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Historical Christological Heresies

Trevor O'Reggio

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Historical Christological Heresies

Dr. Trevor O'Reggio



Viewpoints of the	Ebionites	Docetists	Arians
Proponents	Judaizers	Basilides Valentinus Patripassians Sabellians	Arius, Presbyter of Alexandria Origen (?)
Time	2 nd century	Late 1 st century	4 th century
Denial	Genuine deity	Genuine humanity	Genuine deity
Explanation	Christ had the Spirit after his baptism; he was not preexistent	Jesus appeared human but was really divine	Christ was the first and highest created being, <i>homoiousia</i> , not <i>homoousia</i>
Condemned	No official condemnation	No official condemnation	Council of Nicea, A.D. 325
Associated with	Legalism	Evil of the material world and oussian divinity of man as taught by Marcion and Gnostics	generation=creation



Viewpoints of the	Ebionites	Docetists	Arians
Argument for	They are monotheistic	They affirm Christ's deity	They teach that Christ is subordinate to the Father
Argument against	Only a divine Christ is worthy of worship (John 1:1; 20:28 Heb. 13:8)	If Christ were not human He could not redeem humanity (Heb. 2:4; 1 John 4:1-3)	Only a divine Christ is worthy of worship; this view tends toward polytheism. Only a divine Christ can save (Phil. 2:6; Rev. 1:8)
Major Opponents	Irenaeus Hippolytus Origen Eusebius	Irenaeus Hippolytus	Athanasius Ossius



Viewpoints of the	Appollinarians	Nestorians	Eutychians
Proponents	Appollinarius, bishop of Laodicea Justin Martyr	Represented by Nestorius, 5 th -century bishop of Constantinople	Represented by Eutychius Theodosius II
Time	4 th century	5 th century	5 th century
Denial	Completeness of humanity	Unity of person	Distinction of natures
Explanation	The divine Logos too the place of the human mind	Union was moral, not organic-thus two persons. The human was completely controlled by the divine	Monophysitist; the human nature was swallowed by the divine to create a new third nature- <i>tertium quid</i>
Condemned	Council of Antioch, A.D. 378, 379 Council of Constantinople A.D. 381	Synod of Ephesus, A.D. 731	Council of Chalcedon A.D. 405; defended by "Robber Synod" of Ephesus, A.D. 449; Condemned by Chalcedon, A.D. 451

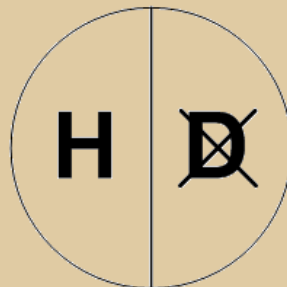


Viewpoints of the	Appollinarians	Nestorians	Eutychians
Associated with	Logos=reason in all people	“Word-man” (Antiochene) not “word-flesh” (Alexandrian) Christology; opposed to using <i>theotokos</i> of Mary	Concern for the unity and divinity of Christ; Alexandrian (minimized humanity)
Argument against	If Christ did not have a human mind, he would not be truly human (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 4:1-3)	If the death of Jesus was the act of a human person, not of God, it could not be efficacious (Rev. 1:12-18)	If Christ were neither a man or God, he could not redeem as man or as God (Phil. 2:6)
Major Opponents	Vitalis Pope Damascus Basil, Theodosius Gregory of Nazianzen Gregory of Nyssa	Cyril of Alexandria	Flavian of Constantinople Pope Leo Theodoret Eusebius of Dorylaeum



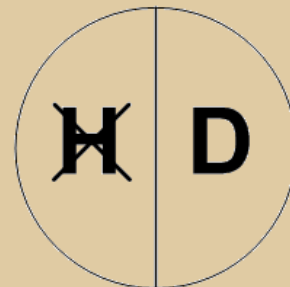
False Views of the Person of Jesus, God the Son

Ebionism



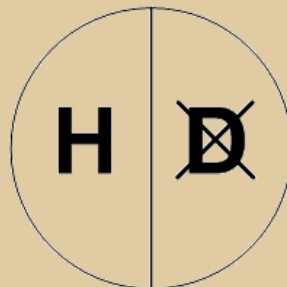
Denied Divine Nature

Docetism



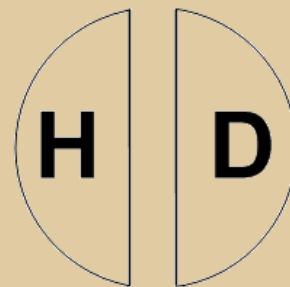
Denied Human Nature

Arianism



Denied Divine Nature

Nestorianism



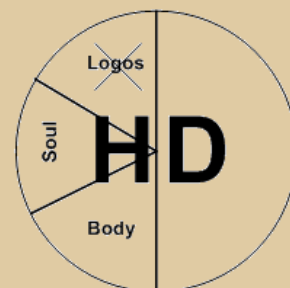
Denied Union of Nature

Eutychianism



Denied Distinction of Nature

Appollinarianism



Denied Human Spirit



Gnosticism

- Gnosis=knowledge
- Services in Jewish Alexandrian Philosophy-Philo
 - Influenced by Buddhism and Zoroastrianism
- Aim of Gnosticism
 - Intellectual enlightenment not moral regeneration
 - Freedom from bondage of matter rather than from corruption of sin



Gnosticism

- Main characteristic
 - Syncretism combined with mystical, magical, and philosophical
- Three main types
 - **Earliest** In Syria
 - *Simon Magus*
 - *Menander*
 - *Saturninus*



Alexandrian Tradition

- Basilides
 - Godhead- non-existence
- Valentinus
 - Greatest Gnostic
- Aim
 - Attain superior knowledge of invisible **world**
 - Cosmic return to God
 - Assert freedom of **soul** deny power of the flesh



Marcion

- Main idea
 - Law and gospel incompatible
 - God of O.T. inferior
 - God of N.T superior
- Influence in Christian thought and life
 - Widely defused throughout Christian churches during the 2nd and 3rd centuries
 - Led to **amalgamation** of Christian and pagan thought