

*Hypostatic union (from the Greek: ὑπόστασις, ὑπόστασις, hypóstasis, "sediment, foundation, substance, subsistence") is a technical term in Christian theology employed in mainstream Christology to describe the union of Christ's humanity and divinity in one hypostasis, or individual existence.*

For example, the passage Milliner highlights as most problematic for John 1 Matthew J. By extension, we seem to require a more nuanced account of the shift from the first to the second wave of iconoclasm than what Milliner provides. John even begins his first discourse with an exposition of how christology shapes the proper understanding of icons. Finally, John uses his christological precision to clarify what exactly one depicts or circumscribes when one paints the face of Christ. Writings on Iconoclasm, transl. The Newman Press, , IV, p. Therefore Christ is circumscribed, even if he is not a mere human being he is not one of the many, but God become a human being ; else those whom you follow, and who say that Christ only came in appearance and as it were in a phantasy, would be attacked by the swift dragons of heresy. What becomes apparent upon checking these details is that John and Theodore seem to share a sense of divine presence in icons. Andrew Louth translates the passage as follows: Indeed, such a shift indicates that it may not be fair to attribute to John a preoccupation with the nature of the icon as though it could emanate divinity in and of itself. Accordingly, apart from the name, the materials of the image are no different from any other earthly substances, and so the way divine grace is present in the icon cannot be a matter of the material relating to divinity per se. Walter de Gruyter, , for the Greek: In this passage, John makes it clear that the material of icons cannot merit veneration unless they retain the form of their prototype: And again, so long as the pieces of the wood are bound together in the form of a 7 this would be to confuse the nature of the icon with its form. In particular, it turns out that Theodore himself can say that divinity somehow exists in the icon: The locality of the icon, its physical presence, must count for something. Otherwise, it is not clear why icons merit veneration. In the first place, the novelty of cross, I venerate the form because of Christ who was crucified on it; but if they are separated from each other, then I throw them away and burn them. Since there is historical precedent for such ways of describing sacraments in Basil of Caesarea cf. It is certainly fair to say that Theodore lends greater theological precision to the discussion, but it remains to be seen what exactly proved to be new in his defense other than christological emphasis and tighter nuances. These differences reveal contextual factors that impacted the development of iconographic orthodoxy in important ways. But sometimes it is possible to oversimplify by emphasizing the differences over other mitigating evidence. While it is admirable to explore how thinkers can relate over time i. In particular, does using such an analogy predispose the iconodule to think of icons sacramentally? A Contemporary Reader, 2nd ed. Clendenin Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, , Walter de Gruyter, A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy. Church Historical Society, The Works of the Fathers in Translation. The Newman Press,

### Chapter 2 : Nature Icons - 43, free vector icons

*'The mystical fathers of the church also teach of what can be called a fourth type of icon-the hypostasis of God, the image of His being.' The single person of Christ, as contrasted with his dual human and divine nature.*

Rather, he has taken the trouble to engage the Christological issues underlying the iconoclastic debates. The Orthodox answer, reflecting Chalcedonian Christology, is that icons depict the Person of Christ, who is both divine and human. He reasons that if icons are inaccurate or lack sufficient details, then Orthodox Christians, despite their sincerity, are venerating something other than Christ. And here we arrive at long last at the problem. First, let us grant that if there had been photographers on site in Judea during the earthly days of Jesus it would have been fine to take pictures of Jesus, preserve those pictures, and venerate those pictures. The question comes down to whether we have strong enough evidence to believe that the icons we now have are in fact accurate portraits of Christ. And very much related to that, did Jesus and the apostles intend for a central part of the ministry of the Church to be through the making and venerating of images? The actual historical evidence seems decidedly against this. In other words, there are hefty biblical and historical arguments against assuming that modern icons of Christ actually resemble the Jewish man they claim to. And if they do not, they are not in fact the hypostasis of Christ, and therefore we are left with millions of Christians praying in front of pictures of someone else. Emphases added In short, he attempts to show how the Orthodox position on icons, even with its Chalcedonian premise, is untenable and therefore leads to iconoclastic conclusions. In doing so, he inadvertently frames his question in a way that departs from the Chalcedonian focus on the Person uniting the two natures; thus, he reverts to the heretical alternatives that assumed icons relate to the natures of Christ. The Orthodox understanding is that icons relate us to the Person of Christ. Without identity, no image was possible. Therefore an image made by a painter could not be an icon of Christ. The icon does not represent the nature, but the person: When we represent our Lord, we do not represent His divinity or His humanity, but His Person, which inconceivably unites in itself these two natures without confusion and without division, as the Chalcedonian dogma defines it. Now the iconic likeness is radically opposed to natural likeness, to natural portraiture, and only relates to the hypostasis, that is, the person, and to his heavenly body. Theodore the Studite anticipated this in his apologia *On the Holy Icons*: An objection as from the iconoclasts: And if these differ, the veneration which you introduce differs also. Therefore it produces an idolatrous worship. The prototype is not essentially in the image. If it were, the image would be called prototype, as conversely the prototype would be called image. This is not admissible, because the nature of each has its own definition. In other words, iconoclasts erred when they located the connection in the essence *ousia* rather than the person hypostasis. In doing so, early iconoclasts deviated from the Chalcedonian principle of the enhypostatic union as the basis for Orthodox Christology and iconography. This understanding comes from the Council of Chalcedon. In the icon, we encounter the Person of Christ. Key to understanding the Orthodox veneration of icons is prayer. There can be no veneration apart from prayer. This is due to the fact that the veneration of icon is an act of prayer. And key to prayer is calling on the divine Name of Christ. This is because to invoke the divine Name is to call on the Person who bears that Name. There is, within the Jewish tradition, a deep reverence for the divine Name. I learned this when I bought a yarmulke for a friend of mine years ago. The icon is joined to its prototype because it portrays the person and carries his name. This is what makes communion with the represented person possible, what makes him known. It is the likeness alone and not the board that is the meeting place where we encounter the presence. This likeness is fundamental to an understanding of the real nature of the icon. Rather than refute Nicea II, he merely rephrases the earlier iconoclastic arguments in the form of a question. Nor, it seems, did he read Theodore the Studite carefully. And, even more telling is the fact that he failed to grasp the categories used in Chalcedonian Christology. His confusing nature with person led to his misleading question and his erroneous iconoclastic conclusion! A muddled Christology is a bad starting point for doing theology. Depicting Christ One important question is whether there is evidence of visual depictions of Christ that can be traced back to the time of Christ. The Orthodox understanding that icons form part of Holy Tradition implies that icons have been present in

Christianity from the start. Nor is it strange that those of the Gentiles who, of old, were benefited by our Saviour, should have done such things, since we have learned also that the likenesses of his apostles Paul and Peter, and of Christ himself, are preserved in paintings, the ancients being accustomed, as it is likely, according to a habit of the Gentiles, to pay this kind of honor indiscriminately to those regarded by them as deliverers. This particular icon is commemorated on August. The sticheron hymn for this particular feast day goes: The story behind this unusual icon is related in the Festal Menaion for the month of August: King Abgar, a leper, had sent to Christ his archivist Hannan Ananias with a letter in which he asked Christ to come to Edessa to heal him. Hannan was a painter; and in case Christ refused to come, Abgar had advised Hannan to make a portrait of the Lord and bring it to him. Hannan found Christ surrounded by a large crowd; he climbed a rock from which he could see him better. He gave the linen to Hannan to carry it with a letter to the one who had sent him. In His letter, Christ refused to go to Edessa Himself, but promised Abgar to send him one of His disciples, once His mission had ended. Note 2 in Ouspensky p. But, while the Acheiropoietos icon has been accepted by Orthodoxy, its provenance is problematic to non-Orthodox scholars. The earliest historical references date back to the fifth century, e. So, like many thorny problems in ancient history, we can only look on our meager sources and wonder. The depiction of him in art took several centuries to reach a conventional standardized form for his physical appearance, which has subsequently remained largely stable since that time. Most images of Jesus have in common a number of traits which are now almost universally associated with Jesus, although variants are seen. Coptic icon A review of Orthodox icons compared with other ancient icons from the Latin, Coptic, and Ethiopian traditions shows striking similarities despite stylistic differences. This underlying similarity points to a broad catholic visual tradition in the early Church. We therefore do not know what the first icons of Christ and of the Virgin were like. But the little that remains of primitive art leads us to surmise that the first images were not purely naturalistic portraits, but rather images of a completely new and specific Christian reality. This can be seen in ancient catacomb art, which combined direct images with abstract symbols. Another characteristic trait of Christian art, which can be seen already in the first centuries, is that the image is reduced to a minimum of details and to a maximum of expression. Such laconism, such frugality in methods, corresponds to the laconic and subdued character of Scripture. Similarly, the sacred image portrays only the essential. Details are tolerated only when they have some significance. If his argument is valid, then one can likewise argue that if we do not have the exact words of Christ, but rather mediated and redacted versions, then the Gospel accounts are likewise invalid, and that we are reading the words of mere men. This quest for the true and genuine sayings of Jesus of history reflects an aspect of higher critical biblical scholarship. However, a review of Scripture shows that seeing is not antithetical to believing, and that the two complement each other. You shall see greater things than that. I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man. The answer is an unequivocal Yes! Icons are meant only to aid us in prayer. They make visible the invisible reality of heaven. They remind us of the spiritual dimension, and so strengthen our faith in Christ. It is not as if icons were essential for our making contact with God. Key to effective prayer is faith in Christ. But key to faith in Christ is right Christology. In Orthodoxy, especially in the Liturgy, the Christological and Trinitarian dogmas frame our prayers and our prayers express the dogmas of the Church. Orthodox prayer is not like magic where one needs to perform special rites and utter magical formulas for something to happen. Without faith, that is, without a personal commitment to Christ, the veneration of icons is an empty ritual; the presence of faith makes the veneration of icons a sacramental encounter with the Risen Christ. In a nutshell, the icon is a sacrament for the Christian East; more precisely, it is the vehicle of a personal presence. The icon is not an image of the divine nature. It is an image of a divine person incarnate; it conveys the features of the Son of God who came in the flesh, who became visible and could therefore be represented with human means. The Christian painter renounces the naturalistic representation of space, so noticeable in the Roman art of this time. The Christian painter depicts neither depth nor shadow in his work. They are almost always represented face on, as we have already said. They address the viewer and communicate their inner state to him, a state of prayer. The possibility of a misdirected veneration is prevented by the safeguards within Orthodoxy. First, regular attendance at the Liturgy will result in familiarity with the icons of Christ and the other saints. Icons are liturgical art. One

learns about who Jesus is through the Gospel readings and through receiving the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Second, icons of Christ depict him with a cruciform halo. This distinguishes Christ from the saints, who also have haloes.

**Chapter 3 : Nature Icon Free Vector Art - ( Free Downloads)**

*Hypostasis, Temporality, Eastern Christian Tradition We would like to explore our relation to Nature, the image we have built of Nature, and to what extent we are part of Nature, or rather detached from.*

Powers Introduction The charge of idolatry has often sobered the Christian understanding of the capacity of matter to mediate the divine presence. The mystery of the incarnation highlights the difficult balance the Christian tradition has maintained in simultaneously upholding the ultimate transcendence of God and the immanent presence of God, fully and materially, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. We come to know the unknowable God through the hypostatic union of Christ, as through our encounters with the human Jesus of Nazareth we encounter God. Christological arguments underscore nearly all of the major theological debates from Chalcedon to the Reformation about the presence of God in relation to material. This is certainly the case with the Iconographic controversy in the eighth and ninth centuries, which saw iconoclasts charging iconodules of idolatrously venerating created matter in the icon. During the controversy, one facet of the iconoclast charge of idolatry involved the inability of an image to properly depict Christ after the resurrection. Their arguments hinged on the text of 2 Cor 5: I will then anticipate an iconodule response through the theological lens provided by Theodore, as well as 20th century Orthodox theologians Leonid Ouspensky and Pavel Florensky. I will then offer a final argument that focuses on the equality of sight and hearing as mediums of revelation. Catherine Roth Crestwood, NY: A primary iconoclastic charge against icon veneration had emerged by the time of Theodore: He then moves to demonstrate how these properties can be portrayed in a manner that connects the image to the prototype in hypostatic likeness. Nature and Hypostasis, Icon and Prototype Theodore argues that if Christ is fully human, then he must be circumscribable. He turns the Chalcedonian argument back upon the Iconoclasts who argued that iconodules had to either divide or confuse the natures of Christ to argue for his circumscribability, arguing that if Christ is fully human, then he is by nature circumscribable. To deny this is to eliminate a key property of his human nature and thus fall into an Apollinarian docetism – depriving Christ of a key aspect of human nature. Theodore argues that one property of human nature is that human beings are circumscribable, and Theodore employs several key characteristics of circumscribability in order to argue this. To affirm that Christ had a form, was visible and suffered is to affirm that he is circumscribable. He affirms that Christ not only assumed human nature but necessarily did so in an individual manner, as to be human in generality alone is impossible – the nature must be instantiated and subsist in a particular individuality. Given this, he argues that there are particular properties to individual hypostases that differentiate one person from another. In the Trinity, Theodore argues, the Son is differentiated from the Father and the Spirit through hypostatic properties unique to each of the three persons. It is these differentiable properties that we discern in human beings and which in fact make Christ depictable. Theodore thus argues that these hypostatic properties indeed disclose the very person hypostasis, in that they are unique to the individual and differentiate him or her from other human beings. Thus what we can know through these properties and depict by means of them is indeed the hypostasis, and not human nature in general. Using this Christological reference point of depictability, Theodore seeks to demonstrate that the veneration of icons is proper by more sharply delineating what an image is. Since Christ is human in an individual manifestation of human nature distinguished from other human 9 Ibid. He distinguishes sharply between a natural image, which shares the nature of its prototype, and the artificial image, which shares the likeness of its prototype. By contrasting an artificial image with a natural one, Theodore can thus differentiate between categories of images that deserve different levels of veneration based on what is due to their prototype and establish how specifically Christ is venerated in his icon. It is the shared hypostatic likeness that links the two and provides the defining material notion of mediation: In this phrasing, he is seemingly using it to differentiate between how the Son is one with the Father, and how the image is similar to the prototype. The primary issue with the usage is that previously, it is almost always linked with hypostatic likeness, which cannot be the context here as the hypostatic difference is precisely what differentiates the respective persons of the Trinity. The two are so intimately bound together in identity that to

deny the existence and thus the hypostatic properties of the image is to deny the prototype. It follows that the veneration of the image is veneration of Christ. The material of the image is not venerated at all, but only Christ who has His likeness in it. As a human being,<sup>24</sup> Christ is a prototype and has an artificial image. Since it is the hypostatic properties, the personal physical characteristics that differentiate Christ from Peter or John or Mary, that make Christ circumscribable and make up his image, then by correlation, to deny that the image of Christ is Christ, for Theodore, is to deny the humanity of Christ. It is to refuse to know Christ as he is made known to us through his personal characteristics. The material itself possesses no intrinsic value, even after it is imprinted<sup>27</sup> with the image and becomes an icon. It is this conception of the accessibility of Christ in the icon that bears the most significant theological ramifications. From here on, I will turn to examine how icons exhibit Christ and thus make him accessible. The critiques I offer are essentially reformulations of the iconoclast concern that the transcendence of God is not fully preserved through the theological conception of icon veneration. Encountering Christ as Stranger Anglican theologian Rowan Williams argues repeatedly in his theological works that one of the largest pitfalls of Christian theology is its inability to resist absolutizing a truth claim. The risen Christ is something suddenly unknown. Mary initially thinks Jesus the gardener in John Blackwell, , 6. Interpreting the Easter Gospel Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, , Here, then, Williams essentially provides a detailed outworking of a more fundamental concern about idolatry that at its core mirrors the initial iconoclastic critique that introduced this paper. The eschatological vision of a new world collapses into a justification of our own; if Jesus is too fixed, so is our capacity to follow him into a world continually strange and new. He contends that holding the features of the Jesus that we knew and 30 Williams, Resurrection, However we conceive of him, we remain unable to fully grasp and fix upon the reality of the risen Christ. To come to know these features as we would come to know images of our friends and family or as repeatedly brought up as an example for Theodore, the Emperor lends itself to a certain familiarity; it fixes and crystallizes our image of who we understand Christ to be. As Williams rightly argues, this very understanding is what an encounter with the risen Christ shatters. The primary question then becomes: Theodore argues that to say that Christ does not have an image is to deny his humanity, as all creaturely things have an artificial image. Theodore argued that if Christ is not knowable, he is not human and we fall into the error of Docetism. It is difficult, then to conceive of a way in which the image of Christ comprised of his personal physical features can fully represent the post-resurrection change and its seeming strangeness to us. While he acknowledges that the icon and prototype differ in essence, he builds strongly on the ontological connection necessitated by the shared identity between the two. The very prototype-image construct that Theodore employs internally collapses if the image is unsuccessful in exhibiting the prototype. Can the image still properly exhibit the now at least partially unrecognizable hypostasis? The hiddenness of the risen Christ questions the ontological link between image and prototype that Theodore suggests. Unless there is some way for the image to convey the unrecognizable strangeness of the resurrected Jesus, it seems as if this construct loses its theological footing. Strangeness is also foreign to his theology as Theodore describes the relation between icon and prototype using terms and ideas that present the hypostasis of Christ in a knowable, recognizable image. The metaphor that he repeatedly uses for the image and its existence within the prototype is that of an impress or character He likens this impress<sup>42</sup> or imprint to a seal that imprints and copies the image onto material. The nature of an artificial image is that it is depictable and recognizable. If not, it serves little purpose in terms of exhibiting the hypostasis and in fact fails to do so. Iconodule Responses In anticipating a response to my hypothesis, I will explore how Theodore might respond and how two 20th century Orthodox theologians, Leonid Ouspensky and Pavel Florensky may further highlight difficulties in my argument. Both theologians have imaginatively engaged with the theology of icons in a theological conversation that historically occurs much closer to the present. Theodore here appears to argue that our representation of the image depends on the evocative power of the symbol rather than its exact and perfect representation of the prototype. The likeness risks, therefore, being imperfect. Given our mutual acceptance of this point, it does not seem particularly germane to reference this section. An irreducible minimum always remains which provides a link with the prototype of the icon. He could argue that the prototype remains human and creaturely, and thus ultimately circumscribable. Moreover, the dissimilarity of the image and

prototype can serve to validate the fact that through a strange image, Christ can be exhibited. The difference in recognition lies in our abilities of perception, not in any immateriality of the prototype or broken linkage between image and prototype. We can never fully grasp the prototype in our depiction “as with the differences of the cross or the saint” yet the same symbolic representation exists and thus the prototype is exhibited. If this is so, then in correlation with the resurrection narratives, the question of how we come to know Christ as such through the icon becomes a matter of revelation rather than perception. Icons, through the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit,<sup>48</sup> are media of divine revelation. The Orthodox may then argue that there is no difference in this model of revelation between scripture and icons. A Barthian understanding of scripture would hold that as we read it, the Holy Spirit illuminates it for us and through this action of the Spirit, we read the Word of God. Ouspensky thus presents the iconic analog to this tradition, particularly when speaking of the icon of Christ: The icon participates in the holiness of its prototype, and through the icon, we in turn participate in this holiness in our prayers. If sight and hearing are equal in importance, then how is this method of revelation any different than the read gospel tradition? Like the closed canon of scripture, the iconographic canons provide guidelines to protect the image from being corrupted by the subjectivity of the iconpainter. Like scripture, the Holy Spirit is active in the inspiration and transmission of the iconic image as well as the revelation of Christ in the icon. Orthodox theologians may finally also argue that icons do possess an inherently eschatological dimension in their representation of Christ or the Saints that does convey an other-worldly strangeness. Florensky uses an extended dream analogy to describe the way in which the icons mediate and reveal the spiritual world to us. Our experience of a dream is likened to the way in which we experience the heavenly realm “as illusive, fleeting and ephemeral memory. The image of a person becomes fixed in our memory as that person, and indeed as Theodore affirms, that visual image shares the identity of its prototype. Stories that are read or heard present information about characters that the imagination then has to form into an image. Our visual conception of the imagined characters remains somewhat illusive within our own minds, and with the exception of those of us with extraordinary 64 Theodore, *On the Holy Icons*, 47, 71, 78, 81, While hearing then leaves open the image of the character, and hence our recognition of the character, our visual memory is more concrete. This can be evidenced further in the dilemma long-running American TV shows have often faced in the question of how to handle the departure of an actor or actress who was portraying a popular character. Some have tried to replace the actor with another portraying the same character, but most often the character is simply written out of the narrative. Characters, once physically imaged, are difficult to dissociate and we struggle to associate that same character with a second distinctly different physical and visual depiction. Icons present a physical image of the saints and Jesus Christ. While, as Orthodox theologians will be quick to point out, the iconographic style is somewhat surreal and not intended to be a realistic depiction, what cannot be argued is that it presents us with a symbolic image of what Christ looks like. Further, given the guidelines passed down in the iconographic canons, we can say that this is what Christ is supposed to look like. The canons exist to ensure that these images conform to the standards of what a proper iconographic image should be.

**Chapter 4 : Nature and Relax - Free nature icons**

*Can't write much right now but here's the ELI5 version: Ousia [essence, substance, nature] is what you are. Hypostasis [person] is who you are.. Before I was a Christian, I had the opportunity to ask a priest what the Christian word "trinity" meant.*

These opponents of the Icon came to be known as iconomache or iconoclasts [Icon smashers]. The greatest opposition began in A. The iconoclastic movement, supported by the emperor Leo III and the iconoclast bishops, smashed and burnt Icons, tortures, killed or exiled anyone who opposed them. This continued until A. Act 7 of this council stated: For the more often and frequent their representation in an image is seen, the more those beholding are led to remember the originals which they represent and for whom the person beholding begets a yearning in the soul and grows to love them more. Also such persons are prompted to kiss and pay them honorary adoration, not the true adoration which according to our faith, is proper only to the one divine nature, but in the same way veneration is given to the image of the precious and vivifying cross, the Holy Gospels and other sacred objects, which we honour with incense and candles according to the custom of our forefathers by way of manifesting piety. In , there was another iconoclast period until the Empress Theodora came to the throne. In , she called together a council, as had Irene before her, and once again proved and proclaimed the legitimacy of venerating Icons. A great feast to celebrate this victory took place on the first Sunday of Lent, March 11, This feast is still celebrated by the Orthodox Church on the first Sunday of Lent each year, which is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy or the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. The iconoclasts also regarded all created matter as evil and despicable and therefore incapable of representing something that is spiritual. This school of thought was in reality saying that the incarnate body of Christ fell into the same category. But if we accept that God became man and His flesh was deified, then in truth, God deified matter, making it spirit bearing, and as the flesh was sanctified, then so could other matter, though in a different way. God created nothing evil and despicable, for in all things that He created, He saw that it was good [Genesis 1]. When we venerate an Icon, we do not venerate the paint or the wood, but the veneration is passed on through the Icon to the actual person. The Icon does not become that person because by nature the person and the Icon are made of different materials, The Icon relates to the person because; it depicts his recognizable image and must carry his name. The name of a saint on his Icon does the same; it is a seal of sanctification and constitutes its blessing. With the Icon of our Lord Jesus Christ, we do not say that the Icon becomes God; this is because it does not share in his divine nature. However, we can say that it is the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, because it shares with Him His hypostasis [person], by the fact that it bears His image and name. We as human beings all have one nature, that is, we are all made of flesh and blood, but we differ from each other because we have different characters and names. I am not like John or Anthony, and they are not like Andrew or Peter. What we all share we call the nature, what makes us different from each other we call the hypostasis or person. In helping us to understand how the Icon participates in the hypostasis and not the nature, St. Theodore the Studite gave us an example by using the image of a seal on a ring and its imprint. He said that if we take a ring which has carved upon it the image of the Emperor and make an imprint with the ring in wax or clay, the imprint would be the same in both the wax and the clay, but the two would still be different from each other because they are made of different materials. The wax has the image of the Emperor but it is still wax, and the clay has the image of the Emperor but it is still clay. In this same way, they are also different from the ring, which is the original prototype. Neither the wax nor the clay image can be the ring; the only thing that all three share together is the image of the Emperor. It is the same with Christ and His Icon: Therefore, when we venerate the Icon of Christ, we worship the hypostasis person of Christ and the Icon acts like a transmitter, transmitting the worship to the very person of Christ, in whom is united his two natures. Some people have the opinion that it is acceptable to kiss the Icon of Christ because He is God, but to show such reverence to the Icons of the Mother of God or of one of the saints is a form of idolatry. Let us therefore try to understand why this is a wrong belief arising from a lack of knowledge of the relationship between God and man. In the Gospels, we find the event of the Transfiguration [See plate 1]. As created beings, we can only

explain what we see, hear or understand, by other things in our life. We cannot begin to describe this light of the Transfiguration because it is not created, as is the light of the sun: Therefore, Christ appeared to His disciples as God in the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, for as has already been mentioned, when the Son of God became man, He did not lose His divine nature, but accepted another. Christ is both very God and very man. God became man so that man may become God. We find in the writings of the fathers and from the lives of some of the saints, that through inner peace, prayer and contemplation, they received while still in this life, this same uncreated light whereby man is transfigured and is united to God. Also in St Matthew 5: And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them that they may be one even as we are one: We see therefore that Christ Himself desires that we be one with Him. In His desire, He gives us of His glory that we may be made perfect in one. It is for this reason that man was created, to reach perfection and oneness with God. The Church recognizes that many of her members have obtained through righteous living or martyrdom this oneness with God. It is these that the Church has promoted to the ranks of saints. By nature, these saints are still men, but they have been deified through the grace of God. To be deified by the grace of God means to be exalted and made as a god. The Holy Trinity is God by nature; when a man is deified, he receives deification as a gift from God. It is not something that belongs to him by nature because by nature he is a human being. God bestows upon man the greatest gift of His love and raises him to Himself by making him a god by grace. It is the final end for which man was created: This does not mean that man becomes an additional hypostasis [person] to the Three Hypostasis of the Holy Trinity. The divine nature is always inaccessible to all creatures that have their nature in something else. Man partakes not in the nature of God, but in the divine energies that proceed from the divine nature. When we honour a saint through his Icon, we do not worship him as if he was God, we give him honour and respect because of his oneness with God. When we pray to the saint, we do not ask him to save us directly as though he was God, but we beseech him as our fellow man to intercede to God on our behalf, for having already reached perfection [insofar as he can until the general resurrection of the dead], his prayer is of great strength before the face of God. In Christ, it takes on the form of worship because He is God. This does not hinder it from being sanctified. The icon is sanctified through its communion with Christ and the saints, through the image and the inscription that it bears. It is holy in the same way that the Cross and the Bible are holy. Basil the Great says that iconographers are equal in honour to the Gospel writers. He says this because what the Gospels explain by means of words, the painter explains by means of his works. The Bible is holy not because of the paper and ink, but because the words it contains are the words of God, written by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. These words of God are holy because they proceeded from the mouth of God and sanctify us each time we hear them. In the same way we are sanctified through the Icon because it also is the word of God represented in images, and to put it another way, as the Icon is the image of Christ, so likewise the Bible is the verbal image of Christ, Both inspire and teach us how to live so that we may find the narrow road that leads to salvation. This may well be true, but to make such a statement can give rise to confusion as to who is being glorified. In all probability, God may well choose to glorify the iconographer by glorifying his work, and reveal to the world that he lives in the light of the Holy Trinity, but if an Icon of a certain saint is revealed as miracle-working, whom is God glorifying, the saint whose Icon it is, or the iconographer? If we give the glory to the iconographer, we take away the glory due to the saint, for it is to the saint, that prayer was offered and a miracle had taken place. If we have an Icon of the Mother of God, which has been revealed as miracle working, and another, which has not, the holiness of both Icons, is the same. The actual person of the Mother of God in heaven is All-Holy and all her Icons are in communion with her to the same degree. Some icons in Orthodox Churches are given special honour because they have been manifested as miracle-working Icons. It is not wrong to give these Icons special place; on the contrary, it is right that special honour is given to such Icons that continually manifest the healing grace of the Holy Spirit. The Church often distinguishes in the glory and honour given to the saints. In the closing prayers of a service, the Church always mentions after Christ, the Mother of God who is ranked as first among the saints, then St. John the Baptist, the Apostles and other ranks of saints according to the type of service. This can be either because they suffered greater than other saints in their lifetime or through martyrdom, or that God manifested how much He has glorified a saint through the many and glorious miracles performed through the saint. In the

same way that we give special place to certain saints, so too it seems right with the Icon, but, keeping in mind, that all Icons can be miracle-working. God performs miracles according to our faith; to help us grow stronger in faith and sometimes even because of lack of faith. But Jesus turned him about and when he saw her he said, daughter be of good comfort: Also in the Acts of the Apostles These two accounts tell. This is especially so with the Icon if we believe and have faith that He can do so. Miracles through Icons also confirm that God approves of our venerating them.

**Chapter 5 : DISCOVERING THE ICON. CHAPTER TWO**

*That is, he depicts His full humanity and His full divinity as they are contained in His divine person: "neither the divine nor the human nature alone is depicted, but the hypostasis of Christ with the particular characteristics which define His human nature, that which the icons of Christ present is the person of the God-Man, the person of the.*

An interesting by-product of this sort of depiction of God is the inclusion of Jesus alongside him, making two figures, Jesus and his Father. The Synod of Moscow canonically forbade the depiction of God the Father in icons, though this canonical decision has not always been obeyed. To further complicate matters, St. What then are the theological principles that prevent us from depicting the Father in iconography, and in what particular ways can He be depicted if at all? Iconicity It is commonly said that the Father cannot be depicted in icons, because the Father is invisible while the Son is incarnate and visible, but is this the reason? It cannot be entirely so, for we depict invisible, spiritual beings all the time such as the angelic hosts. Nevertheless, we depict them in human form. Virtually every Orthodox temple will have images of the Archangels in this fashion. So then, the prohibition of depicting the Father does not stem merely from His invisible nature. Rather, the reason is far more theologically significant than mere visibility or invisibility. To understand this, we must introduce the concept of iconicity, which is the ability of a thing to be imaged, that is to say, the possibility of a thing to have a thought-image or idealization. For example, I may stroll through a garden and see a beautiful flower. If I were then to sit down at an easel with a brush and palette, I can imagine an idealization of that beautiful flower and paint its image on the canvas. A beautifully painted image of a flower iconizes the particular flower that I saw in the garden, and it now gains the ability to inspire a sense of beauty in those who look at it as the particular flower inspired me as I strolled through the garden. The particular flower in the garden can be said to have a certain iconicity, which is actualized by the act of painting, the creation of the image. The human person also has iconicity. Throughout history, the ideal human form has been painted and sculpted in a variety of ways, from Greek sculpture of the Olympian gods to modern comic book heroes with their powerful musculature. When we see an image of Superman, we see and are inspired by an icon of the ideal man even though, and perhaps because he is an alien. All artistic images to one degree or another are iconizing, in that they portray an idealization of a thought-image about a particular thing. The hypostatic icon So then, when we speak about God or specifically about the hypostasis of the Father, in what way does He have iconicity? This is to say that the iconicity of the Father is realized by the Son. The only image of the Father that is possible is the very hypostasis of the Son. It can be said then that it is the property of the Father to be iconized, imaged only by His Son, and it is the property of the Son to iconize the Father. The iconicity of the Father is entirely and completely realized by the Son, so that there is no way that another image of the Father could exist alongside of and in addition to the Son. The Son entirely and completely exhausts in Himself the iconicity of the Father. So then, to see the Son is to see the only possible icon of the Father, and it is for this reason that no artistic icon of the hypostasis of Father is possible, for that icon is the Son of God himself. Therefore, a painted icon of the Son, the incarnate Logos, Jesus Christ, is a material image of the hypostatic image of the Father, an icon of an icon. What then can be said of that famous icon of the Holy Trinity by St. In this icon, taking as its inspiration the hospitality of Abraham from Genesis 18, where Abraham is visited by God in the form of three men, God is depicted iconographically by the image of three angels seated around a table. Are we able then to point to each individual Angel and say that it is an image of one of the hypostases of the Holy Trinity? Theologians are divided on this issue, and perhaps both the affirmation and negation of this notion are correct in different ways. If we isolate one of the Angels and say that it is a direct image of the hypostasis of the Father, we would be wrong. Of course, the Father is most definitely not an angel, therefore to depict the Father as an angel is not possible. The Son and the Spirit alike are not angels either, so depiction of Them as angels is also incorrect. What then do we have in this enigmatic image? The Eidos icon St. We may speak of the Holy Trinity. We may name the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the very act of speaking about these things we engage in a certain act of iconization. If we engage in the apophatic mode of theology, we would say that the essence ousia of God is not the Father, the Son, or the

Holy Spirit. These are names given to the hypostases of God, but not the essence of God, which is transcendent, unknowable, and unnamable. Therefore, to speak of the Holy Trinity is to engage in cataphatic theology. In doing so, however, we are describing the hypostasis of the Father in His eternal generation of His own hypostatic image, the Son. We have distinguished, then, two types of icons: It is not an icon of the hypostasis of the Father. It is an icon of the thought-idea of Father by use of the angel as a symbol. All symbols contain a visible form, for which we can use the Greek word *eidos*. So we can speak about *eidos* icons, which symbolically depict ideas. The Holy Spirit has an *eidos* icon, which is the image of a dove, seen in the icon of Theophany. The Holy Spirit is not a dove, of course, therefore the image of the Spirit as a dove is not a hypostatic icon but rather a symbolic *eidos* icon. In this symbol, we are reminded of the dove that Noah sent out to find the dry land after the flood. The Spirit in the form of a dove symbolizes to us the idea that the incarnate Christ, like the dry land, is the New Creation cf. The Ancient of days. The depiction of the Father as an old man, then, is not proper if it is understood as a hypostatic icon, that is, an image of the hypostasis of the Father, for the hypostasis of the Father is only depicted by His Son. The idea of the Father is depicted via the symbol of the angel. Can the idea of the Father be depicted as an old man? Some might argue so, though the propensity for this form to be understood as a hypostatic icon is perhaps too great, and in order to avoid this confusion, such depictions are regulated as non-canonical and prohibited by the Synod of Moscow as they are understood to be images of the Father. The Bible itself, however, uses the image of an old man, as an *eidos* image in the vision of Daniel, which he sees in a vision. In this context, however, we are not given the impression that this image refers to the hypostasis of the Father, but to God in His unified simplicity, i. The idea symbolized here is the eternity of God, specifically that He exists before and after the earthly imperial powers which had subjected the Jewish people. Again, this image depicts the idea of God in His unified simplicity, not in His hypostatic plurality. The One Essence of God cannot be depicted in a direct manner, but the idea of it may be referenced symbolically through these *eidos* icons. Nevertheless, these icons remain on the cusp of canonical permissibility, and they should be treated with caution.

### Chapter 6 : Do We Need a Photo ID of Christ? - Orthodox Reformed Bridge

*The oldest known icon of Christ Pantocrator - Saint Catherine's Monastery. The two different facial expressions on either side emphasize Christ's dual nature as both divine and human.[1][2] Photoshop composites of the two sides of the face.*

It was in their own synod, held in under Constantine Copronymos, that the iconoclasts set the stage for the debate undertaken by St. They accused the Orthodox of falling to two separate heresies in painting an icon of Christ. On the one hand they were accused of trying to portray both the human and the divine natures of Christ, thus running the risk of confusing these two and resulting in the heresy of Monophysitism. Only the Divine Will could so ineffably and without confusion unite the divine and human in Christ, the iconoclasts warned. If, on the other hand, the Orthodox were to agree with the view that the divine nature cannot be depicted, as the iconoclasts rightly maintained, then that would leave them only the human nature of Christ to represent. And if that were all that they depicted, they would be separating the divine and the human, which would constitute the heresy of Nestorianism. And their response formed an integral part of the apologetics of the second iconoclastic period. The Fathers gathered in the synod evoked the ancient Patristic distinction between person hypostasis and nature essence , a distinction first systematically put forth in the thinking of the Cappadocian Fathers. The specific focus of the Cappadocians was Trinitarian theology, and they determined that, with regard to the Holy Trinity, we must speak of three hypostases and one essence. This is the same terminology was then employed in the Christological definitions at a later time in the early Church. In particular, at Chalcedon the Orthodox posited a union of two natures, the human and the divine, in the one divine person of Christ. Outside the members of the Holy Trinity, it is usual to speak of any individual or object as being distinguished by a hypostasis person, form and a nature essence. On the basis of this Patristic witness, the iconodules were able to state that the error of the iconoclasts, then, was their constant tendency to conceive of the icon as being of the same nature as its prototype. In fact, the only icon to which they could give their approval was the Eucharist, a view which the Fathers of the Seventh Synod flatly rejected. Theodore the Studite comments that, " Thus their failure to understand why the veneration of the image reaches up to the prototype, if simply because they failed to understand the nature of the hypostasis of the icon, which disallows the stark distinction established by the iconoclasts between the image and its prototype according to essence alone. Theodore summarized the arguments of the iconodules during the second iconoclastic period in a particularly brilliant passage which establishes the similarity or commonality of image and prototype qua hypostasis. Therefore, we do not understand that the image lacks equality with the prototype and has an inferior glory in respect to similarity, but in respect to its different essence. The essence of the image is not of a nature to be venerated, although the one who is portrayed appears in it for veneration. Therefore, there is no introduction of a different kind of veneration, but the image has one and the same veneration with the prototype, in accordance with the identity of likeness. While the essence of the Father is unknowable, His personhood is not, and that is what icons of Him intend to depict.

**Chapter 7 : Can someone PLEASE explain ousia and hypostasis? : Christianity**

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Before reaching the answer to this question, let us take a look at three types of Trinity Icons and the biblical text on which their composition is based. It is based on the story found in the Old Testament in the book of Genesis, chapter 18. And he lifted up his eyes and beheld, and lo! The story continues with Abraham preparing food for his visitors and the Lord telling him that his wife Sarah would conceive in her old age and bear him a son. The Icon shows the three angels around the table with Abraham and Sarah serving them with the food they have prepared. Throughout the history of the Church, the Church fathers have often been divided in their interpretation of this event. Some say that all three angels were a representation of the Three Persons of the Godhead, while others accept the general understanding that it was only the appearance of the Word of God, accompanied by two angels. Indeed, the oak tree is still to be seen there and there is a picture of those whom Abraham entertained reclining at table, one shown on each side and the most august and honourable guest in the middle. Through him is signified to us our Lord and Saviour, whom simple men honour and whose divine words they believe. Hidden in human appearance and form, he showed himself to Abraham the God-loving Forefather, and gave him knowledge of the Father. The testimony by Eusebius is of twofold importance: There is no doubt that the central figure was the Son of God, and in the icon, He is usually represented wearing the colours ascribed to Him after His incarnation. This addition of the cruciform halo actually puts forth a heretical teaching. Firstly, the passion and crucifixion were the attributes of the incarnate Son of God and only His human nature suffered the cross and death. Secondly, to give a cruciform halo to the other two angels, or any other representation of the Father and the Holy Spirit also leads to heresy, for it was only the Son of God in the flesh who suffered the cross and not the other two persons of the Holy Trinity. In the 15th century, a Russian monk named Andrew Rublev gave this Icon a new form and meaning. He reduced the historical elements of the event, by omitting Abraham and Sarah, so that the main significance of the Icon was not in the historical biblical event, but in the dogmatic teaching of the Three consubstantial Persons of the Holy Trinity [See plate 11]. The table was no longer the instrument to hold the food of hospitality, but became the altar for the chalice with the sacrificial lamb: Although the Icon was the same event of the hospitality of Abraham, it now placed the historical event as a secondary factor to the symbolic representation of the Triune God and subsequently renamed The Holy Trinity. The Icon has borrowed from the iconography of the incarnation of the Word by a human mother, in an attempt to show the pre-eternal birth of the Son from the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and sent by the Son. Fundamentally, the Icon is purely theological, but instead of expounding the teaching of the Orthodox Church, it assimilates to the filioque heresy. These few words contributed to the already unstable and fragile relationship between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople, and were one of the reasons for the Great Schism. This may seem difficult to understand, but any change in Trinitarian Theology has consequences on the whole of the Christian faith, because the dogma of the Holy Trinity is at the very heart of it. The Greek Church has never sat in local council to condemn the Icon of Fatherhood, but the Russian Church had on at least two occasions found it necessary to question Trinity Icons. The second occasion was at the Great Council of Moscow in 1551. The Trinity Icon in question this time was The Fatherhood. For the Father has no flesh, and it was not in the flesh that the Son was born from the Father before all ages; although the Prophet David says: It shows the Father and the Son sitting side by side with the Holy Spirit, again represented as a dove, in between Them. The Father is depicted as an old man with silver grey hair and clothed in a white garment. His representation is based on imagination, but also on the vision seen by the prophet Daniel: The text is not altogether clear as to who is the Ancient of days, which has often led to its interpretation, that he is the Father. Also, the Father hath committed all judgement unto the Son [St. John 1:3]. Having therefore seen three types of Trinity Icons, let us now return to the question posed in the beginning of this chapter: Christ makes it clear that no man has, at any time, seen the Father. This also takes into account the dreams and visions of the Old Testament prophets as well as the appearance of God to

Abraham by the Mambre oak tree. This confirms that Abraham only saw the Son of God accompanied by two angels, for it would be logical to say that, if the pre-eternal Word, having not yet received flesh, could appear as a man, then so could the Father and the Holy Spirit. But if this were the case, then it would be in conflict, with what Christ has said and cause His words to hold no truth. It would insinuate that the Holy Spirit is a dove and not the invisible and indescribable Third Person of the Holy Trinity. He also appeared as a cloud in the Transfiguration and as tongues of fire at Pentecost, but we do not see these forms representing the Holy Spirit in other Icons other than in the events they took place. All this could be enough to say that the Holy Trinity should not be represented in Icons, but there is still a greater argument against Trinity Icons, for they are actually opposed by the theology of the Icon. Nowadays we tend to take a more relaxed and moderate attitude to what is depicted in the Icon, but this is to forget the iconoclast persecution against the Church, her incessant and steadfast defence for the true faith, and the many saints who gave their lives in martyrdom in defence of the Holy Icon and what it stood for. There can be no doubt that besides The Hospitality of Abraham, there did not exist an Icon of the Holy Trinity before the iconoclast periods, for if this was not so, the iconoclasts would certainly have used it in defence of their own arguments and would probably have been victorious. At that time, the only Icon of God was the Icon of Christ, and this was defended by the dogma of the incarnation: If the iconoclasts were to use an Icon of the Holy Trinity as the foundation of their argument, it could not be defended by the incarnation because neither the Father or the Holy Spirit have at any time become incarnate: It is an intentional and deliberate form of communication with the persons it represents. To serve its full purpose, the Icon can never be just a symbol, for it represents and in a sense becomes one with the hypostasis of the person. An Icon must be a faithful interpretation of the prototype [original], showing a recognizable image and the name of the person it represents. The name identifies the person or persons and at the same time is a seal of sanctification, for as with the cross and the Bible, the Icon does not need to have special prayers read over it or receive any other form of blessing by a priest to make it holy. Some icons have no inscription, which is contrary to the theology of the Icon, for it is the inscription that brings about its sanctification: If the inscription alone provides us with a direct form of communication with the Three Hypostatic God, then in theory, we could use any symbol to represent the Holy Trinity, or more specifically the Father, as He has never been seen in any form. This may sound absurd, yet no more than the figures already used, for if He has never been seen, how can we show Him in any form whatsoever? If on the other hand, the Icon must show a recognizable image as well as the inscription, then any symbolic representation is a false image and does not provide us with a direct form of communication with the true hypostasis, but only communion with the symbol. With the Icon of Christ, we depict neither His divine nor human nature, but the incarnate hypostasis in which is united His two natures. A nature does not exist in itself, but is contemplated in the hypostasis [individual]. We show His human form incorporating the features of His individual character and veneration of this image is passed on to his actual person and His two natures. The individual character of the Father has never been revealed and so His representation cannot be His hypostasis and therefore His symbolic image cannot transmit any form of veneration to His actual person. If for many centuries, the Church had no Icon of the Holy Trinity, we can assume that the Icons we now possess were the invention of the human imagination reflecting a desire to see in visible form, what is beyond its accessibility, thereby introducing personal emotions and individuality into the Icon. Officially, there is no feast day for the Holy Trinity, but the Church dedicates the day of Pentecost to the Holy Trinity and as with all feasts, it is customary to bring out an icon for veneration by the faithful. In this situation, what Icon could we use that is not opposed by the theology of the Icon? We could continue to use the Hospitality of Abraham, as this does not state that it is an Icon of the Holy Trinity, but leaves it to the individual to see in the three angels the teaching of the Trinitarian doctrine. This would not be wrong even though we acknowledge that it was only the Son of God accompanied by two angels that appeared to Abraham, for each Person of the Holy Trinity possesses the whole fullness of the Godhead. If Christ then is the image of the Father, then so too is the Holy Spirit. This does not mean their individual characters are the image of each other, but that they are identical in the divine nature of the Godhead and in the unity of their one will. The Church sees these events as manifesting the Three Hypostatic God. Again, in the Transfiguration, Christ was seen transfigured, the Holy Spirit appeared in

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the form of a cloud and the voice of the Father repeated the same words [Matth.

### Chapter 8 : May or May not God the Father Be Depicted in Orthodox Iconography? - The Catalog of Good

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### Chapter 9 : Christology Terms

*Moreover, hypostasis and nature are related to each other in such a manner that the hypostasis is the bearer of the nature and the ultimate subject of all being and acting, while the nature is.*