



# The Christological Controversy

*Richard A. Norris Jr. (Editor)*

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Series Foreword I. Introduction Early Christology Initial Problems Justin Martyr, Melito of Sardis, Irenaeus of Lyon, Tertullian of Carthage, Origen of Alexandria Further Problems The Arians and Athanasius; Apollinaris of Laodicea; Theodore of Mopsuestia; Cyril, Nestorius, and Eutyches; Leo and Chalcedon II. Melito of Sardis A Homily on the Passover III. Irenaeus of Lyon Against Heresies IV. Tertullian Against Praxeas On the Flesh of Christ V. Origen On First Principles VI. Athanasius Orations against the Arians VII. Apollinaris of Laodicea On the Union in Christ of the Body with the Godhead Fragments VIII. Theodore of Mopsuestia Fragments of the Doctrinal Works IX. The Controversies Leading Up to the Council of Chalcedon Nestorius's First Sermon against the Theotokos Cyril of Alexandria's Second Letter to Nestorius Nestorius's Second Letter to Cyril Cyril's Letter to John of Antioch Pope Leo I's Letter to Flavian of Constantinople The Council of Chalcedon's "Definition of the Faith" Bibliography

## The Christological Controversy Details

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# From Reader Review The Christological Controversy for online ebook

## G Walker says

Ehhh... mixed bag... feels too Western in overall tone, but still good as a brief, super small, snap shot of the issues... not a great intro... not a bad one, if it is used strictly as a primer... One of the weaker volumes in this set from Augsburg/Fortress.

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## Dion Talamante says

### An interesting read

Most Christian now a days take for granted fundamental theological issues that the Church faced. I'm an Atheist?, and found this a very interesting. I still don't agree with the premise, but the following conclusion is mindbogglingly

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## SooHo Lee says

It is always surprising to see how much a scholar can put together in less than 200 pages. Richard A. Norris, Jr., has canvased the landscape of the early stages of Christological formation and brought this important, accessible, and resourceful together: *\*The Christological Controversy\**. Landmark Church Father figures, such as Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, and Cyril, are listed with checkered figures, such as Apollinaris, Theodore, and Nestorius (Origen can be argued to be listed here, as well).

It would be ironic to say that heresies make orthodoxy, but that seems like the case for early Christological controversies. Many times, these heresies and the condemned heretics who espoused them were either trying to say *\*too much\** or too neatly fixed that they *\*suffocate\** orthodoxy. Most, or all, of the precise wordings of the (Four) Great Ecumenical Creeds were hammered during and after heated debates. So, it's important to keep in mind not only that these great creeds are in a very Hellenistic worldview but also in very complicated, drawn out debates (via pony express). To say Jesus is "true God from true God" shocks Arius, and "true man from true man" shudders gnostics and docetics.

To be sure, Norris nor even the great Church Fathers were attempting to solve a problem or fix a paradox. Jesus as God-Man is, utterly, mysterious. Yet, in the spirit of Augustine, so that we would not be silenced, we must say something -- rightly and worshipfully, orthodox and orthopraxis.

cf. [www.sooholee.wordpress.com](http://www.sooholee.wordpress.com)

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## Sagely says

I'm always thankful to read primary texts. I'm glad Norris included early texts, like Melito of Sardis' Homily

on the Passover and selections from Irenaeus' Against Heresies. Though they both bear/bare the flaws of their historical moments (as I do of mine), these are fun reading at points.

The later writers, post-Tertullian (with the exception of Leo's Tome) are dry. The living fire of the first centuries is lost for the arid negotiations with the dominant philosophical categories. Reading the second half of this text was work.

Which goes to show, I guess, that most ecclesial and theological work is just that: work. A truly good sermon may not so much sing as hum a good tune others can catch. Fashioning a truly good tune can take hours at the piano.

I first picked up this text for a grad course. It is a worthwhile introduction, as far as it goes. It's approachable, readable, understandable.

But I think the name--until we get to Nestorius and Cyril of Alexandria--is false advertising. We don't hear much of the controversy. We hear the various arguments of the winners of history (perhaps because the winners burned losers' texts). I would have appreciated fuller indication (if primary sources were unavailable) of the other side(s) during this controversial time period.

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### **Angela Joyce says**

I found this to be a great reference in writing essays about both Arianism and Nestorianism. The Introduction is clear and informative as well. I highly recommend this to anyone studying the history of Christianity.

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### **Don says**

Solid seminary reading on how the question of Christ's nature was resolved in the early church.

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### **Peter says**

In addition to the author's review of the Christological controversies and apologists arguments over the first few centuries, he presents actual translated texts of those same apologists. Very good for the student of theological history to read.

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### **Ryan Linkous says**

This book has a lot of key texts concerning the early Christological controversies of the 2nd-5th centuries. Anyone interested in the doctrine of the person of Christ must read this book. However, it is not for the faint of heart. Some of the writings (like Origen), though not all, are pretty advanced and confusing. The content is incredibly helpful, I just can't recommend this to younger believers who don't have a lot of guidance and who aren't eagerly seeking to know more about the development of doctrine of the person of Christ. This is the place to start though.

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## **Dwight Davis says**

A helpful collection of primary source readings around early christology, in particular the earliest christological work and the thinkers around Nicaea and Chalcedon. This is a little out of date. There are definitely better volumes available now with primary source readings around early christology, in particular Frances Young's volume *From Nicaea to Chalcedon*.

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