

# THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST

## INTRODUCTION

Historic origin of the Son of God's Divinity  
305-321 A.D.

Neoplatonism, a religious philosophy that held that a divine substance saturated all objects that were worshipped in different religions, but denied Christianity this quality.

In the Roman Empire resided a fear that certain divisions put the state in danger. Therefore, Constantine established Sunday as a day of rest and worship (321 A.D.); this favored Christianity, imperially speaking. This Imperial Church adapted to paganism.

### 325 A.D. Nicea Council

This creed was almost a binding decision from the Nicea Council against religious polytheism and philosophic polytheism prevailing in those days, due to Constantine's (who organized and presided over the Council) intention of establishing a Universal Church and a religion favorable to the Empire, and also due to the bishops' inclinations toward Constantine.

The dispute over "homousios" and "homoiousios" ("equal" and "likeness") is extended through one hundred different transformations; many interests, in part very worldly, intermingle in the conflict.

Out of the three hundred eighteen bishops that were in Nicea (June, 325 A.D.), only half a dozen were from the west; Bishop Sylvester from Rome was not there in person; instead he sent two priests to represent him, following the correct tactic, which was adopted also by his successors, "to not visit the eastern synods."

On the other hand, almost a thousand bishops, whose votes were needed, were invited by means of an official letter.

Constantine himself inaugurated the Nicea Council.

During the negotiations, it was observed that Osio had predisposed the emperor against the Arians, and that by means of his party, he was influencing, by all means, the indecisive crowds, reminding them also of the imperial favor towards them.

So, neither Arius' speeches nor Athanasius' replies on behalf of the Son's eternity decided the result.

An emperor's command put an end to the debates. Constantine was in favor of the "homousios" expression, against the will of the majority, which was forbearingly subdued. Just two bishops refused to sign.

**BEFORE CONSTANTINE (the era of the Apostolic Fathers—first century and the beginning of the second)**

**Clement of Rome (ending first century)**

He neither asserts nor contradicts the Son's Godhead. "It relates to the Son of God, who is exalted over angels."

**Hermas**

He says about the Son of God, "He is older than creation," accepting the preexistence of Christ.

Clement (not from Rome) says in his homily about Christ, "He was like a spirit before coming to this world and taking on the form of man." It seems that he considers Christ like a creature of the Father.

**Ignatius of Antioch**

He doesn't mention the word "eternity" in regards to Christ.

**APOLOGISTS FATHERS (second century A.D.)**

**Tatian**

There was a time in which God was alone and before beginning his creation, he "engendered" the Word, resulting, in this way, the firstborn work of the Father. This is the Word's outward appearance as a fruit of God's own reasoning faculty.

**Justin**

The Word, which was in God before other creatures were, was "engendered" and came from God before all other creatures did.

**ANTIGNOSTICS FATHERS AND ANTIMONARCHISTS (second-third century A.D.)**

**Irenaeus**

He is the first who uses the expression "God" in reference to Christ. He clearly shows the Logos to be God; moreover, he coexists with God. The Logos reveals the Father since eternity, and as a Son of the revealing God, that eternal Logos became Jesus of Nazareth.

**Tertullian**

For him, the Logos is something real. It is an independent person, a substance, but there was a time when the Son was not.

## **ALEXANDRINE FATHERS AND PRE-NICENE CHRISTOLOGY (second-third century A.D.)**

### **Clement of Alexandria**

He does not emphatically affirm the eternity of the Word's personality, nor that of Jesus Christ. He expresses the Son as a creature.

### **Origen**

He says about the Son, "His creation is the fruit of an eternal act," and as a result, the Logos already existed; however, "He is the greatest of all created things yet."

The Son has a lower rank than the Father, is less powerful than the Father. "The Logos is a second God." So, there is a difference between "The God" with article and "God" without it (Greek).

### **Dionysus**

He says about God's Son, "He exists since the very moment he receives his existence from the Father." The Son is the Father's creation; "as a created thing he did not exist before he was made."

### **Novatian**

"The Son is less than the Father." He has had an origin since he "was born." He is before all things, but after the Father."

### **Arius**

"There is only one God, who was not engendered."

"The Son has a beginning and was created."

"He was created before all times and ages, full of grace and truth; divine, unique and unchangeable." He was not before being engendered, created, ordained, and established.

God was not always the Father; there was a time when God was alone and he was not the Father yet. Then, he became the Father. The Son was not always. Like all things that receive "Being" from "not Being" and like all made things and creatures who have come into existence themselves, so God's Logos came into existence from nonexistent things. The firstborn should be created too.

## **FROM NICEA TO THE REFORMATION (fourth-sixteenth century A.D.)**

During the Dark Ages strange concepts prevailed with relation to Christ that are not worth mentioning.

Michael Servet (sixteenth century A.D.) knew the church fathers' sources very well. He said, "Christ is not of divine essence." The gifts that God the Father has given him, let Christ be called "God," but he has been created.

Milton, the famous poet (sixteenth century A.D.) opposes Christ's eternity; he is against Christ's divinity.

#### **CONTEMPORARY ERA (sixteenth-nineteenth century A.D.)**

William Whester and Isaac Newton reject the belief of Christ's divinity and eternity.

### **THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST**

#### **I. There is no plurality in the divinity during the act of creation.**

Genesis 1:26 [says], "Let us make man in our image...." So, only God intervenes in the act.

Genesis 1:27 [says], "God created man." The same occurs in Chapters 3:22-23 and 11:7-8.

Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9 speak that man has always walked in his Creator's image and likeness.

#### **II. The Son and the Godhead.**

Hebrews 1:3 [says], The Son is not of the same substance as the Father. He is the radiance of God's glory, but he is not of the same nature.

John 10:30 [says], "I and the Father are one." Here Jesus does not teach that he is co-substantial with the Father, but that they both are one in purpose and action.

#### **A. "And the Word was God."**

With regard to John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," the LXX uses "Logos" to translate from Hebrew the term "dabar" (what is back). According to a common characteristic of Hebrew psychology, man's "dabar" is considered, in some sense, as an extension of his personality.

## B. The Greek concept of Logos (the Word).

The logos doctrine, as the cause and substance of the world, rose in the bosom of Greek philosophy and was first defined by Heraclitus, around 450 B.C.; therefore, 500 years before John would use it. The logos is conceived by Heraclitus as the self-same law of the world. "All human laws are fed by a divine one, which is so strong that it rules over all of them and is enough to prevail."

The Stoics said, "The logos is the active element in matter, that is, God. He is eternal and, through matter, is the craftsman of all things."

Plotino, in the same sense, affirms: "The logos, who works in matter, is a natural source; he is not a thought nor a vision, but a power capable of modifying matter, a potency that they don't know. It works as the seal that prints its form, or as the object that reproduces its image on the water."

The doctrine of the logos as a divine person finds its formation in the work of Philo (Greek philosopher from Jewish origin, who was born in Alexandria (13 B.C.–54 A.D.)). The readers of the Gospel of John were used to the concepts of Greek philosophy. This was the preferred way by them to get the truth. John, for this reason, introduces in evangelical language this new word "Logos." This word was not known by the Jews as the Son of God, although it was used by them in reference to God.

## C. Only the Father is a complete God.

"I am who I am", that is, "I am he who exists by himself."

"Source of his own being, he does not depend on anybody in any way."

"He is self-sufficient; in addition to this, all-sufficient."

"The inexhaustible spring of all beings."

"God is the only being who exists by himself, and the cause of all beings; that is, he is the eternal and unchangeable Creator" (Ex. 3:14).

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:26). This right of having life by himself and being the source of life is God's gift to the Son. As man is given the right and the freedom to continually make his own decisions, so the Son has the right of living by himself. For this gift of divine independence, given to the Son, the Father has given him all things due to his subordination. The Son gives back the Father all things. "To give all, to give back all, that is the perfect love."

The Son possesses the being of God the Father, exists by himself, remains by himself, and possesses an absolute independence. So, he has within himself the "I am who I am" image of the invisible God. Col. 1:15, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature."

¿que es la palabra "being"?

El mismo de "substance" "stuff" "nature" "what He consists of"

Life's sovereign fountain, the living God, imparts life to the Son. So the Son lives due to the Father, and finds in the Father his life and his being's principle. In John 6:57, the Son says, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

The believer finds in the Son the same source and guarantees that the Son found in his relation with the Father. Believers receive this life due to their union with Christ.

### III. The Son as Lord.

Psalm 110:1, "Jehovah says to my Lord..." This passage can also be read this way: "The Lord says to my Lord..." (Matthew 22:44). How can the Father and the Son be distinguished? In Psalms 110:1, two different words are used in the Hebrew: "Adonay" and "Adon". In Matthew, "kurios" first and after "kurio" in Greek. The first words indicate greater rank than the second ones.

The term "Lord"—from the fourth century B.C. on, the term "kurios" is already used as a noun, in the general sense of "owner," "proprietor," and as a polite expression such as we use it.

### IV. The Son in relation to Eternity.

Definition of the term "Sempiternal". With regard to God's creation, the terms "sempiternal" and "eternal" are the terms "olam" (world) in Hebrew and "ayon" (epoch, age) in Greek. Both of them indicate a continuous duration, generally endless. "...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed...it will itself endure forever" (Daniel 2:44).

The millennial kingdom has a beginning but not an ending. "And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end" (Luke 1:33). Here the text does not speak of a limited or relative eternity, although it is extraordinary. The relative and hypothetic eternity can not be called full and absolute, because this duration has a beginning but not an ending, and it implies a certain succession, too. It's possessed by angels, and it will be possessed by the just.

The Word was a part of the eternal scheme of things, and we say that because God used it in the eternity. The Word is sempiternal; it has a beginning but not an ending. Whatever may be the case with God, eternity, in relation to man, is not compatible with time, in the sense of a conscious development of events. Revelation 22:2 mentions months within eternity. Being engendered into eternity does not mean being eternal, not merely because of having been "made" or "shaped" into eternity. The Son was engendered at a given point, in a given moment. God conceives the concept, the idea "you are my Son; today I have become your Father."

*John 4:3, 9  
John 1:18  
II Cor 13:14  
13:27  
8:27  
Acts 2:36  
Gal 4:1*

*Ps 110:1  
Matt 22:44*

*John 1:1-14  
Coloss 1:13  
The Kingdom of God is not of this world  
The Kingdom of God is within you  
The Kingdom of God is a reality  
The Kingdom of God is a power*

*Gen 1:1-5*

*John 1:1-14*

*Col 1:13*

*John 1:1-14  
John 1:1-14*

*John 1:1-14*

*John 1:1-14*

*John 1:1-14*

*John 1:1-14*

*Acts 17:8, 27, 31*

*John 1:1-14*

*Jesus is sempiternal.  
And is eternal.*

The Spaniard writer Roque Garcia, in his *Castilian Synonyms Dictionary*, published in 1823 A.D., says about the term *sempiternal*: "It means always eternal; nevertheless it expresses much less than the primitive voice, the difference between these two words (many times mistaken and confused) is: Sempiternal: it will last forever within space. Eternal: it will last forever within infinity...that is, within the simple, complete, finished, absolute perpetuity."

Sempiternal will endure; eternal does not finish.  
Sempiternal represents the existence; eternal represents the being.

## V. The Son, co-worker or co-creator with the Father.

The firstborn over all creation, the beginning of God's creation. "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule..." (Genesis 1:26). God's purpose or intention was to share his glory as creator in relation to man. This occurred just before all creation was made, before human life.

In the previous five days and a part of the sixth, God used his Word as a means to bring about the existence, the creation. When God made man, he expressed his will of letting Christ be his co-worker or co-creator. For the moment, man was made by a God and in the image and likeness of a single God (v. 27).

Hebrews 1:3,6 [says] no one mortal ever projected the Father's perfect image. The Son was the most perfect expression of the invisible God. The Son was made perfect and, as God's firstborn, was sustained by the Father, and, at the same time, he is a supporter.

1 Cor. 15:45 [says], "...the last Adam (became) a life-giving spirit" for giving life.

Colossians 3:10 and Romans 8:29 [say] in the new creation the believer has within himself the image of the Father and of the Son.

John 5:17-19 [says] the Father and the Son work together to this very day, with the new man.

Ephesians 2:10,15 [says] we are God's workmanship, but due to his Son at Calvary, he has built a new man.

Colossians 1:15, 18 [says] the Son is the firstborn of the new world's new creation, because he was the first who projected the Father's perfect image, the firstborn from among the dead and entered into eternity.

## VI. The Son and Worship.

Deuteronomy 6:4 reveals that worship belongs to only God, and the Son re-establishes and reaffirms it (Mark 12:29).

Ms. 1119 15

*Rev. 4:10-11 in worship to the Father  
5:14*

I Cor. 15:28

Acts 10:25 [says] Cornelius fell at Peter's feet worshipping ("proskyneo"), but in worshipping God, "proskineo" is used.

Hebrews 1:6 [says], "Let all God's angels worship him." Some versions say, "Let them pay homage to him." *Heb. 1:6, 7*

Philippians 2:10-11 [says], "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Ephesians 3:14 [says], "For this reason I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**VII. The Father and the Son are not equal.**

If they were alike, why is one always identified as being superior and the other inferior?

John 17:3 - The only true God and Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28:19 - The Father and the Son.

1 Cor. 8:6 - God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 10:36 - God and Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 - God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 13:23 - God and Jesus.

Romans 1:7 - God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:8 - God and Christ.

*etc.*

**CONCLUSION:**

God is infinitely eternal; he lives by himself, of indivisible nature. The Son had his origin in God and has immortality as a Father's gift and shares it with man.

The Son is the invisible God's perfect image and preserves the likeness of the Son of man.

**MOTION:**

*To IAC all in the position*  
"Be it resolved that ~~we support the present belief that~~ Jesus Christ was created by God in eternity."

Submitted by the  
Mexican National Council

*Essence - Jesus not of same nature as Father. Not of same substance*



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# FORUM

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