum, which condemned the Three Chapters and reaffirmed the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon.
- Justinian was trying to reconcile Cyril with Chalcedon.
- Vigilius fled to Chalcedon where he wrote a letter to all Christians explaining what had happened to him and outlining the faith of the previous four ecumenical councils.
- Justinian announced that 150 eastern bishops and 25 western bishops would attend a council held in Constantinople.

Second Council of Constantinople

- The Second Council of Constantinople convened on May 5, 553.
- The Council created a compromise that they thought upheld the two natures of Chalcedon while at the same time appeasing the Monophysite concern that Cyril's theology of one nature was undermined by Chalcedon.



- The Council specifically mentioned that Christ is a single person and not two persons, as proclaimed by Nestorius.
- This attempt at reconciliation failed because the Monophysites were not satisfied.

Third Council of Constantinople

- The Third Council of Constantinople met in 680, which is more than a century after the Second Council of Constantinople that met in 553.
- The Second Council of Constantinople had the goal of reconciling Monophysites, who said Christ had one incarnate nature of the Word, with Chalcedonians, who said Christ was one person with two natures.

Monoenergism

- Monoenergism said there was only one working or energy in Christ.
- Everything Christ did came from the Word whether the activity was appropriate for the divine or human nature.
- The Pact of Union anathematized all who did not hold to two natures in Christ, a perfect divine nature and a perfect human nature.
- The Pact of Union was agreed to in Alexandria. However, the Monophysites were elated because they believed that to hold to one operation in Christ meant there was one nature in Christ.

Monothelism

- The *Ecthesis* explained the doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation, dealing specifically with the number of operations and the number of wills in Christ. It concludes by saying there was one will of Jesus Christ.
- The doctrine of one will is called Monothelism. The word is made up of the Greek prefix *mono*, meaning *one*, and the Greek word *thelein*, meaning *to will*.
- John 6:38 and Matthew 26:39
- Most of the bishops in the East accepted the *Ecthesis*.

Maximus

- Muslims began their conquest during this period.



- Areas under Muslim rule were no longer under the rule of the Byzantine emperor so they could believe whatever they wanted to believe. Monophysites, Nestorians, and Copts could preach and live as they wished.
- The Greek monk Maximum fled the East. He took up the fight against Monothelitism.
- Maximus thought that if Christ has two natures, then there must be two operations of those natures.

Lateran Council

- Pope John IV called a synod that condemned the *Ecthesis*.
- Opposition in Rome to Monothelitism continued to grow with the presence of Maximus in Rome during the years 645 and 646.
- Emperor Constans issued a new edict, called the *Typos*, in 648. In the edict the emperor expressed concern for the purity of the Christian faith and dismay at the division caused by the controversy over the number of wills in Christ.
- All were to abide by the faith of the Scriptures, the rulings of the five previous councils, and the rulings of the Fathers without interpreting these things by their own personal views.
- One hundred bishops, mostly from Italy, met at the Lateran Palace.
- The bishops affirmed the faith of Chalcedon and added that our human nature, apart from sin, being perfect and without restriction, was incarnate in Christ, who was God himself.
- The synod condemned all patriarchs of Constantinople and encouraged all to accept the teaching of the five holy councils.
- The emperor sent a letter, the *Sacra*, to the pope asking for representatives to come to Constantinople so the theological differences between East and West could be discussed.

Third Council of Constantinople

- The papal representatives arrived in September, 680; the Council opened on November 7, 680. The Council met in numerous sessions until September 16, 681.
- The definition produced by the Council was signed by 174 bishops and by Emperor Constantine IV. In the Definition of Faith they accepted the rulings of the previous five ecumenical councils and reaffirmed the Nicene Creed and the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.



- The Council reaffirmed the doctrines of Chalcedon and Leo's Tome.
- Directly addressing Monoenergism and Monothelitism the Council said that in Christ there are "two natural wills and two natural operations indivisibly, inconvertibly, inseparably, inconfusedly."
- The Definition of Faith ended with "wherefore we confess two wills and two operations, concurring most fitly in him for the salvation of the human race."
- This Definition of Faith laid out clearly that two natures meant two complete natures, and several times the Definition said the two natures were not confused, not divided, and not separated. Also, there is the emphasis that the two natures are in one person so whatever is attributed to each nature is attributed to the person.

Summary of the Councils

- **Council of Nicea** – This Council was directed primarily against the Arians, who taught that Christ was the first and highest created being. The Council gave us the Nicene Creed which emphasizes that the Son is of the same essence as the Father and was begotten, not made.
- **First Council of Constantinople** – This Council was directed primarily against those who held a lesser view of the Holy Spirit and against Apollinarianism. This group held that the divine Word took the place of the human soul or intellect of Christ. The Council gave us the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed which says specifically that the Son of God came down from heaven and was born of the Virgin Mary and became man. Also, the Creed emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is of the same essence as the Father and proceeds from the Father. Eventually the West changed the Creed to say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, which led to the *filioque* controversy.
- **Council of Ephesus** – This Council dealt with the Nestorian controversy. Nestorius taught that Christ consisted of two persons and disliked the title Theotokos, or Mother of God, for Mary. Nestorius wanted to defend the immutability of God. He was opposed by Cyril of Alexandria who said the two natures formed a single *hypostasis*, or person. The Council condemned Nestorianism and reaffirmed the title Theotokos for Mary.
- **Council of Chalcedon** – This Council was a result of the Eutychian heresy. Eutyches taught that Christ had one nature that was a mixture of the divine and human, a sort of hybrid divine-human nature. The Definition of Chalcedon is the most definitive statement of orthodox Christology produced by the early Church. It established the boundaries of orthodox Christology. The critical portion of the Definition says, Christ is "to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation; the distinction of natures being in no way abolished because of the union, but rather the characteristic property of each nature being preserved, and concurring into one Person (*prosopon*) and one subsistence (*hypostasis*), not as if Christ were parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son and only-begotten God, Word, Lord, Jesus Christ."
- **Second Council of Constantinople** – This Council was an attempt to reconcile Monophysites, those who believed Christ had one nature, with Chalcedonians, those who believed Christ had two natures. The



dispute was over the Henotikon, written by the patriarch of Constantinople, which made no mention of two natures. The attempt at reconciliation was unsuccessful.

- **Third Council of Constantinople** – This council addressed Monoenergism and Monothelitism. The Council said that in Christ there are “two natural wills and two natural operations indivisibly, inconvertibly, inseparably, inconfusedly.” The two wills do not operate contrary to each other. The human will is submitted to the divine will.

Second Council of Nicaea

- The Second Council of Nicaea met in 787. This Council was was about iconoclasm.
- Iconoclasm was the opposition of Christian images and icons. Those against the use of images were called iconoclasts. Those in favor of the use of images were called iconodules or iconophiles.
- The main argument against images was Christ is now glorified so how can that be expressed in a mere painting.
- The Quinisext Council, which met in 692 after the Third Council of Constantinople, decreed that Christ should be portrayed in human form.
- Some of the arguments for and against images were Christological arguments.
- The emperor Constantine V issued a doctrinal statement against images based on Christology. He said Christ is one person with two natures. The only proper image of Christ would be one that captured this truth. The only true image of Christ is the one he gave us in the Lord’s supper, the bread and the wine.
- An iconoclast council met in 754 and condemned all sacred images.
- The Second Council of Nicaea reversed the rulings of the council of 754.
- Their argument for images is an argument against Docetism, which was one of the earliest heresies that said Christ only seemed to be a man.
- The Roman Catholic Church and especially the Orthodox Church still place great emphasis on images. Today there is disagreement among Protestants over the appropriateness of art, but all Protestants do not in any way consider art useful for worship.

Conclusion

- What was considered orthodox changed over time.



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- What unites believers in Christ has not changed over time, but what has changed is the criteria for what is a credible confession of faith.
 - Every time one problem was solved, the discussion changed in order to take into account the new solution. Every solution generated new questions that needed to be addressed by going to the Scripture.