

Christology

The person of Christ According to the ancient church

**Alexandrians set down
the theological terms in
Greek.**

**Theological terms in
human language.**

Theological Terms

أوسيا = Ousia = ousia = Essence جوهر

فيزيس = Physis = fysis = Nature طبيعة

هيبوستاسيس = Hypostasis = upostasis = Person أقنوم

بروسوبون = Prosopon = prosowpon = Person شخص

اللاتينية وتعنى أقنوم أو persona الإنجليزية مأخوذة عن كلمة person كلمة شخص.

Tertullian describes God as

[una substantia

tres Personae

in uno statu

= one substance,

three Persons

in one status].

**He understands the
substantia as
a light,
a fire,
an invisible matter
which while being a unity is
differentiated within itself.**

2- “Prosopon” or “Persona”

When **Sabillius** used the term **“prosopon”** in the sense of a mask, and the **three prosopa** are **three forms** and nothing more, the fathers of the Church replaced it by **“hypostaseis”**.

3 - Ousia

Early Alexandrian theologians made a clear distinction between “**ousia**” and “**hypostasis**”.

The first term signifies what is common, “**being**” or a dynamic reality, while the other signifies **what is particular**.

It was an Alexandrian formula [= **one ousia, three hypostases**], @

As we have seen, the Church Fathers preferred to use the term “**three hypostaseis**” instead of “**prosopons**”, for **Sabillius** used the last term in the sense of mere masks or forms not more.

The hypostasis may be **simple or composite**, as in the case of man.

He is one hypostasis but **“composite”**, for he consists of body and soul.

God is:

One Ousia

One divine essence.

“Three hypostaseis”

“mia-physis”



1 - We mean by **“mia”**
“one”,
but not **“single one”** or
“simple one”
as some scholars believe.
St Dioscorus declared in
the Council of Chalcedon
that he accepted the one
nature **“out of two
natures”**.

“PHYSIS”

meaning “to be”, “to
become”,
“to bring forth”
and “to produce”.

“form” or “nature”,

**The essence of somebody
or something.**



Not only do we believe in the presence of **the perfect Godhead** and **the perfect manhood** of Christ but in a dynamic presence **without confusion** or **separation.**



St. Cyril gives some examples to explain this unity.

We are created of **soul** and **body**, and these are different natures and with their **union** we become a man with one human nature.



The soul and the
flesh together become
one nature and **one**
man,
without any
confusion or
absorption.

SAINT
CYRIL

THE PILLAR
OF FAITH



For example, St. Cyril insisted that in Christ's miracles, as the raising from the dead of **Jairus's daughter** or of **the widow's son at Nain**, both the divine and the human were involved;

SAINT
CYRIL

THE PILLAR
OF FAITH



the hand of Christ touched the person to demonstrate the **“single operation”** of Logos and flesh. For if Christ had performed His miracles by virtue of an **“indwelling”** of the divine Logos,

SAINT
CYRIL

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OF FAITH



He would have been no different from the prophets, who did the same.

Therefore it is meet to say that

the “**Source of life was hungry**”,

that

the “**All Powerful grew tired**”



We are not
“monophysites” as
the Chaledonian
churches called us
recently,
for this inaccurate
term draws us closely
to **Eutychianism**
which we deny.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is, at once,
consubstantial with God the

Father

and con-substantial with us men:

Philoxenos

“He who is consubstantial with
the Father,
the Same became consubstantial
with us through the incarnation.”



St. Dioscorus

“I am fully aware that **He was born of the Father as God,** and **the same was born of Mary as man.**”

**Jesus Christ who is the Son of
God was truly Incarnate,
and had a real body.**

Rejecting the gnostic heresies.

**He who lived among us is
truly the Son of God.**

Rejecting Arianism.

Heretics often denied the
Manhood of Jesus
or His Godhead,
whereas Nestorius denied
neither of them but divided
them.

St Athanasius confirming **three kinds of unity:** :

(a) The Unity of the Father and the Son:
The Savior is the Only-begotten Son of God, one with Him in the ousia (divine essence).

(b) The Son of God became man in a real unity without dualism.

(c) He grants us adoption by the Father not as an external gift:
(our unity with the Savior or His indwelling in our hearts).

□ These three kinds of unity are truly unique,

but are different from each other.

For the first is a unity between two

Hypostasies in One Divine essence;

the second is a unity between two

natures in One Hypostasis

without mixing,

altering

or absorbing one into the other;

they form one unseparable nature.

The third is called **“deification”**,
but **does not mean participation** in the
Divine essence (ousia);
it means unity of the believer with His
God by the Divine grace,
which is unequal to the incarnation of the
Son of God.



Arianism was based on “**rationalism**”.

St. Athanasius, whose theology depended on the soteriological Christology and not on “**rationalism**”, found no problem concerning the agony of Christ.

Through rationalism **the Ebionites** and **Docetes** concluded different results.

The former stated that since Christ suffered then He is **not God,** while **the latter** stated that since Christ is God then His suffering was **not real** but merely **an illusion.**

**St. Athanasius- in his
soteriological view-
sees that Christ's
suffering was **not
shameful** to Him,
but a glory.**

**We accept Him as **the
Crucified Lord of
glory.****





St. Gregory the Nazianzen (329-389 A.D.)

The Savior is made of elements (.....)

which are distinct from one another,

for **the invisible** is not the same with **the visible,**

not **the timeless** with that which is **subject to time,**

yet He is not two persons.

God forbid! For both natures are one by the combination.



The Alexandrian School

“hypostatic union”



“natural union”

The union of natures

“real unification”

The Godhead



The manhood

one single person (prosopon)

The union of the natures was inward and real.

The oneness of Jesus Christ

**The Word of God united our nature to
Himself and made it His own.**

(Mia physis tou Theo Logou sesarkomene)

**The Incarnate Logos is co-essential in Godhead
with the Father
and co-essential with us in manhood without sin.**

Two natures are distinguished in thought alone.

John 1:14

“And the Word became flesh,”

**It does not ignore the
difference of natures.**

One incarnate nature of two

**without confusion of natures
or separation
Or alteration
Or mingling
without division
without separation.**

**Only one composite nature
(out of two)
after the union in one person.**

A union has taken place;
not an overlap,
or **a co-habitation,**
or **a relationship,**
or **a displacement,**
or **an association,**
Or **close participation.**

**It was thus in the manner of the soul-body
union in humans.**

**Not in the manner of a union of sand and
sugar
not really combine.**

**Not a union of fire and wood
one which only worked by destroying the
basis of the elements so united.**

***“two natures exist inseparably after the
union.”***



“For **we do not affirm** that the nature of the Word underwent a **change** and became flesh, or that it was **transformed** into a whole or **perfect man** consisting of soul and body; but we say that the Word, having, in an ineffable and inconceivable manner,



personally **united** to Himself
flesh instinct with a living
soul,
became man and was called
the son of Man;
yet **not of mere will** or **favor**,
nor again by the simple taking
to Himself of a person,
(i.e. of a human person to His
divine person);



....the **Godhead** and **Manhood** completed for us the **one** Lord and Christ and Son by their inutterable and unspeakable **concurrence** and **unity**".



“Even when He became man by taking upon Him flesh and blood, **still continuing what He was God in nature and truth.** **Neither** do we say that the flesh was **converted** into the divine nature, nor surely that the ineffable nature of God



the Word was **debased** and **changed** into the nature of flesh,
for it is **unchangeable** and **unalterable**,
ever continuing altogether the same according to the Scripture”.



+The flesh did not abandon its nature as flesh, although it became the flesh of God
(St. Severus of Antioch)

Philoxenos of Mabboogh

“We believe that the Word
became flesh.

The Word was **not changed**
into the flesh;
neither was the flesh **changed**
into the Word.”

St. Severus of Antioch

“The flesh remained flesh even after the God-befitting **resurrection** and **ascension**.

It shines in glory that becomes
Him whose it is.

As the body of God it is divine,
but has not been changed into the
“ousia” “of Godhead.”



The Antiochian School
Nestorius

“indwelling theology”

“conjunction”

“close participation”

“prosopic union”

St Cyril refused the term *“prosopic union.”*

In his *Second Letter to Nestorius*:

*“For the Scriptures has not said that the Word united the
person
[the union of persons] of a man to Himself,
but that He became flesh.”*

The external aspect of the object or person

The Godhead dwells in a man

a man indwelt by God

insufficient to reveal the real unification

The division of natures of Christ

The person of Jesus Christ is not the same person of the Son of God, the Logos.

Two persons in Christ

DYOPHYSEIS

Two persons and not only two natures in Jesus Christ.

Christ and **not the Logos** who suffered

So **the passion of Christ loses its endless value**

This destroys our redemption completely.

**God the Word would not be, Himself,
the crucified Redeemer and Saviour of
the world.**

This would make meaningless
**“For God so loved the world,
that He gave His Only-Begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in Him should not
perish, but have everlasting life.”**

(John 3:16).

**“I, even I, am the Lord;
and beside Me there is no Savior.”**

(Is 43:11).

**As man He suffered death,
as God He again abolished death;**

**He could not have wrought our
salvation by His divine nature
if He had not endured death for
our sake in His human nature.**

**How Christ “suffered impassibly”
(*apathos epathen*).**



He is at once God and man
(Incarnate God):

The Alexandrians used the expression
“God and Man” to confirm
“His Godhead and manhood”,
but often added
“One Hypostasis”,
“one nature”
or **“at the same time”**



St. Severus of Antioch

“To walk on earth
and to move from
place to place is
indeed human.

But to **enable those
who are lame** and
cannot use their feet to
walk is God-befitting.

However, it is the same **God the Word incarnate** who works in both.”



He became truly man

The Word of God assumed true manhood **consisting of everything human** in the truest sense, **with the single exception of sin.** So He was conceived and was born as **a babe** and grew as **a child**; He was subject to all the laws of nature

and he endured suffering.

Mocked, humiliated and tortured,

He died and rose again.

St. Severus wrote a letter to Antonino of Aleppo in which he emphasized that

“the Virgin” gave birth feeling, and that **“the birth was not in phantasy”**

He who willed to come truly in everything that pertains to us and identify Himself with us, His brethren, in all things except sin,



was most certainly born in the flesh
by a manifest and real birth,
causing her who bore (Him) to feel
(the reality of birth),
though **she was free from all pain
and suffering.**

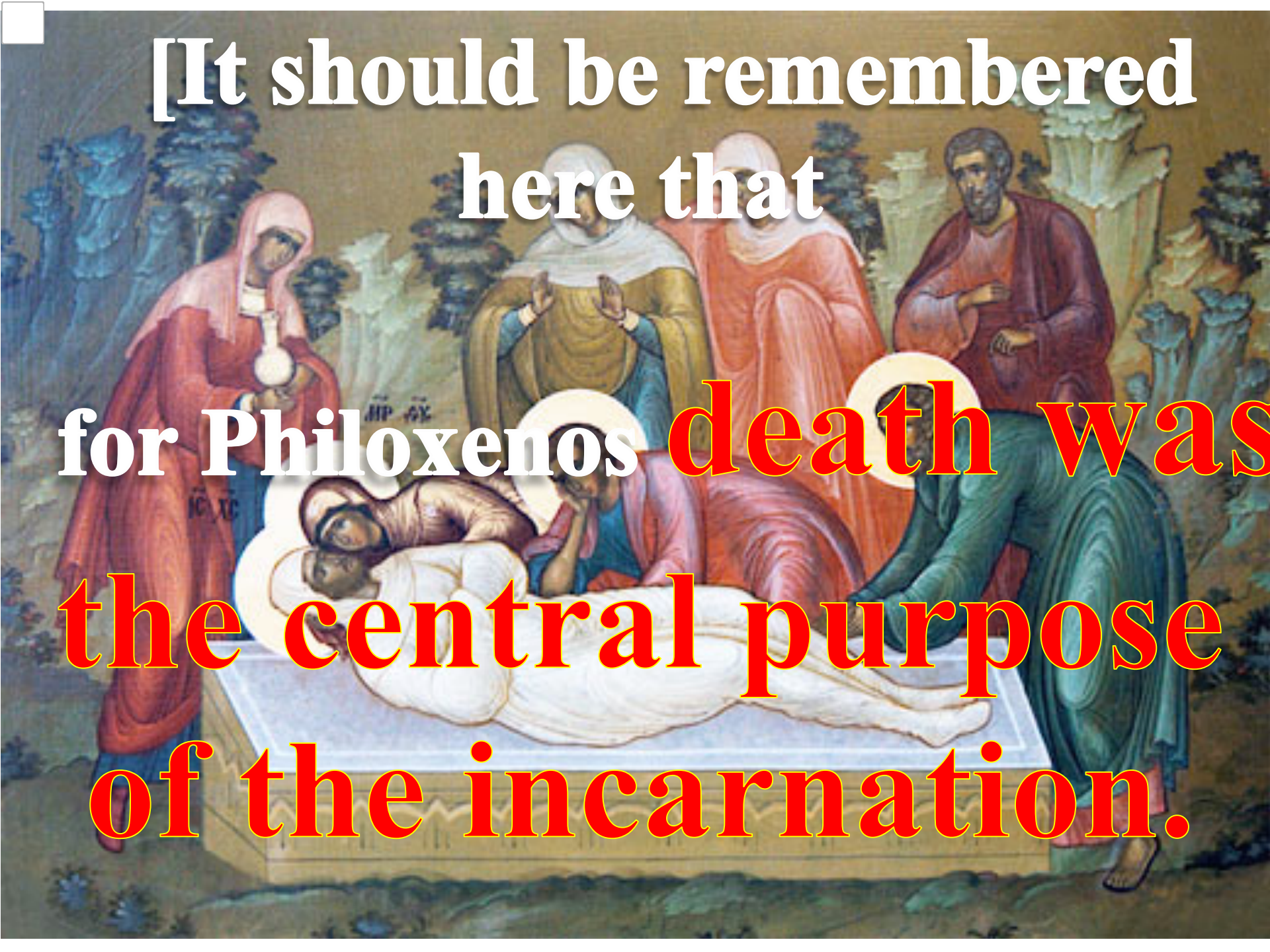


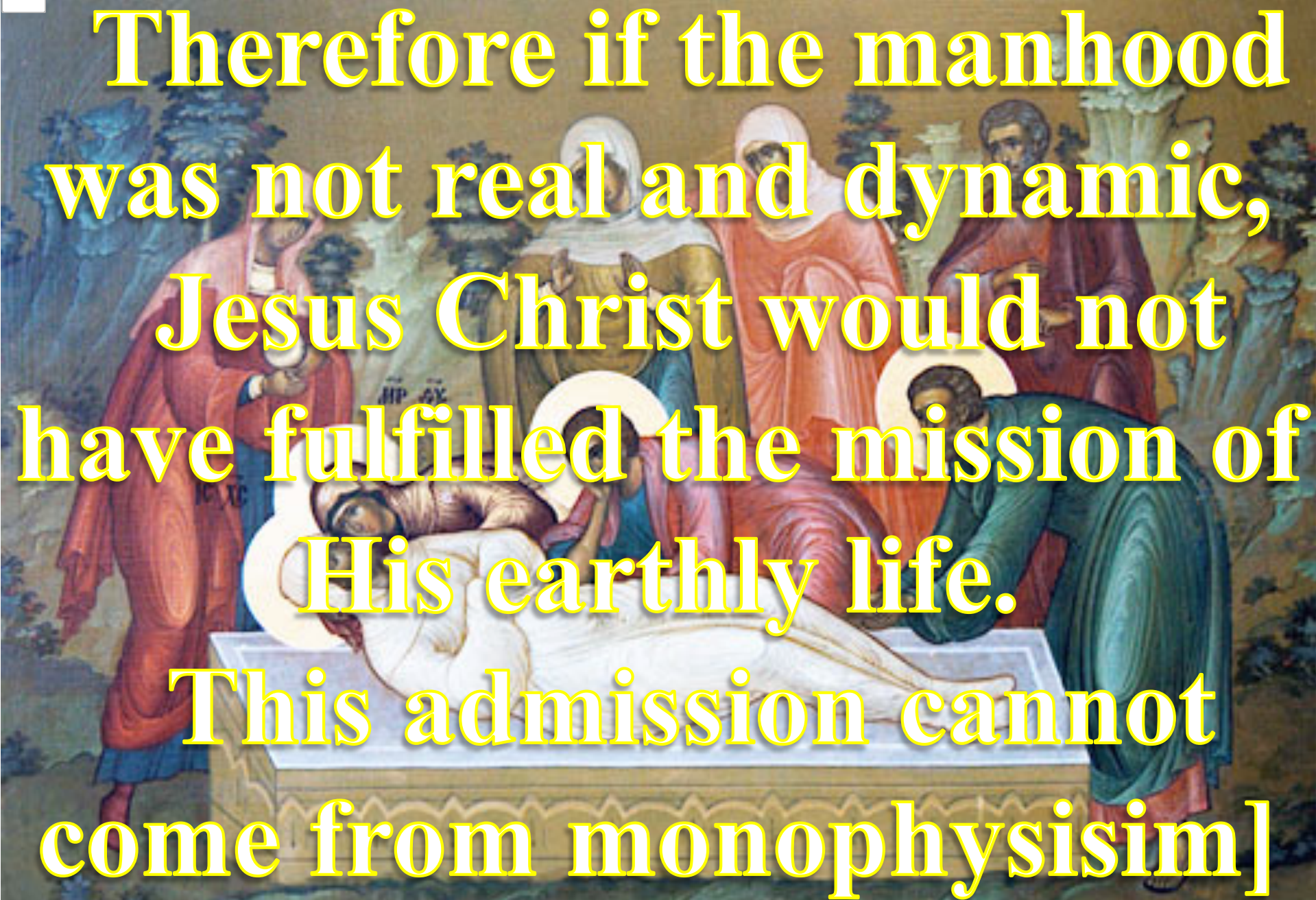
St Philoxenos of Mabboogh

“Had He not become man to begin
with,
there **would be no possibility for
Him to die,**
for God is Spirit and He does not
undergo death”

[It should be remembered here that

for Philoxenos death was the central purpose of the incarnation.





Therefore if the manhood
was not real and dynamic,
Jesus Christ would not
have fulfilled the mission of
His earthly life.
This admission cannot
come from monophysism]

8 – The manhood of Jesus was perfect:



**He united to Himself
hypostatically flesh possessing a
rational soul.**

Since **the whole of Adam** had come
under the curse and been depraved,
the whole of him was taken by God
and renewed.

In this way **the whole of our nature was
recreated** in Him into a new man.

The Manhood of Christ was
not formed before the
Incarnation

**St. Severus affirms that the
manhood of Christ had all the
limitations of our manhood**

with the only exception that it was
sinless.

Therefore He could be subject to the
limitations of a finite existence:
hunger, thirst and be physical
fatigue.