

GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES: CHURCH HISTORY

30 June 2021 | Week 4: Council of Nicaea, Athanasius, and Augustine

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus... - Hebrews 12:1-2a

Introduction: The Unsteady Church

1. Modalism
2. Subordinationism
3. Adoptionists
4. Arianism

I. Arianism: Arius the Deacon (256*-336)

1. "There was when he was not"

i. One God

ii. Salvation

*The uncreated God has made the Son
A beginning of things created,
And by adoption had God made the Son
Yet the Son's substance is
Removed from the substance of the Father:
The Son is not equal to the Father,
Nor does he share the same substance.
God is the all-wise Father,
And the Son is the teacher of his mysteries.
The members of the Holy Trinity
Share unequal glories. - Arius*

II. The Creed: Council of Nicaea (325)

1. Council of Nicaea

i. "One Substance"

ii. "For Our Salvation"

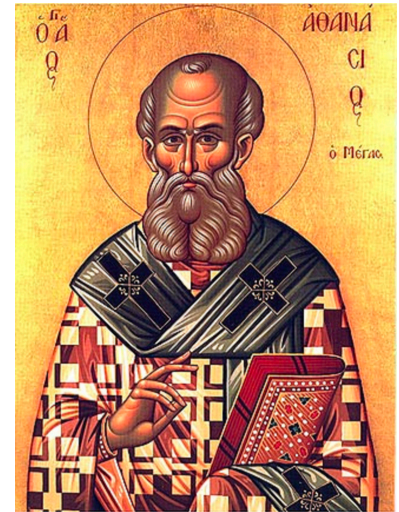
iii. "Anathema"

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father the only-begotten, that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made in heaven and on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he cometh to judge the quick and the dead.

III. Athanasius: The Exiled Apologist (298*-373)

1. Bishop of Alexandria

2. Exile #1 -



3. Exile #3

Exile #1
336-337

Exile #2
339-346

Exile #3
356-362

Exile #4
362-364

Exile #5
365-366

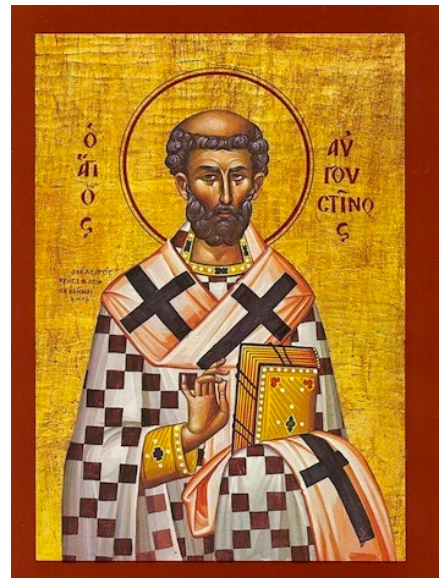
IV. The Council of Constantinople

*We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
Amen.*

V. Augustine: The Bishop of Hippo (354*-430)

1. Influence

2. Conversion



3. Fight for Orthodoxy

i. Manichaeans

ii. Donatism

iii. Pelagians

4. Writings

Appendix A

Council of Nicaea (325)

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father the only-begotten, that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made in heaven and on earth; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man; he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he cometh to judge the quick and the dead.

And in the Holy Ghost.

And those who say: 'There was a time when he was not;' and 'He was not before he was made;' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'out of another substance' or 'thing,' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable'; they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.

Council of Constantinople (381)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Appendix B

Chapter IV.—*That the Son is Eternal and Increate. These attributes, being the points in dispute, are first proved by direct texts of Scripture. Concerning the 'eternal power' of God in Rom. i. 20, which is shewn to mean the Son. Remarks on the Arian formula, 'Once the Son was not,' its supporters not daring to speak of 'a time when the Son was not.'*

11. At his suggestion then ye have maintained and ye think, that 'there was once when the Son was not;' this is the first cloke of your views of doctrine which has to be stripped off. Say then what was once when the Son was not, O slanderous and irreligious men? If ye say the Father, your blasphemy is but greater; for it is impious to say that He was 'once,' or to signify Him by the word 'once.' For He is ever, and is now, and as the Son is, so is He, and is Himself He that is, and Father of the Son. But if ye say that the Son was once, when He Himself was not, the answer is foolish and unmeaning. For how could He both be and not be? In this difficulty, you can but answer, that there was a time when the Word was not; for your very adverb 'once' naturally signifies this. And your other, 'The Son was not before His generation,' is equivalent to saying, 'There was once when He was not,' for both the one and the other signify that there is a time before the Word. Whence then this your discovery? Why do ye, as 'the heathen, rage, and imagine vain phrases against the Lord and against His Christ?' for no holy Scripture has used such language of the Saviour, but rather 'always' and 'eternal' and 'coexistent always with the Father.' For, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' And in the Apocalypse he thus speaks; 'Who is and who was and who is to come.' Now who can rob 'who is' and 'who was' of eternity? This too in confutation of the Jews hath Paul written in his Epistle to the Romans, 'Of whom as concerning the flesh is Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever;' while silencing the Greeks, he has said, 'The visible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal Power and Godhead;' and what the Power of God is, he teaches us elsewhere himself, 'Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God.' Surely in these words he does not designate the Father, as ye often whisper one to another, affirming that the Father is 'His eternal power.' This is not so; for he says not, 'God Himself is the power,' but 'His is the power.' Very plain is it to all that 'His' is not 'He;' yet not something alien but rather proper to Him. Study too the context and 'turn to the Lord;' now 'the Lord is that Spirit;' and you will see that it is the Son who is signified.

Resources Cited & Recommended

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