

# The Oriental Orthodox Church agrees with the Church of the East on...

- Person
  - Prosopon (Greek)
  - Parsopa/Farsofa (Aramaic)
- Individual Existence/Subsistence
  - Hypostasis (Greek)
  - Qnoma (Aramaic)
- Substance/Essence
  - Ousia (Greek)
  - Ousia (Aramaic)
- Nature
  - Physis (Greek)
  - Kyana (Aramaic)
- Why is this important?



# What did the Chalcedonian Church do?

- Change the definition of the terms
  - Prosopon = Hypostasis
  - Physis = Ousia
- If Prosopon = Hypostasis...





## What did Nestorius teach?:

For we know not two Christs or Sons or only-begottens or Lords; nor one and another Son nor an original and a new only-begotten nor a first and a second Christ, but one and the same who is visible in the invisible and the visible nature. Can a man, when he hears these things, say that something else was said by him and by those at Chalcedon and by Leo? For openly he is bold and knows the same Christ who is visible in the invisible and the visible nature nor has said two Christs and two sons and Lords. And the Council of Chalcedon said: 'One and the same Christ, son, lord, only-begotten, in two natures, not changeably, not confusedly, not divisibly.'

(Nestorius of Constantinople, Fragment 308)

For this reason the union is in the prosôpon and not in the nature, and we say not 'the union of the prosopa' but 'of the natures'. But [there is only] one prosôpon in the union but in the natures the one and the other, as from the common prosôpon it is known that he took the flesh, the likeness of a servant, for his own prosôpon, and thereby he spoke in teaching and working and acting; and he gave his own likeness to the likeness of a servant and thereby he speaks as by his own prosôpon and by the divinity. For the prosôpon is common, one and the same.

(Nestorius of Constantinople, Bazaar of Heracleides, Book II)

For harm was not done to the uniqueness of the Son by the diversity of the natures, But in such wise as the corruptible body is one thing and further the immortal soul is another thing, yet one man is constituted of them both, so from the mortal and the immortal, from the corruptible and from the incorruptible, and from what is subject to beginning and from the nature which has no beginning, that is of God the Word, I confess one prosopon of the Son.

(Nestorius of Constantinople, Bazaar of Heracleides, Fragment 280)

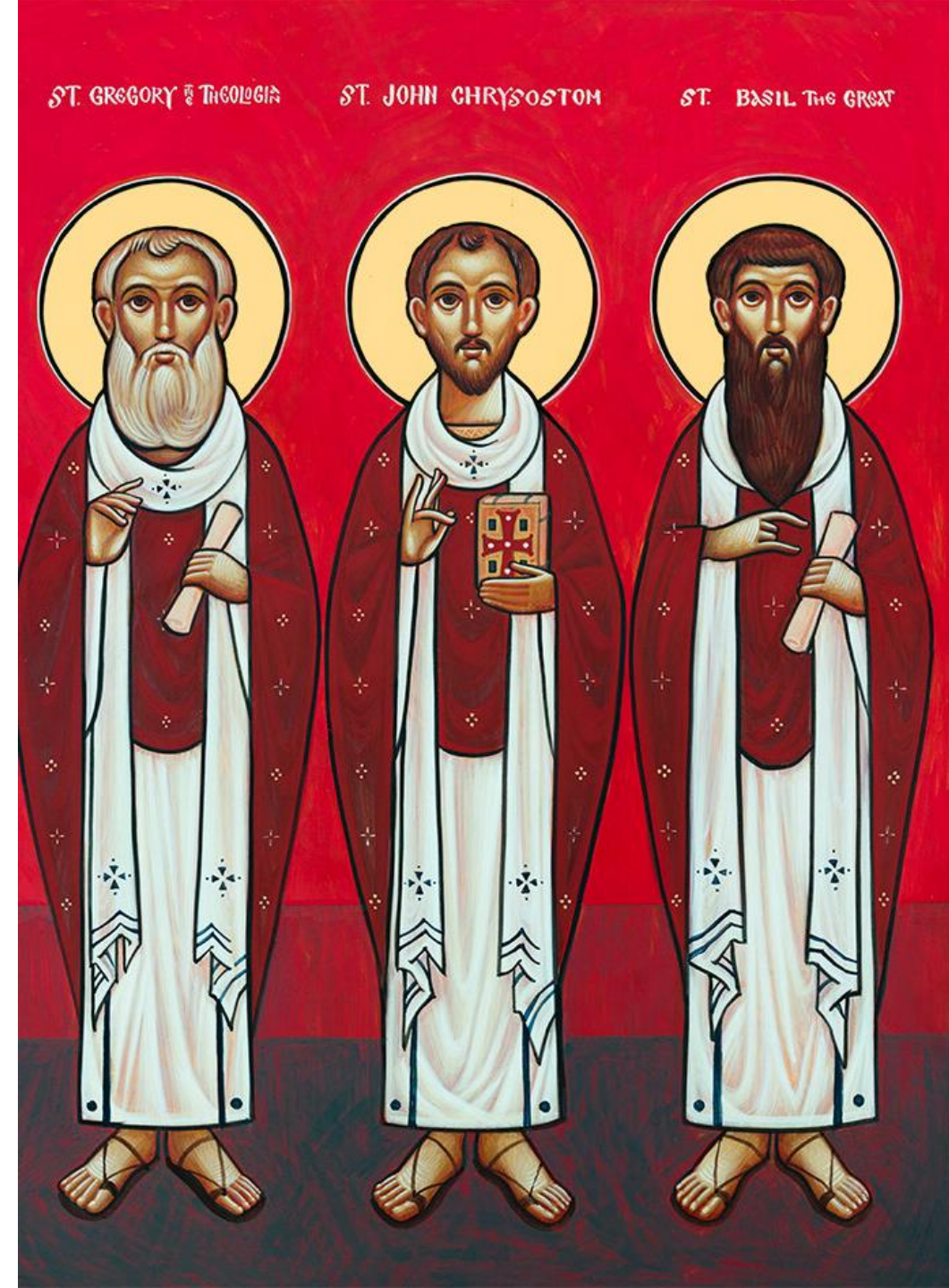


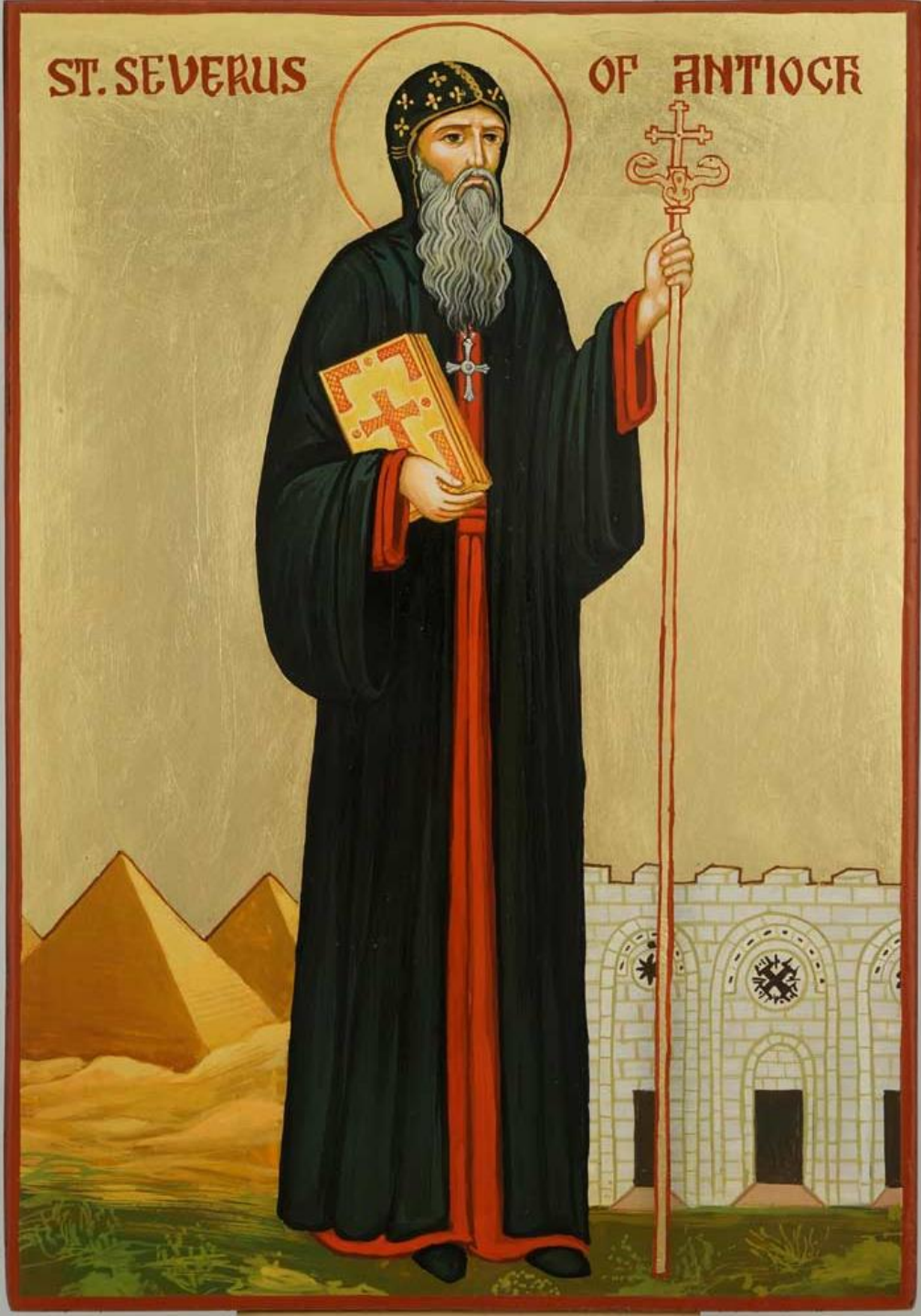


# Are these terms identical?

Prosopon (Person) ≠ Hypostasis (Individual Existence)

- Therefore, while the nature of the Godhead is simple and uncomposed, it would not be divided by our thoughts into the dyad of Father and Son, if not some difference were posited, I mean, not according to substance, but thought to be external [to the substance], **through which the person (πρόσωπον) of each is made (εἰσφέρεται) to lie in a peculiar (ἰδιόζυση) hypostasis, but is bound into unity of Godhead through natural identity.**  
(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Thesaurus)
- If then they describe **the Persons as being without hypostasis**, the statement is per se absurd; **but if they concede that the Persons exist in real hypostasis**, as they acknowledge, let them so reckon them that the principle of the homoousion may be preserved in the unity of the Godhead, and that the doctrine preached may be the recognition of true religion, of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the perfect and complete hypostasis of each of the Persons named.  
(St. Basil The Great, Letters, Letter 214)
- For merely to enumerate the differences of Persons is insufficient; **we must confess each Person to have a substantial existence in real hypostasis.**  
(St. Basil The Great, Letters, Letter 210)





# Relation between Prosopon and Hypostasis

- Self-subsisting Hypostases
  - When hypostases subsist by individual subsistence, as for instance, those of Peter and of Paul, whom the authority of the apostleship united, then there will be a union of persons and a brotherly association, not a natural junction of one hypostasis made up out of two that is free from confusion.
- Non-Self Subsisting Hypostases
  - But, when hypostases do not subsist in individual subsistence, as also in the case of the man among us, I mean him who is composed of soul and body, but are without confusion recognized in union and composition, being distinguished by the intellect only and displaying one hypostasis made out of two, such a union none will be so uninstructed as to call one of persons. Though the hypostasis of God the Word existed before, or rather was before all ages and times, being eternally with God both the Father and the Holy Spirit, yet still the flesh possessing an intelligent soul which he united to him did not exist before the union with him, nor was a distinct person assigned to it.

(St. Severus of Antioch, Letter 2)





- Nature ≠ Ousia (Essence)
- Nature = Hypostasis or Ousia
  - Enough has, I think, been said about essence and hypostasis. But the name 'nature' is sometimes taken in place of essence', sometimes in place of hypostasis. For even the whole of mankind we call comprehensively 'nature', as it is indeed written: «For all natures of beasts and of birds, and of reptiles and of things that are in the water are subjected and are made subject to human nature»: and again we speak of one nature in reference to a single man, Paul for example or Peter, or maybe James. **Where therefore we name all mankind one nature, we use the name 'nature' generically in place of 'essence'; but, where we say that there is one nature of Paul, the name 'nature' is employed in place of 'individual hypostasis'.** So also we call the Holy Trinity one nature, employing the term 'nature' in place of the general designation 'essence'; as Gregory the Theologian the bishop of Nazianzus also said in the sermon on the Holy Pentecost: «Confess the Trinity to be of one Godhead, my friends; or, if you like, of one nature; and we will ask for you from the Spirit the expression 'God'».

(St. Severus of Antioch, Letter 6)





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- So they err: for if a mind is the spirit and the spirit a mind, as they also believe, but the soul is another hypostasis along with the mind and along with the spirit, **no longer are two hypostaseis being combined into a man into one hypostasis,** no longer is the soul alone enhypostatic and the body enhypostatic, but we find then four: the mind is one hypostasis, the soul another hypostasis, the spirit another hypostasis, the body another hypostasis.

(St. Epiphanius of Salamis, Ancoratus, Chapter 77, Section 4-7)





# What is Miaphysitism?

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- Union of Two Natures into One Incarnate (Composite) Nature
- What are these Natures?
- It is precisely because Nestorius constantly denied that God the Word's birth happened according to flesh, and instead introduced a mere unity of dignities, and it is because he said that a man, honored by sharing the title of Sonship, was connected to God, **that we were forced to battle against these notions of his and to assert instead that the union was "at the level of hypostasis," meaning by this simply that the Word's nature, that is, his hypostasis, which is the Word himself, was genuinely united to a human nature,** quite apart from any change or confusion, as we have said often enough. He is reckoned to be, and actually is, a single Christ; the same individual is both God and man.

(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Defense of The Twelve Chapters against Theodoret, Defense 2)



If anyone shall after the [hypostatic] union divide the hypostases in the one Christ, joining them by that connexion alone, which happens according to worthiness, or even authority and power, and not rather by a coming together, which is made by natural union: let him be anathema.

(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Third Anathema of the Twelve Chapters)

Since he points out that God's form took upon himself the form of a servant, let him go on and explain **whether it was just these "forms" that came together by themselves, quite apart from their hypostases**. Well, I reckon that even he would shrink from saying that, for it was not mere resemblances and forms, things with no hypostasis, that conjoined together to bring about the saving union; rather, it was a convergence of the very things themselves, of two hypostases. Then we can really have faith that **a genuine incarnation** took place.

(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Defense of the Twelve Chapters against Theodoret of Cyrus, Defense 1)

Accordingly we say that from it and the hypostasis of God the Word the ineffable union was made: **for the whole of the Godhead and the whole of humanity in general were not joined in a natural union, but special hypostases**.

(St. Severus of Antioch, Letter 2)







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Are the two natures completely gone?

The inquisitive as to the mode of his incarnation and becoming man may contemplate God the Word of God who, as Scripture has it, 'took the form of a slave and was made in the likeness of men'. **By this very fact alone the difference between the natures or hypostases will be appreciated; for Godhead and manhood are not the same thing in quality of nature.** Otherwise what is the point of the Word's becoming empty, though being God) and abasing himself among inferiors that is to say us men? **Accordingly when the mode of the incarnation is the object of curiosity the human mind is bound to observe two things joined together in union with each other mysteriously and without merger,** yet it in no way divides what are united but believes and firmly accepts that the product of both elements is one God, Son, Christ and Lord.

(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Letter to St. Acacius of Melitene, Ch. 14)

But observe how the whole ark was overlaid with pure gold within and without. For God the Word was united to the holy Flesh, and this (I deem) is it that the ark was overlaid without. But that He made His own the reasonable Soul also that was within the Body, will this shew, viz., that He bade that it should be overlaid within also. **And that the Natures or Hypostases have remained unconfused, shall we see hence.** For the gold that was spread upon the wood, remained what it was, and the wood was rich in the glory of the gold; yet it ceased not from being wood.

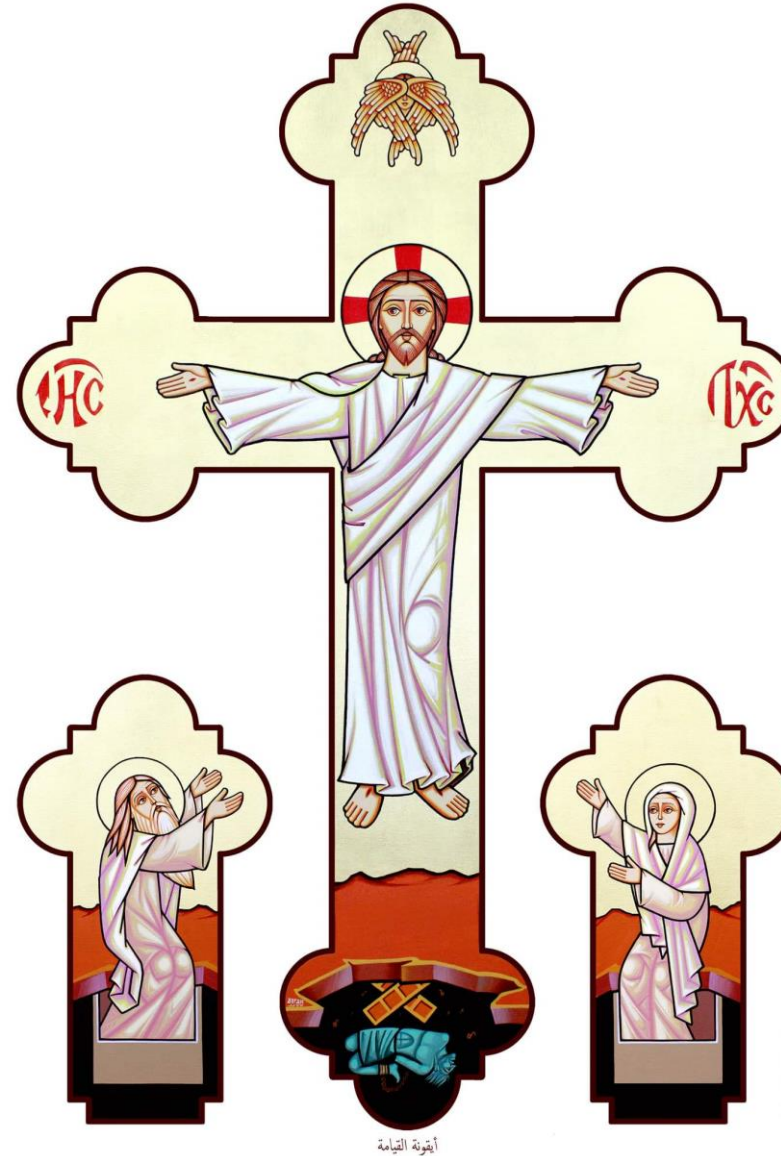
(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Scholia on the Incarnation of of the Only-begotten)



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We do not say "one nature and one qnumo (hypostasis) for the divine and the human." We say that the composite Christ is one nature and one composite qnumo (hypostasis).

(St. Michael the Great, Chronicle, Book 8, Chapter 11)





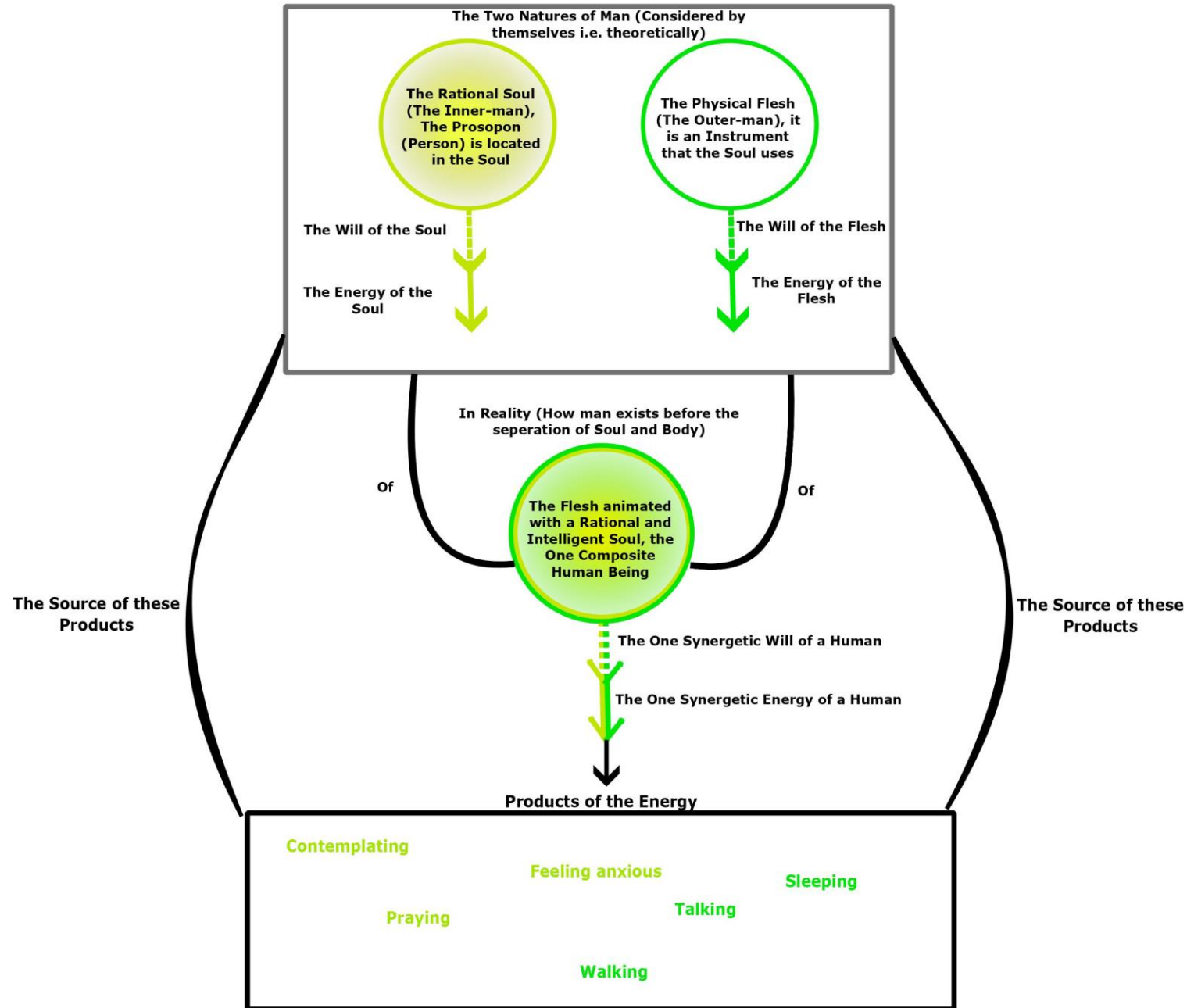
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The term 'one' can be properly applied not just to those things which are naturally simple, but also to things which are compounded in a synthesis. Such is the case with a **human being who comprises soul and body.** These are quite different things and they are not consubstantial with each other, yet when they are united they constitute the single nature of man, even though the difference in nature of the things that are brought into unity is still present within the system of the composition. **So, those who say that if there is one incarnate nature of God the Word, then it necessarily follows that there must have been a mixture or confusion with the human nature being diminished or 'stolen away', are talking rubbish.**

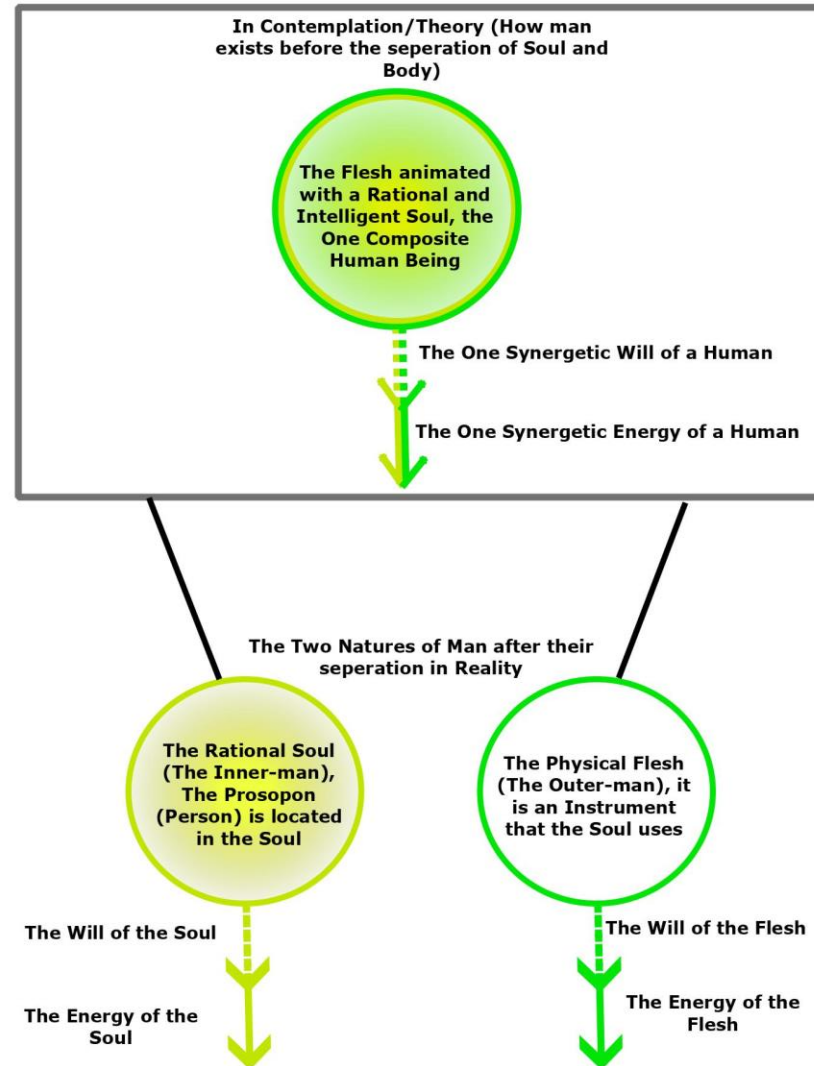
(St. Cyril of Alexandria, Second Letter to Succensus)



# The Composition of a Human Being



# The Seperation of a Human Being







What do we say the human being is? Both [body and soul] together, or only one of them? **It is clear, surely that the joining of the two of them is characteristic of the living being— it makes no sense to spin out a discussion of what is undisputed and well known!** And since this is so, let us consider another point in addition: shall we say of human acts such as adultery, murder, theft, and whatever is in that category— or, on the other hand, of sobriety, continence, and every activity opposed to vice— that they are the achievements of both [parts], or do we define these actions as restricted to the soul by itself? **Is not the truth obvious here, as well? For the soul is never separated from the body when it undertakes theft or carries out a burglary, nor is it, indeed, alone, when it gives bread to the hungry or drink the thirsty or when it makes eager haste to the prison to care for the one distressed by imprisonment; but in every one of these acts, each part is united with the other and performs it jointly.**

(St. Gregory of Nyssa, Oration on the Holy Pascha, Section 19)

- So truly it is our way also, when we talk of man, to speak things both high and low. For when we say that “man is nothing”, “man is earth,” “man is ashes,” **we name the whole man from the inferior part.** But when we say that “man is an immortal animal” and that “man is rational and related to the higher (beings),” **we again name the whole man from the superior part.** So also with Christ: sometimes Paul speaks of Him from the inferior part, and sometimes from the superior part.

(St. John Chrysostom, Homily 1 on Hebrews)







For there is one who acts, that is the Word of God incarnate; and there is one active movement which is activity, but the things which are done are diverse, that is (the things) accomplished by activity. **For example, bodily to walk on the earth and to make a journey is something human, but to raise up and order to run those who are lame in the feet, and unable to use their soles, but who are prostrate and crawl like reptiles, is most proper to God. But there is one Word which is incarnate, and one activity of his, which is an active movement, which performed the one and the other.** And it is not the case that, because these things which were done were of different kinds, we say that consequently there were two natures which were effecting those things, for as we have said, a single God the Word incarnate performed both of them. And just as no one divides the Word from the flesh, so also it is impossible to divide or separate these activities.

(St. Severus of Antioch, Letter I to Sergius the Monophysite)

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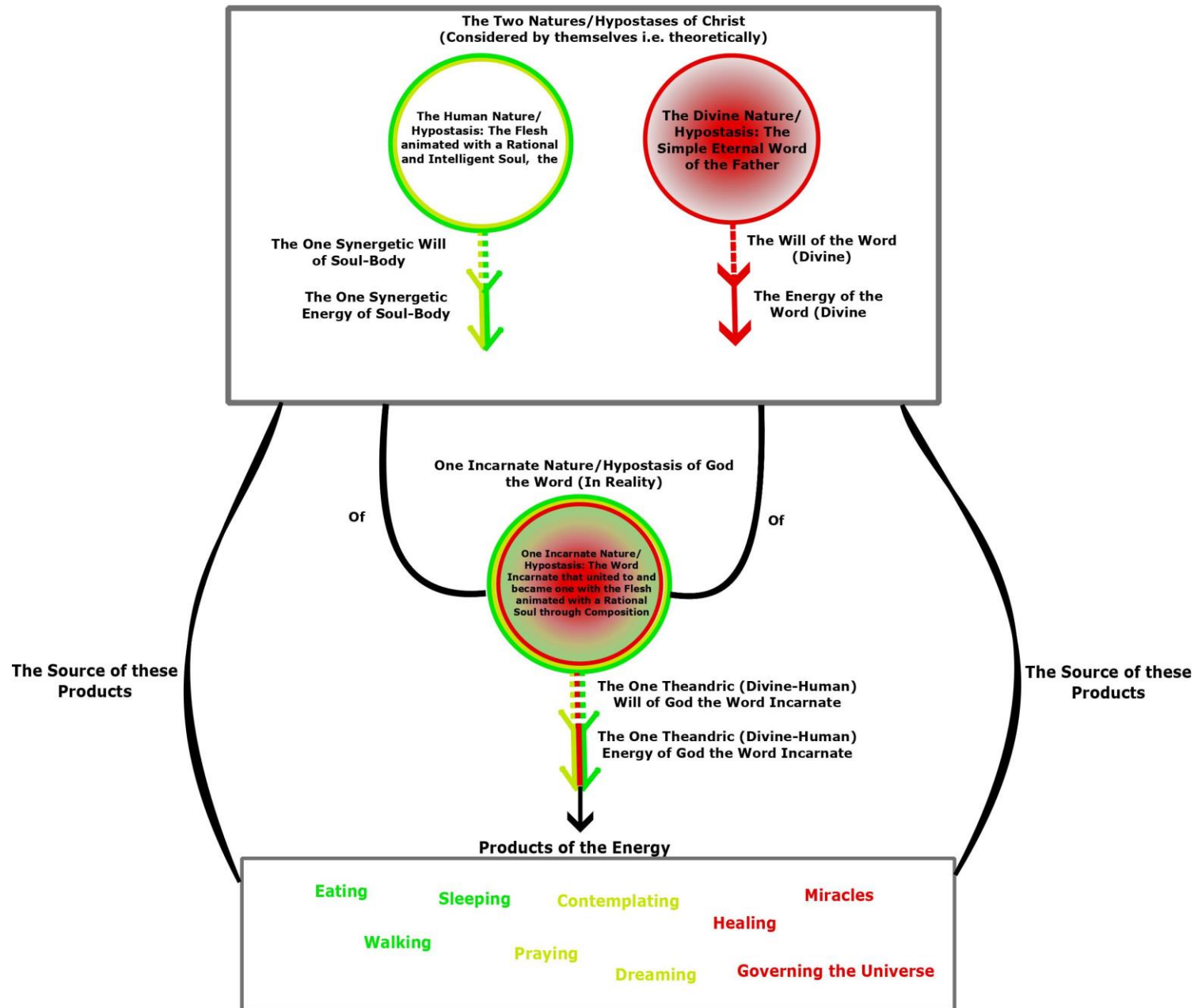
The Word's nature took humanity to itself for sure, but he was not "merely" human. Instead, because his own glory overshadowed the element that he assumed, the Word permanently preserved his divine transcendence without confusing it with the humanity. This is what the disciples had realized when they worshiped him with the words, "Truly you are the Son of God," **even though they could see him walking around in a human body; in reality, he was walking miraculously, as God.**

(St. Cyril of Alexandria, On Orthodoxy to Theodosius, 31)





# The Incarnation of the Word





How is it possible, then, on the one hand, for body to be united to soul without losing corporeity, or, on the other hand, how is it possible for soul, being incorporeal and self-subsistent, to be joined to body, and become part of a living creature, still keeping distinct and uncorrupted its own entity?

([St?] Nemesis of Emesa, On the Nature of Man, Of the Union of Soul with Body)

However, Ammonius, the master of Plotinus, solved the problem thus. **He said that it is in the nature of intelligibles both to be capable of union with things adapted to receive them, just as much as if they were things that would perish with them, and to remain, nevertheless, unconfused with them while in union, and imperishable, just as though they were merely juxtaposed.** For, the union of bodies always involves some alteration in them as they enter into union, even, possibly, a being transformed into other bodies, as in the case of elements entering into compounds, food turning into blood, or blood turning into flesh or into other parts of the body. **In the case of intelligibles, on the other hand, union takes place, and yet no change in them results. For an intelligible being is essentially such as not to suffer alteration. The alternatives are for it to withdraw from the union, or to suffer annihilation. An intelligible will not suffer transformation.**

([St?] Nemesis of Emesa, On the Nature of Man, Of the Union of Soul with Body)

Gregory the Theologian also in the letter to Cledonius wrote words which agree with him as follows: «As the natures are mingled, so also are the appellations; and they run into one another on the principle of coalescence». **Do not let the term 'mingle' disturb you: for he used it very clearly and without danger with the intention of denoting the primary union: for, where there is a union of something incorporeal with a body, no danger anywhere arises from mingling.** For this is manifestly a quality of fluid bodies, to be confounded together by intertwining, and, so to speak, come out of their nature.

(St. Severus of Antioch, Letter 1)

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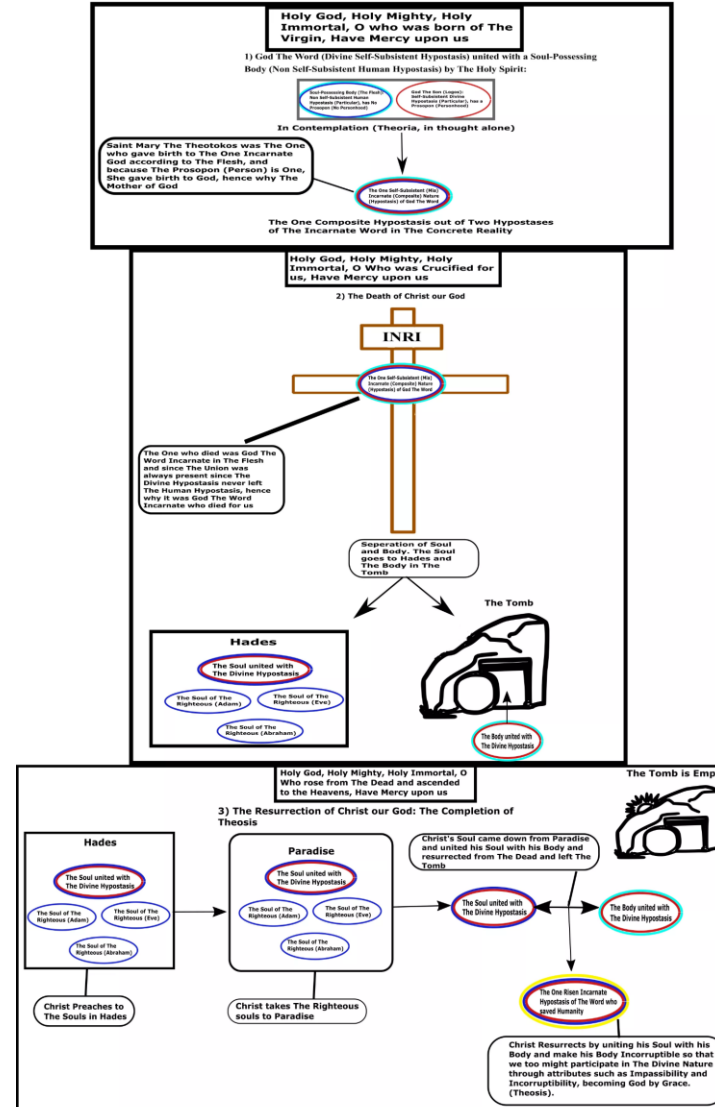




For the Jews did not crucify a mere man, **neither did they nail the visible nature only**, but they brought (their) daring to the God (who was) in it, **who had appropriated the sufferings of the united nature**.

(St. Theodotus of Ancyra, Homily II at Ephesus)

# The Incarnation, The Death and The Resurrection of Christ our God: The Divine Economy for our Deification and Salvation



Christ Our Prototype of The New Creation

From

To

## Colors:

The Word (Son), The Hypostasis Begotten from The Essence of The Father from Eternity with The Particular Characteristics: Sonship, Wisdom and Power of God The Father. The One Who was Incarnate

The Soul of a Body

The Body of Human being, overall Blue Represents The One Hypostasis of Man that is Composite out of Two different Elements but still both are One

The Glorified Body, Our New Bodies which will have after The Resurrection of The Dead since Christ made it possible for us to become Incorrupt and Participate in The Divine Uncreated Grace (Energies)

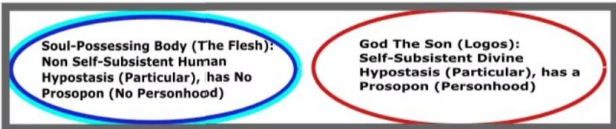
In Contemplation, In Thought Alone that there are Two Natures to show The Distinction of The Particularities, that The Nature of The Flesh is not The Word's Nature and The Word's Nature is not Flesh's Nature but that Christ is Composite out of Two Different Natures made into in Reality without Confusion, Alternation or Mixture



**The Incarnation, The Death and The Resurrection of  
Christ our God: The Divine Economy for our  
Deification and Salvation**

**Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy  
Immortal, O who was born of The  
Virgin, Have Mercy upon us**

**1) God The Word (Divine Self-Subsistent Hypostasis) united with a Soul-Possessing  
Body (Non Self-Subsistent Human Hypostasis) by The Holy Spirit:**



**In Contemplation (Theoria, in thought alone)**

**Saint Mary The Theotokos was The One  
who gave birth to The One Incarnate  
God according to The Flesh, and  
because The Prosopon (Person) is One,  
She gave birth to God, hence why The  
Mother of God**



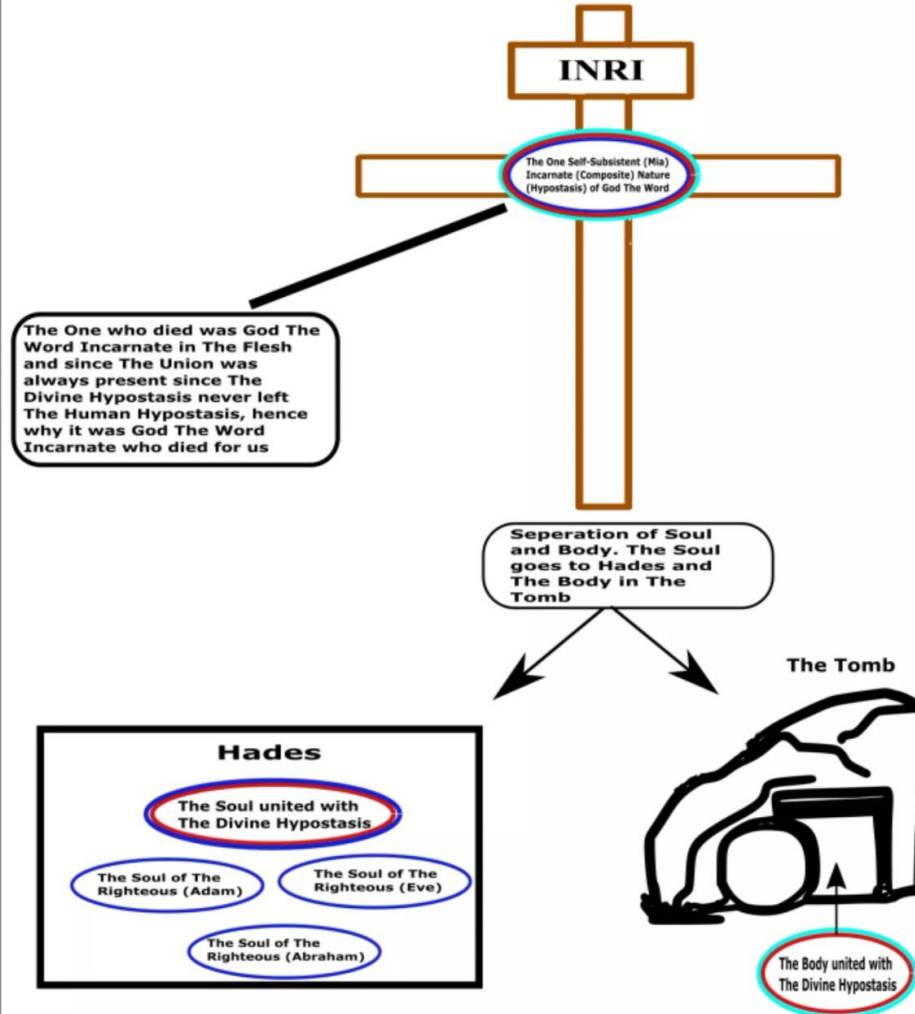
**The One Composite Hypostasis out of Two Hypostases  
of The Incarnate Word in The Concrete Reality**

**Christ Our  
Prototype of  
The New  
Creation**

**From**

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy  
Immortal, O Who was Crucified for  
us, Have Mercy upon us

2) The Death of Christ our God



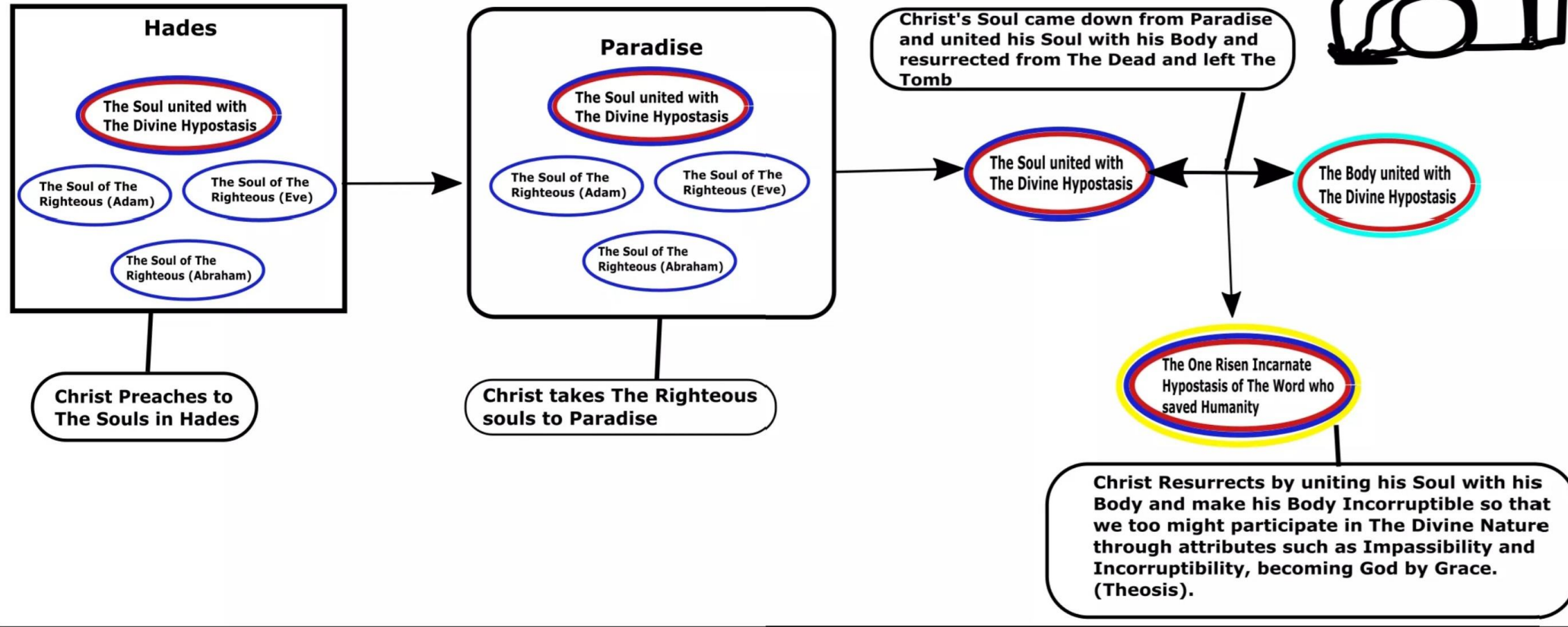


Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, O  
Who rose from The Dead and ascended  
to the Heavens, Have Mercy upon us

The Tomb is Empty



### 3) The Resurrection of Christ our God: The Completion of Theosis



To



Believe, therefore, in accordance with what Scripture says, that he came in the flesh, not that flesh came; that he grew weary in the flesh, not that flesh grew weary; that he suffered in the flesh, not that flesh suffered; that he died in the flesh, not that flesh died; that he was crucified in the flesh, not that flesh was crucified; that he rose in the flesh, not that flesh arose; that he was taken into heaven in the flesh, not that flesh was taken into heaven; that he healed in the flesh, not that flesh healed; that he was seated at the right hand of God in the flesh, not that flesh was seated. **And, in general, whenever Holy Scripture speaks about him bodily, you cannot show that it is speaking about the flesh as one part of the whole, but rather united: he made the deeds of the flesh his own.** For Scripture says: Christ was begotten, Christ healed, Christ ate, Christ slept; Christ's body thirsts blood, Christ's feet, Christ's wounds. The soldier slapped Christ on the face, Christ grew weary, Christ suffered, Christ died for is Christ was crucified, Christ arose, Christ was taken into heaven, Christ was seated at the right hand of God, Christ will come to judge the living and the dead, Christ is the Son of God, Christ is God over all things. **Nowhere does it say, "his humanity suffered something" or "God the Word did something."** It says everywhere in Scripture, rather, that he claimed the deeds of the flesh as his own, not only on earth in the here and now, but also in heaven for ever.

(St. Mark the Ascetic, On the Incarnation)



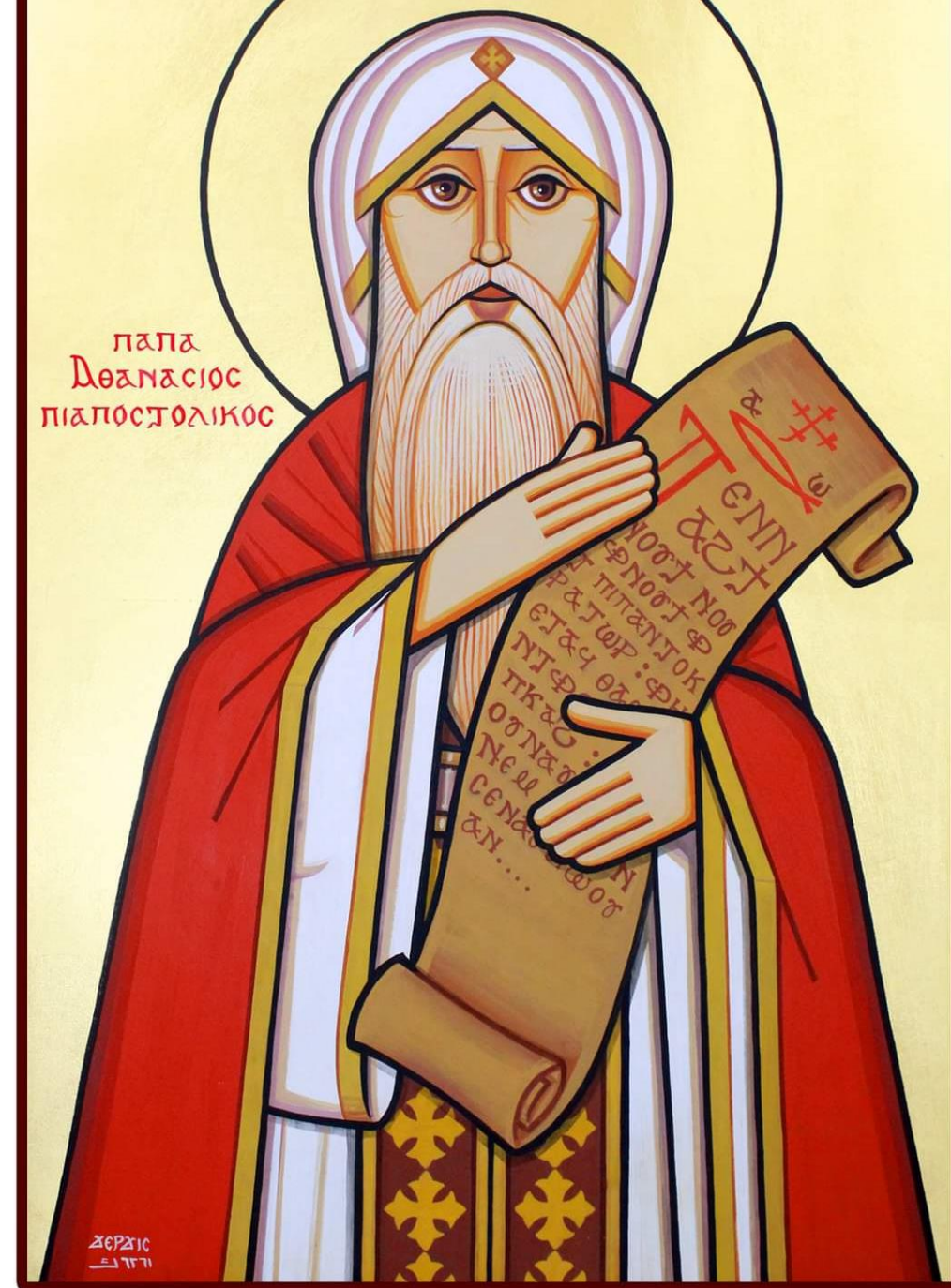


In the same way the passion did the divine nature no harm but was suffered in the human nature, **and yet not only as the human nature's; otherwise the scripture, "Cursed be everyone whose hope is in man" might be applicable to the work of salvation.** It was also counted as the Godhead's though the Godhead does not suffer, so that the salvation of the passion might be credited to God's holy church in the Godhead.

(St. Epiphanius of Salamis, Panarion, Against Apollinarians)

- We confess that he is the Son of God and God in the Spirit, and man in the flesh. **We do not confess that this single Son is two natures, one to be worshiped and one not to be worshiped. He is rather one incarnate nature of the Word, and is to be worshiped, with his flesh, with a single worship.** There are not two sons, one the true Son of God who is worshiped, and the other a man from Mary who is not worshiped, but who has become a son of God by grace in the way that men do.

(St. Athanasius of Alexandria, quoted by St. Cyril of Alexandria, A Defense of the Twelve Anathemas against the Bishops of the Diocese of Oriens, Defense 8)



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