

Decode Trinity

*"Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord."
[The Bible, Mark 12:29]*

When Jesus Christ himself says this then still some verses taken out of context to prove trinity. All those verses are discussed below:

John 14:11 *Believe me that I [am] in the Father, and the Father in me:*

John 10:30 *I and [my] Father are one*

john 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. john 14:9 he that hath seen me hath seen the Father*

John 8:58 *Before Abraham was Born I Am*

Genesis 1:26 *Let Us Create Man in our own image*

Was Jesus Son of God?

All These verses if they are taken out of context can use to prove trinity but decoding the context provide different result.

John 14:11 *Believe me that I [am] in the Father, and the Father in me*

"But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." [John 10:38]

"Don't you know that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? The words that I say to you are not my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me who is doing this work." [John 14:10]

But further reading in the very same chapter:

"On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you." [John 14:20]

So how does he live in his disciples and how do they live in him? And if so, are they also, sons of God or Gods?

Another good question.

"But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in Him. Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did." [1st John 2:5-6]

(This is an epistle [letter] written by another 'John,' not John the Gospel er nor John the Baptist)

Note: This indicates, living 'in God' means, 'Obeying God' commandments and following the Way of Jesus, peace be upon him.

John 10:30 I and [my] Father are one

Well If we analyse the context means the verses before and after let see what we get

John 10:22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

John 10:23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

John 10:24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

John 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any

[man] pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:29 My Father, which gave [them] me, is greater than all; and no [man] is able to pluck [them] out of my Father's hand.

John 10:30 I and [my] Father are one.

From previous verses we get that Jewish were asking Jesus (pbuh) to tell clearly that he is Christ. Jesus (pbuh) told them instead of telling them many times they don't believe. God given him some believer who always will believe and follow him. Because they follow Jesus they follow God. So no one can take them away from teaching of Jesus (pluck them out of my hand) neither from teaching of God. The Target of God and Jesus for disciples are one. As example when it comes to destroy Iraq and take control over Oil mine UK and USA are one. To support this claim Jesus said at John 17:21 "That they all may be one; as thou, **Father, [art] in me, and I in thee**, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me". John 17:22 "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that **they may be one, even as we are one**". which states that to make others believe Jesus, Disciples and God are one. Their purpose are one. Well If anyone read the context not only the quote then he/she can get the appropriate meaning.

Note: So either someone read the context and agree with me or if just read quote then may be there are fourteen God.

john 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. john 14:9 he that hath seen me hath seen the Father

It seems These two quotation came from same context.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

John 14:2 In my Fathers house are many mansions: if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto

myself; that where I am, [there] ye may be also.

John 14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

John 14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

John 14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

John 14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

John 14:9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou [then], Shew us the Father?

Jesus(pbuh) was telling about eternal life to his deciples. But what is the way. ofcourse the way jesus followed which he showed that path his decipled as well thats why he said, John 14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. but thomas wasnt clear and said John 14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus said The way of mine is the true way to get eternal life and that is also the way of god. if anyone dont follow my way he is not following Gods way so **John 14:6** " I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me". Jesus further continued **John 14:7** "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him". The verse vlearly states that that seeing someone doesnt mean to actually visual see. It refers if you know someone as if you see him. Those who know jesus also know what and how is god. Is Cow a god or is tree a god or god is something eternal, bodyless, pure, most powerful, most gracious, greater than all? Jesus explained this to those who know and listen to jesus. so who know jesus also know god. But this simple thing wasnt get into deciple Philips mind on john 14:8 he asked Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus was disappointed and said, How long i am with you yet you dont know me. If you know me you know the God. It means you have seen the God. Still you are asking to God.

Note: So From context it clearly shows Seeing refers to knowing not Visual see.

John 8:58 Before Abraham was Born I Am

John 8

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them.

3 The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group

4 and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery.

5 In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?"

6 They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger.

7 When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

8 Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.

10 Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"

11 "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."

The Validity of Jesus' Testimony

12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

13 The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

14 Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.

15 You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one.

16 But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me.

17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid.

18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

20 He spoke these words while teaching in the temple area near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his time had not yet come.

21 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come."

22 This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come'?"

23 But he continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins."

25 "Who are you?" they asked. "Just what I have been claiming all along," Jesus replied.

26 "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."

27 They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.

28 So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am the one I claim to be and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.

29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."

30 Even as he spoke, many put their faith in him.

The Children of Abraham

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

37 I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are ready to kill me, because you have no room for my word.

38 I am telling you what I have seen in the Father's presence, and you do what you have heard from your father."

39 "Abraham is our father," they answered. "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do the things Abraham did.

40 As it is, you are determined to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.

41 You are doing the things your own father does." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

The Children of the Devil

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but he sent me.

43 Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.

44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

47 He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

The Claims of Jesus About Himself

48 The Jews answered him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?"

49 "I am not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father and you dishonor me.

50 I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge.

51 I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

52 At this the Jews exclaimed, "Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death.

53 Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?"

54 Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me.

55 Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and keep his word.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad."

57 "You are not yet fifty years old," the Jews said to him, "and you have seen Abraham!"

58 "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am"

First of all In the statement if jesus(pbuh) speakin about himself he wouldve said, "Before Abraham was born I was". what is the significance. Did he make a mistake. The background context is the teachers of the law and the Pharisees trying to trap Jesus(pbuh). But Jesus(pbuh) was clever enough to escape all their traps. So in such posotion he cant make mistake. but the problem is he was speaking in parable which was mostly not understood by those people.

Like At 8:25 : "Who are you?" they asked. "Just what I have been claiming all along," Jesus replied.

26 "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is reliable, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."

27 They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.

from 8:25-28 Jesus was talking about God but they didnt understand.

8:21 Once more Jesus said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sin. Where I go, you cannot come."

22 This made the Jews ask, "Will he kill himself? Is that why he says, 'Where I go, you cannot come'?"

Jesus was giving one message they are understanding something else.

Same way they misunderstood him when he said 8:51 I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death".

In the statement Jesus is not talking about bodily death but eternal death but Jewish people didnt get the message and asked when all the prophets even died how can normal human being will not die.

Then Jesus replied at 8:54 It is my father(God) who glorify me and further he said Abraham was happy seeing his day.

Jewish was shocked cause Jesus was only fifty years old how come he saw Abraham happy.

first of all Jesus didnt said he saw Abraham. He said Abraham saw the day of Jesus. Now How Abraham Saw his day? Previously From John 14:7 "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him". we figured out that seeing someone doesnt refer to visual see it means to know someone.

From John 8:54 **it is clear that God glorifying Jesus so it is obvious that God told Abraham about the last israelite prophet** thats how Abraham knew and saw the day of Jesus. I repeat 8:27 **They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.** How Jesus(pbuh) got to know that Abraham saw his days.

Jesus(pbuh) already answered this question 8:26".....what I have heard from him I tell the world" . It was God who told Jesus that Abraham was rejoiced to see his day. God existed before everything born. thats why Jesus replied at 8:58 that before Abraham was born I Am. **Here I Am refers to the God of Moses.**

Ex.3:14-15 reads, "**And Elohim said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and He said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you**". So it is Clear that if Jesus wasnt speaking about God then he wouldve said I was instead I Am.

Genesis 1:26 *Let Us Create Man in our own image*

According to Old Testament undoubtedly there is only one god. Old testament was written in Hebrew. In Hebrew, Aramic, Arabic, Hindi,

English they use Royal plural majestic. Us and Our used are plural majestic pronoun used.

Was Jesus Son of God?

Who is Son of God ?

New testament on Son of God

Jesus, speaking in the third person talked about the "Son of God" in [John 3:17 - John 5:24 - John 11:4 - John 11:27]

Who is son of God According to bible?

"because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."

[Romans 8:14]

What Jesus said about Son of God

John 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

John 10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

John 10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

John 10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

John 10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

John 10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

Jewish people stoned Jesus thinking Jesus said he is god but Jesus reply Is it not writtent in your law who is son of god. Well we shall see who is son of god in old testament. But Important thing is jesus himself said ehom the word of god came are gods. So why you wonder? It clearly state that it was their language when they say god , son of god it refers to godly people or messengers. As examle in court judge is called as my lord it doesnt mean that he is the lord or god. this is the language of court. same way this is the language all chosen people from god are son of god. We further analyse new and old testament quotes for clearance.

in [Isaiah 63:8] refers to the entire house of Israel as being, 'Sons of God'.

"I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: he said to me, you are my Son; this day have I begotten you." [Psalms 2:7]

1 Chronicles, chapter 28: 6: He said to me, 'It is Solomon your son who shall build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my Son, and I will be his Father.

Psalm 82:6 "I said, 'You are "gods" (Elohim; plural to El); you are all sons of the Most High.' "

Note: who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

History behind one god became trinity

This history was taken from <http://www.bibleislam.com/arianism.php> Excerpts and Quotes - From The Catholic Church History
By Brother John Raymond

Introduction

Arianism with its fundamental Trinitarian controversy must not be looked upon as an isolated theory by its founder Arius. Its appeal, which began in Alexandria and spread through the whole Empire, must be seen in the context of the times. The Church emerged in a Jewish and Greek world. The question occupying this non-Christian world was the contrast between the "One and the Many, between the ultimate unity that lay behind the visible universe and the incalculable variety that exists in the world."

[Ward 1955, 38]

Relationship of God And World

The relationship between God and the world had to be solved.

The Jews proposed a supreme God who created by His word. It was an idea of a mediating "Word or Wisdom - the Word which is pronounced, the Wisdom which is created - whereby the Father communicated Himself to man and took possession of him."

[Guitton 1965, 81]

The Greeks could not see how a finite and changeable world could come from an eternal and changeless God. They proposed the idea of a "mediating Intelligence or even Word, a first emanation of the first principle which reduced the distance between God and the world"

[Guitton 1965, 81]

The primitive Church had to "reconcile the notions they had inherited from Judaism with those they had derived from philosophy. Jew and Greek had to meet in Christ. They had to find an answer that would agree with the revelation they had received from Christ as recorded in the scriptures."

[Ward 1955, 39]

This struggle for a reconciliation of thought reached its climax with the Arian controversy. The Church responded with the First Ecumenical Council of Nicaea that brought together Scriptural and philosophical thought to explain the Trinity. The Council did triumph over Arianism but only after fifty years of bitter battling. Imperial support and confusion in theological terminology were the principal

reasons for such a long drawn out battle as we will see.

Arius And His Teaching

Arius, who was born in Egypt in 256 A.D., was a parish priest in Alexandria. He had studied under St. Lucian of Antioch, the founder of the school of Antioch, who had earlier been condemned for holding that Christ was only a man; although he was later reconciled. He is called the "Father of Arianism" because "Arius and almost all the 4th-century Arian theologians were his students. Calling themselves Lucianists and Collucianists, they developed his adoptionist and subordinationist tendencies into a full heresy."

[Harkins 1967, 1057, 1058]

With this background Arius struggled with the question of the Trinity. His teaching in Alexandria was the following: "Personal distinctions were not eternally present within the nature of God. . . the Godhead Himself was responsible for them. . . Identifying the eternal Godhead with the Father and regarding the Logos ('Logos' is simply a Greek word for 'word') as no more than a power or quality of the Father, he said that before time began the Father had created the Son by the power of the Word to be His agent in creation.

The Son was not therefore to be identified with the Godhead, He was only God in a derivative sense, and since there was once when he did not exist He could not be eternal. Arius stressed the subordination of the Logos to such an extent as to affirm His creaturehood, to deny His eternity and to assert His capacity for change and suffering."

[Ward 1955, 41]

This teaching of Arius "drove the distinctions outside the Deity and thus destroyed the Trinity. It meant solving the difficulty of the One and the Many by proposing a theory of one Supreme Being and two inferior deities."

[Ward 1955, 43]

The Person of Christ "belonged to no order of being that the Church could recognize. . . He was neither God nor man."

[Ward 1955,42]

Arius Versus The Alexandrian Bishop

Arius' views began to spread among the people and the Alexandrian clergy. Alexander the Bishop called a meeting of his priests and deacons. The Bishop insisted on the unity of the Godhead. Arius

continued to argue that since the Son was begotten of the Father then at some point He began to exist. Therefore there was a time when the Son did not exist. Arius refused to submit to the Bishop and continued to spread his teaching.

Alexander called a synod of Bishops of Egypt and Libya. Of the hundred Bishops who attended eighty voted for the condemnation and exile of Arius. After the synod Alexander wrote letters to the other Bishops refuting Arius' views. In doing so the Bishop used the term "homoousios" to describe the Father and Son as being of one substance.

Alexander "used a term which was to become the keyword of the whole controversy."

[Ward 1955, 43, 44]

With the decision of the synod Arius fled to Palestine. Some of the Bishops there, especially Eusebius of Caesarea, supported him. From here Arius continued his journey to Nicomedia in Asia Minor. The Bishop of that city, Eusebius, had studied under Lucian of Antioch. He became Arius' most influential supporter. From this city Arius enlisted the support of other Bishops, many of whom had studied under Lucian. His supporters held their own synod calling Arius' views orthodox and condemning Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. Arius seemed to have good grounds for this condemnation.

The term homoousios was rejected by Alexander's own predecessor Dionysus when arguing against the Sabellians (who claimed the Father and Son were identical). All this controversy was taking place just as the Church was emerging from Roman oppression.

Constantine And Ossius

With the rise of Constantine to power Christianity became the religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine had politically united the Empire but he was distressed to find a divided Christianity. Constantine, certainly not understanding the significance of the controversy, sent Ossius his main ecclesiastical adviser with letters to both Alexander and Arius. In the letters he tried to reconcile them by saying that their disagreement was merely just a matter of words. Both of them really were in agreement on major doctrines and neither was involved in heresy.

The letters failed to have an effect. In 325 A.D. Ossius presided over a Council of the Orient in Antioch that was attended by fifty-nine bishops, forty-six of whom would soon attend the Council of Nicaea. This Council in Antioch was a forerunner of the latter Council in Nicaea.

Under the influence of Ossius a new Church practice was inaugurated - that of issuing a creedal statement. At this Council Arianism was condemned, a profession of faith resembling the Alexandrian creed was promulgated and three Bishops who refused to agree with the teaching of this Council were provisionally excommunicated until the Council of Nicaea.

Roman Emperor Calls Council of his Church (Universal or Catholic Church of Rome). It was the year 325 AD in what is now Turkey and in the summer of that year, probably under the suggestion of Ossius, Constantine called for a general council of the Church at Nicaea in Bithynia.

That an Emperor should invoke a Council should not be considered unusual since in Hellenistic thought he "was given by God supreme power in things material and spiritual."
[Davis 1987, 56]

The Council of Nicaea. The General Council was well attended by the major sees of the Eastern Empire. Also some Western Bishops were present. Because of old age and sickness Pope Sylvester did not attend but sent two papal legates. The total number of Bishops who attended the Council has been disputed. Eusebius of Caesarea who attended it claimed 250; Athanasius also in attendance mentioned 300; after the Council a symbolic number of 318 was used; modern scholars put the number at 220.

If there were minutes taken of the Council proceedings they are no longer in existence. We know from the writings of Rufinus that "daily sessions were held and that Arius was often summoned before the assembly; his arguments attentively considered. The majority, especially those who were confessors of the Faith, energetically declared themselves against the impious doctrines of Arius."
[LeClercq 1913, 45]

Concerning the Creed that was drafted at the Council "Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius of Alexandria and Philostorgius have given divergent accounts of how this Creed was drafted."
[LeClercq 1967, 792]

But from one reconstruction of the events Eusebius of Nicomedia offered a creed that was favorable to Arian views. This creed was rejected by the Council. Eusebius of Caesarea proposed the baptismal creed used in Caesarea. Although accepted it does not seem to form the basis of the Council's Creed. Attempts were made to construct a creed using only scriptural terms. These creeds proved insufficient to exclude the Arian position.

"Finally, it seems, a Syro-Palestinian creed was used as the basis for a new credal statement . . . The finished creed was preserved in the writings of Athanasius, of the historian Socrates and of Basil of Caesarea and in the acts of the Council of Chalcedon of 451."
[Davis 1987, 59]

When the creed was finished eighteen Bishops still opposed it. Constantine at this point intervened to threaten with exile anyone who would not sign for it. Two Libyan Bishops and Arius still refused to accept the creed. All three were exiled. The Creed and an Analysis some parts of the literal translation of the Nicaea Creed are as follows:

"We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance (ousia) of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of the same substance (homoousios) with the Father, through whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth . . . Those who say: 'There was a time when He was not, and He was not before He was begotten;' and that 'He was made out of nothing;' or who maintain that 'He is of another hypostasis or another substance,' or that 'the Son of God is created, or mutable, or subject to change,' the Catholic Church anathematizes."
[LeClercq 1913, 45]

The Arians were very clever in twisting phrases in credal statements to reflect their own doctrine. The Son being "begotten of the Father" was seen by them as saying that the Son was created from nothing. But to counter their doctrine the phrase "*begotten not made*" was *added* to the creed that totally ruled out their position of the Son having a beginning. Another Arian teaching was that the Son was God by grace and name only.

The credal statement "*true God of true God*" was an affirmation that the Son was really truly God against this Arian position. The most important statement in the creed that affirms "that the Son shares the same being as the Father and is therefore fully divine" was the phrase "of one substance (homoousios) with the Father"
[Davis 1987, 61]

This statement totally destroyed the Arian view of the Son as an intermediary being between God and Creation. In case the creed was not enough to end the Arian controversy anathemas were attached directly condemning Arian positions. The Arian denial of the Son's co-eternity with the Father is expressed in the two phrases "*there was when the Son of God was not*" and "*before He was begotten He was not.*"

The Arian belief in the Son being created out of nothing is expressed

in the phrase "*He came into being from things that are not.*" The Arian doctrine that the Son being a creature was subject to moral changeability and only remained virtuous by an act of the will is expressed in the phrase "*He is mutable or alterable.*"

Finally the Arian position of the Son as subordinate to the Father and not really God is expressed in the phrase "*He is of a different hypostasis or substance.*" With these specific anathemas against them the Arians and their heresy seemed to be finished. Terminology Problem With the Eastern Church using Greek and the Western Church using Latin misunderstandings were bound to arise over theological terminology. One instance of confusion is the statement "He is of a different hypostasis or substance."

The two words in the Eastern Church were seen to be synonymous. In the West hypostasis meant person. So for a Westerner the Council would look as if it was condemning the statement that the Son was a different Person from the Father, which would clearly be erroneous. Only later would the East come to distinguish hypostasis from substance (ousia) as in the West.

This instance of confusion "points up the terminological difficulty which continued to bedevil Eastern theology and to confuse the West about the East's position."

[Davis 1987, 63]

A second and very important term used by the Council was homoousios. At that time this word could have three possible meanings.

✦"First, it could be generic; of one substance could be said of two individual men, both of whom share human nature while remaining individuals.

✦Second, it could signify numerical identity, that is, that the Father and the Son are identical in concrete being.

✦Finally, it could refer to material things, as two pots are of the same substance because both are made of the same clay."

[Davis 1987, 61]

The Council intended the *first meaning* to stress the equality of the Son with the Father.

If the *second meaning* for the word was taken to be the Council's intention it would mean that the Father and Son were identical and indistinguishable - clearly a Sabellian heresy.

The *third meaning* gave the word a materialistic tendency that would infer that the Father and Son are parts of the same stuff.

Along with these possible misunderstandings of the meaning of the word *homoousios* the history of the word is closely associated with heresies.

The word was originally used by the *Gnostics* [1] . The word had even been condemned at the Council of Antioch in 268 regarding its use by the Adoptionist Paul of Samosata.

Another factor making the word unpopular was that it was never used in Sacred Scripture. The Council's defeat by Arianism. It is not surprising that with its use of the word *homoousios* the Council could be called into question.

Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia gained the confidence of Emperor Constantine. He convinced Constantine that the Council's use of the word *homoousios* was Sabellian (Father and Son were identical). The Emperor now favored the Arians.

With the death of Constantine the Empire was divided between his sons. Constantine I who ruled in the West favored Nicaea while his brother Constantius II who ruled the East was anti-Nicaea.

Supporters of Nicaea in the East especially Bishop Athanasius were deposed and excommunicated by the Dedication Council of Antioch. This Council directly attacked the Nicaea Council by promulgating its own creed that omitted the phrases "from the substance of the Father" and "*homoousios*."

Some attempts were made to find a substitute word for *homoousios*. As many as fourteen Councils were held between 341 and 360 "in which every shade of heretical subterfuge found expression . . . The term 'like in substance,' *homoiousion* . . . had been employed merely to get rid of the Nicene formula."

[Barry 1913, 709]

Not all Arians, or their new name of Semi-Arian, agreed with this new word. One group emphasized that the Father and Son were "dissimilar" or *anomoios*. Another group used the word "similar" or *homoios* to describe the Father and Son relationship.

With the death of Constantine I in 350 his anti-Nicaea brother Constantius II became sole ruler of the Empire. The new Emperor demanded that all the Bishops of his Empire should agree with the *homoios* formula. In 359 he summoned two Councils, one in the East at Seleucia and the other in the West at Rimini.

Both Councils, under the Emperor's threats and with rationalizing arguments aimed at calming consciences, were induced to sign the *homoios* formula. "This Homoean victory was confirmed and imposed on the whole Church by the Council of Constantinople in the following

year" which condemned the terms homoousios, homoousios and anomoiios.

[Ward 1955, 57]

It seemed that the Arians had triumphed over the Nicaea creed. The Final Battle. The seeming triumph of homoeism was short lived.

First it gained its popularity solely by imperial imposition. With the death of Constantius in 361 it collapsed.

Second by persecuting both homoousios and homoousios supporters alike "it brought about better understanding and, ultimately, reconciliation between the two groups."

[DeClercq 1967, 793]

Athanasius an ardent defender of the homoousios position and following the Alexandrian train of thought had begun his reasoning with the unity of God. From there he had concluded that the Son and Spirit Who shared that unity must have the same essential substance.

The Cappadocian Fathers Basil of Caesarea, Gregory Nazianzen and Gregory of Nyssa were associated with Homoiousians.

The point of departure for them as well as the Antiochenes had been the individual aspect of the divine personality. With the help of Athanasius they came to the realization that the three Persons as God must share the same identical substance also. By using the term homoousios the Cappadocian Fathers "had never meant to deny the unity but only to preserve the distinction of persons."

[Ward 1955, 58]

Both came to the conclusion that although they used different terms what they meant to say was the same.

The Cappadocian Fathers came to accept the term homoousios. Athanasius, on the other hand, accepted the Cappadocian formula for the Trinity - one substance (ousia) in three persons (hypostaseis).

At about the same time as Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers were reaching an agreement another development was taking place. The East and the West were arriving at a better understanding of each others theological terminology.

At the Synod of Alexandria in 362 the Nicene Creed was re-affirmed, the terms ousia and hypostasis were explained and Macedonianism (sometimes referred to as another form of Semi-Arianism in its subordination of the Holy Spirit) was condemned.

Under the Eastern Emperor Valens (364-378) homoeism still had imperial favor. In the West Ambrose of Milan led the fight for the

Nicene Creed. At the Council of Sirmium in 378, with the support of the Western Emperor Gratian, six Arian Bishops were deposed. A series of laws were passed in 379 and 380 the Emperor prohibited Arianism in the West.

In the East with the succession of Valens by a Nicene sympathizing Emperor Theodosius I all exiled Bishops under Valens to return to their sees. In 381 he convoked a regional Council at Constantinople. The first canon from this Council states that "the faith of the 318 fathers who assembled at Nicaea in Bithynia is not to be made void, but shall continue to be established."
[Davis 1987, 126]

In 380 the Emperor Theodosius outlawed Arianism. The last victory over Arianism came in 381 with the Council of Constantinople in the East and the Council of Aquileia in the West. Both of them "sealed the final adoption of the faith of Nicaea by the entire Church."
[DeClercq 1967, 793]

Conclusion

The Council of Nicaea was victorious in the end. It took over fifty years of bitter battling between the upholders of the Council of Nicaea and those against it. The Arian heresy seemed finished when the Council so specifically anathematized their teachings one by one.

The Arian doctrines condemned were the following:

- ❖The Son was created by the Father out of nothing.
- ❖Thus the Son was not God in the strict sense but by grace and in name only.
- ❖The Father and Son did not share the same substance.
- ❖The Son being a creature was subject to moral changeability and only remained virtuous by an act of the will.

Terminology difficulties had kept the door open for the Arians to continue after the Council. This was especially true with the term homoousios (of the same substance) used by the Council to describe the relationship between the Father and the Son.

The Arians took advantage of one of the term's other meaning, that of identity, to claim that the Council said the Father and Son were identical thereby invalidating the Council. The Arians then started producing their own creeds either eliminating this term or substituting another for it. This led to the breaking up of the Arians into diverse groups according to which term they supported - anomoios (dissimilar), homoios (similar) or homoiousion (like in

substance).

It is obvious that Imperial involvement in the controversy determined at any given moment whether the Council of Nicaea or the Arianism was dominating the controversy. With the imposition of the term homoios on the Church by the Emperor Constantius the work of the Council of Nicaea seemed doomed. But the popularity of this term died with the Emperor.

The persecution of both the Homoiousians and the Homoiousians forced them to begin to dialogue. With the two great representatives of these positions, St. Athanasius and the Cappadocian Fathers, finding theological grounds for their eventual agreement the way was paved for the triumph of the Council of Nicaea. This incident later coupled with Eastern and Western Emperors who were pro-Nicaea led to the final Arian downfall.

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[1] Gnostics - meaning "to know secret or hidden knowledge"; lit., those who know; a mystic order of Christianity. Often known for giving up all worldly matters, often living apart from society and being reclusive, fasting and remaining celibate. Possible forerunners of the sufi orders found amongst some Muslims today.

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