

9. The Eutychians

Eutyches was an elderly abbot of a monastery in Constantinople when he came to prominence in A.D. 448. He reacted sharply to the Nestorian formula of "two natures = two persons", and maintained that the human nature of Christ, through union with the divine nature, was so assimilated by the divine that every thing of Christ's humanity, including His body, became divine. At his examination before a local synod he said, "I confess that our Lord was of two natures before the union, but after the union one nature." in this manner Eutyches sought to preserve the unipersonality of Christ, contra Nestorius. In doing so, however, he destroyed Christ's humanity.

Cyril of Alexandria, the foremost opponent of Nestorianism, held to the true deity of Christ, the true humanity of Christ, and the personal union of the two natures in one Person. However, he appears to have located the unity of Christ's Person in the communication of the divine attributes of the Logos to the human nature, resulting from the union of the two natures. Thus Cyril appears to have leaned heavily in the direction of Eutychianism.

Eutyches was condemned for his views by a local synod in Constantinople in 448; restored by a local synod in Ephesus in 449; and finally condemned by the ecumenical synod of Chalcedon in 451.

Following Chalcedon, a number of controversies developed, some of which grew out of Eutychianism. The Monophysite ("one nature") controversy raged until the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 680, and Monophysitism has come down to the present in the Coptic, Abyssinian, and Armenian churches. Out of this controversy came the Monothelite ("one will") controversy, which also terminated with the Sixth Ecumenical Council in A.D. 680.

EUTYCHIANISM

1. Before Incarnation Event



2. At Incarnation Event



3. After Incarnation Event

