



Eastern Church Conflict

- The Council of Constantinople ruled that Constantinople was the Rome of the East and only Rome had more authority than Constantinople.
- John was known as John Chrysostom, the golden tongued.
- New charges were brought against John, and, in order to keep peace, John agreed to exile.

Nestorius

- *Theotokos* means Mother of God, or, more literally, God bearer.
- Nestorius said, "Let no one call Mary *Theotokos*, for Mary was only a human being and it is impossible that God should be born of a human being."
- Antiochene Christology began with the Jesus we see in Matthew, Mark, and Luke and tried to explain how this man was also God. This is called the Word-Man framework.
- Alexandrian Christology began with the Word of John's gospel and tried to explain how the *Logos* became flesh. This is called the Word-Flesh framework.
- Nestorius thought the title *Theotokos* smacked of Arianism since it implied that the divine Son of God was a created being born of a woman.
- Nestorius believed Christ had two natures, but he defined those natures in terms of persons.
- Nestorius said Jesus is the union of a divine person and a human person.

Cyril vs Nestorius

Cyril of Alexandria was the main opponent of Nestorius.

Cyril said the union of the two natures in Christ does not abolish the difference between the two natures, but the divine and the human natures form a single *hypostasis*, that is, a single person.

The Twelve Anathemas condemned the "two-natures" Christology of Antioch that divided the words and actions of Christ between his divine nature and his human nature.

When we say that the single person of the Son of God suffered and died, we are not saying the suffering and death happened in his divine nature.

When Jesus was born the Word was united to the flesh so Mary is appropriately called *Theotokos*.

The impassible God was in a body that suffered, and since his flesh died, the Word is said to have suffered and died for us.

Cyril created a new Apollinarian formula of one incarnate nature of the divine Word.

Saying the Son of God had one nature led to what became known as Monophysitism.

The Council of Ephesus

- The council met in Ephesus in June, 431.
- The Twelve Anathemas were included in the final acts of the council.



- The council passed sentence on Nestorius saying, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has blasphemed, decrees through the Holy Synod here present that Nestorius is excluded from the episcopal dignity and every priestly assembly.”
- The council reaffirmed the prominence and authority of the Nicene Creed.

The Formula of Union

John of Antioch creed,

We confess, therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, perfect God and perfect Man, consisting of a rational soul and a body begotten of the Father before the ages as touching his Godhead, the same, in the last days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, as touching his Manhood; the same of one substance with the Father as touching his Godhead, and of one substance with us as touching his Manhood. For of two natures a union has been made. For this cause we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord.

In accordance with this sense of the unconfused union, we confess the holy Virgin to be *Theotokos*, because God the Word became incarnate and was made man, and from the very conception united to himself the temple taken from her. And as to the expressions concerning the Lord in the Gospels and Epistles, we are aware that theologians understand some as common, as relating to one Person, and others they distinguish, as relating to two natures, explaining those that befit the diving nature according to the Godhead of Christ, and those of a humble sort according to his Manhood.

- Cyril accepted John’s creed because he believed John’s creed filled out the meaning of the Nicene Creed.
- Cyril relaxed his objection against saying the Son of God has two natures.
- The compromise was known as the Formula of Union.

Further Controversy

- Theodore of Mopsuestia was the forerunner of Nestorius.
- Proclus distinguished between nature (or essence) and *hypostasis*.
- John of Antioch said the issue of Nestorianism was settled and they accepted the faith of Nicaea.

Conclusion

- The Council of Ephesus was the last council that the Coptic churches view as authoritative.
- The Council of Ephesus ended the debate on the number of persons in Christ.