

## 2.2 *Fathers of the East and West*

# Writings of St. Ignatius

### PATRISTICS

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## Who was St. Ignatius?

St. Ignatius was known as a friend of St. Polycarp and, along with him, were disciples of St. John the Beloved. He traveled with St. John and the Apostles consecrated him bishop for Antioch. He nicknamed himself Theophorus “the God-bearing”. When Trajan asked him about his faith and ordered he be taken to Rome to be thrown to wild beasts in the Colosseum.

St. Ignatius, a revered figure in early Christianity, served as the Bishop of Antioch from around 70 AD until his martyrdom in 107 AD. His life unfolded during the reign of Emperor Trajan, a time marked by both challenges and opportunities for the Christian faith.

According to the church traditions, Ignatius is believed to be the young boy mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 18, verses 2-5. “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:2-5). In this passage, Jesus calls a little child to Him, emphasizing the importance of childlike humility and faith for entering the kingdom of heaven. If Ignatius was indeed this young boy, his early encounter with Jesus evidently significantly shaped his spiritual journey.

St. Ignatius was known for his close friendship with St. Polycarp, and together they were disciples of St. John the Beloved, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ. St. Ignatius traveled alongside St. John, and it was under the apostles' guidance that he was consecrated as the Bishop of Antioch. During his time as Bishop, Ignatius earned the nickname "Theophorus," meaning "the God-bearer." This title reflected his profound devotion to God and his unwavering commitment to spreading the Christian message. He believed that carrying God within his heart and soul was the greatest privilege and responsibility.

## En Route to Rome, for Martyrdom

St. Ignatius's life was not without trials. When Emperor Trajan questioned him about his faith, Ignatius remained steadfast in his beliefs. As a result, Trajan ordered that Ignatius be taken to Rome, where he would face a cruel fate. He was sentenced to be thrown to wild beasts in the Colosseum, a gruesome spectacle intended to intimidate and deter Christians from their faith.

Christians, at the time, were not killed because they practiced Christianity, they were martyred because they refused to also practice Roman religion. While practicing Christianity alone was not the sole reason for their persecution, the primary factor was their steadfast resistance to incorporating Roman religious rituals into their beliefs and practices.

During the 1st and 2nd centuries, persecutions were generally localized and sporadic, occurring in specific regions or cities. However, several factors contributed to increased persecution during particularly stressful times. One of the primary reasons for this escalation was jealousy and resentment from neighbors and local communities. Christians were often seen as outsiders who challenged traditional beliefs and practices, leading to social tensions and conflicts. During times of political instability, economic hardship, or natural disasters, the Roman authorities and populace often viewed Christians as scapegoats for the Empire's problems. This scapegoating mentality led to intensified persecutions, with Christians being blamed for various societal ills and misfortunes.

In ancient Rome, blood sports were a popular form of entertainment. Gladiators, the sports stars of their time, played a crucial role in these events. The criminal and slave trade significantly influenced the success of circuses, providing a steady stream of participants for the bloody spectacles. The Colosseum, an iconic amphitheater of the Roman world, could accommodate up to 60,000 spectators. In contrast, the Circus Maximus, a vast chariot racing venue, had a capacity of 250,000. A typical day at these venues would start with animal fights in the morning, followed by the execution of criminals during lunch. The highlight of the day came in the afternoon, where gladiators engaged in intense combat, captivating the audience with their skills and bravery.

Despite the impending danger, St. Ignatius embraced his martyrdom with courage and grace. He viewed it as an opportunity to glorify God and demonstrate the unwavering strength of Christian faith. As he traveled to Rome under the guard of Roman soldiers, Ignatius met Christians along the way and wrote 7 Epistles: To the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans

and to St. Polycarp. The letters to various churches and individuals, expressed his love, encouragement, and wisdom. These letters, known as the Ignatian Epistles, have become treasured spiritual texts, offering insights into early Christian theology and spirituality. Eusebius, a historian of the early church, wrote on St. Ignatius as one who proclaimed to hold on to the traditions of the church. Remember, he was martyred in 107 AD!

"The Report says that he [Ignatius] was sent from Syria to Rome, and became food for wild beasts on account of his testimony to Christ. And as he made the journey through Asia under the strictest military surveillance" (he *called* the guards "ten leopards" in his Letter to the Romans, 5: 1), "he fortified the parishes in the various cities where he stopped by homilies and exhortations, and warned them above all to be especially on their guard against the heresies that were then beginning to prevail, and **exhorted them to hold fast to the tradition of the Apostles**".

St. Ignatius's unwavering faith and heroic death in the Colosseum left an enduring legacy. He became a symbol of Christian perseverance in the face of persecution, inspiring countless believers throughout history. His writings continue to be studied and cherished, providing valuable guidance and inspiration to those seeking a deeper understanding of the Christian faith.

## Importance of Antioch

Antioch, a city of great significance in the history of Christianity, holds a unique distinction as one of the only cities to have been evangelized by both Saint Peter and Saint Paul. It was here, in the bustling streets and vibrant markets, that the followers of Jesus Christ, then known as "the Way," were first referred to as "Christians." This momentous event is recorded in the book of Acts in the New Testament (Acts 11:26).

Antioch's Christian heritage is deeply rooted in the presence of Saint Peter, who served as its first bishop. Saint Peter, one of the most prominent apostles of Jesus, played a pivotal role in the establishment and growth of the early Church. His leadership and teachings in Antioch helped shape the beliefs and practices of the fledgling Christian community.

Following Rome and Alexandria, Antioch emerged as a significant and influential center of Christianity during the 2nd through 4th centuries. With a bustling port and a diverse population, Antioch became a melting pot of cultures and ideas. Christian scholars, philosophers, and theologians gathered in Antioch, engaging in lively dialogues and discussions that contributed to the theological development of Christianity.

Today, Antioch, known as Antakya in modern-day Turkey, continues to hold its place as a significant site of Christian pilgrimage and historical exploration. The city's rich tapestry of Christian history, from the footsteps of Saint Peter and Saint Paul to the emergence of the term "Christian," serves as a reminder of the enduring legacy of the early Church and its profound impact on the shaping of Christianity.

## Goal of His Epistles

St. Ignatius of Antioch addressed several key issues in his writings. These issues shed light on the challenges and concerns facing the early church, and provide valuable insights into the development of Christian thought and practice.

### Martyrdom

St. Ignatius placed a high value on martyrdom and saw it as the ultimate act of faith and love for Christ. In his letters to various churches, he encouraged believers to embrace martyrdom if necessary, emphasizing that it was a way of imitating Christ's sacrifice and achieving eternal glory. St. Ignatius himself was martyred in Rome around 107 AD, and his writings reflect his readiness to face death for the sake of his faith.

### Early Heresies

St. Ignatius confronted several heretical teachings that threatened the unity and purity of the early church. Among them were Docetism and Judaizers. Docetism, a Gnostic heresy, denied the physical reality of Jesus's incarnation, claiming that he only appeared to be human. He refuted this heresy, asserting that Christ genuinely suffered, died, and rose from the dead in a physical body.

Judaizers, on the other hand, insisted on the necessity of observing Jewish laws and rituals for salvation. Ignatius argued against Judaizers, who did not accept the authority of the New Testament, emphasizing that salvation came through faith in Christ alone and that the Mosaic Law had been fulfilled in him.

### Church Structures

St. Ignatius played a crucial role in shaping the structure and organization of the early church. His letters reveal his emphasis on episcopal authority and the importance of a hierarchical structure. He believed that each church should be led by a bishop,

assisted by presbyters (elders) and deacons. Ignatius stressed the need for unity and obedience within the church and urged believers to submit to their leaders. He also emphasized the significance of the Eucharist as a central act of worship and a symbol of the unity of the church.

With unwavering conviction, St. Ignatius affirmed that the New Testament represented the completion of the Old Testament and emphasized the genuine humanity of Christ. He viewed Christ's Passion, death, and Resurrection as pivotal events ensuring "eternal life" in the resurrected Christ. If Christ's death was merely an illusion, St. Ignatius held that his own suffering and willingness to sacrifice his life for Christ would be rendered meaningless.

These key issues in St. Ignatius's writings provide a valuable glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of the early church. His focus on martyrdom, his opposition to heresies, and his contributions to church structures helped shape the development of Christianity and continue to influence Christian thought and practice today.

## Importance of Structure and Hierarchy

According to St. Ignatius of Antioch, a prominent early church father, the bishop holds a crucial role within the church. He represents to his local community the one true bishop, Christ himself. This representation extends beyond mere symbolism; it signifies a profound spiritual connection. Union with the bishop, both in terms of belief and worship, symbolizes union with Christ.

St. Ignatius firmly believed that those who break away from the bishop in a spirit of pride and arrogance sever this sacred union. He viewed such actions as a detrimental disruption of the church's unity. For St. Ignatius, the unity of the church, with its hierarchical structure, was not merely a practical arrangement but a concrete manifestation of the future life in Christ, which would be fully realized in heaven.

While St. Ignatius acknowledged the importance of authority within the church, his primary focus was not on institutional discipline. Instead, he emphasized the spiritual significance of the bishop's role as a representative of Christ and the importance of unity among believers. He believed that by aligning themselves with the bishop and participating in the church's worship, individuals

could deepen their connection with Christ and experience a foretaste of the heavenly kingdom on earth.

"It is fitting that you should concur with the will of your Bishop, which you also do. For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the Bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore, in your concord and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. And man by man, you become a choir, that being harmonious in love and taking up the song of God in unison you may with one voice sing to the Father..." – St. Ignatius's epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesus 4:1-2).

St. Ignatius placed great emphasis on the significance of unity within the church, drawing parallels between the Triune nature of God and the oneness of the Christian community. He believed that God's essence is unity, and that true unity can only be found in God. His teachings on unity were rooted in his understanding of the Trinity. He believed that God exists as three distinct persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—yet these three persons are inseparably united in one God. This unity of the Trinity, he argued, is a model for the unity that should exist within the church. "Be one, one supplication, one mind, one hope in love.... Therefore, all run together as into one temple of God, as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ who came forth from one Father, and is with and has gone to one" – Epistle to the Magnesians (7: 1-2).

Seeing the church as a reflection of the Trinity, with Jesus Christ as the head and the members of the church as his body, he believed that unity within the church is essential for the church to fulfill its mission of proclaiming the gospel and bringing people to salvation. When the church is united, it can more effectively witness to the love of God and the reconciling power of the cross. "Let no man do anything connected with Church without the Bishop" (to the church of Smyrna)

St. Ignatius' emphasis on unity extended beyond the local church. He believed that all Christian communities should be united in faith and love, regardless of their geographic location or cultural background. For the first time in Christian literature, he employed the expression "catholic church." This term, derived from the Greek word "katholikos," signifying "universal" or "whole," captured the essence of the church as one unified entity. It transcended geographical boundaries, encompassing all Christian congregations worldwide.

According to St. Ignatius, the catholic church was not merely an abstract idea but a tangible reality experienced in the present. He viewed the church's unity, including its structure and organization, as a concrete manifestation of the future life in Christ. For him, the church on earth mirrored the heavenly kingdom, embodying the ultimate goal of unity and harmony among believers.

His writings and teachings laid the foundation for future discussions and developments in ecclesiology, influencing subsequent generations of theologians and church leaders. The idea of the catholic church as a universal and unified entity remains a central tenet of Christian faith and practice to this day.

## Martyrdom As Union With Christ

St. Ignatius's intense desire to become a martyr is deeply intertwined with his profound understanding of union with Christ. For Ignatius, being a true disciple of Christ signifies emulating Christ's path of suffering and sacrifice, as expressed in his Passion. He believed that only through sharing in Christ's suffering could one truly imitate him and achieve spiritual perfection.

Throughout his letters, St. Ignatius frequently expressed his sense of imperfection due to not yet having endured the ultimate test of martyrdom. His journey to Rome marked a significant turning point, as he felt he was finally beginning to live as a true disciple. However, he harbored a profound fear that his friends in Rome might intervene and secure a pardon for him, thereby depriving him of the opportunity to achieve perfection through martyrdom.

Ignatius's ardent desire for martyrdom stemmed from his unwavering conviction that only by uniting himself with Christ's Passion could he partake in Christ's ultimate glory. Yet, despite his convictions, he was not immune to human fears. He recognized the possibility that he might falter in the face of death and humbly requested the prayers of the churches to bolster his strength and constancy.

“I write to the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless you hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Allow me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and let me be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may be no trouble to any one. Then shall I truly be a disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice [to God]. I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man: they were free, while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the

freed-man of Jesus, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being a prisoner, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain.” (to the Romans)

St. Ignatius's unwavering commitment to martyrdom serves as a testament to his deep faith and his willingness to follow in the footsteps of Christ. His understanding of union with Christ transcended mere intellectual assent; it manifested itself in his fervent longing to share in Christ's suffering and experience the fullness of his glory. His unwavering pursuit of perfection through martyrdom continues to inspire believers to strive for a deeper relationship with Christ and to embrace the path of self-sacrifice and service.

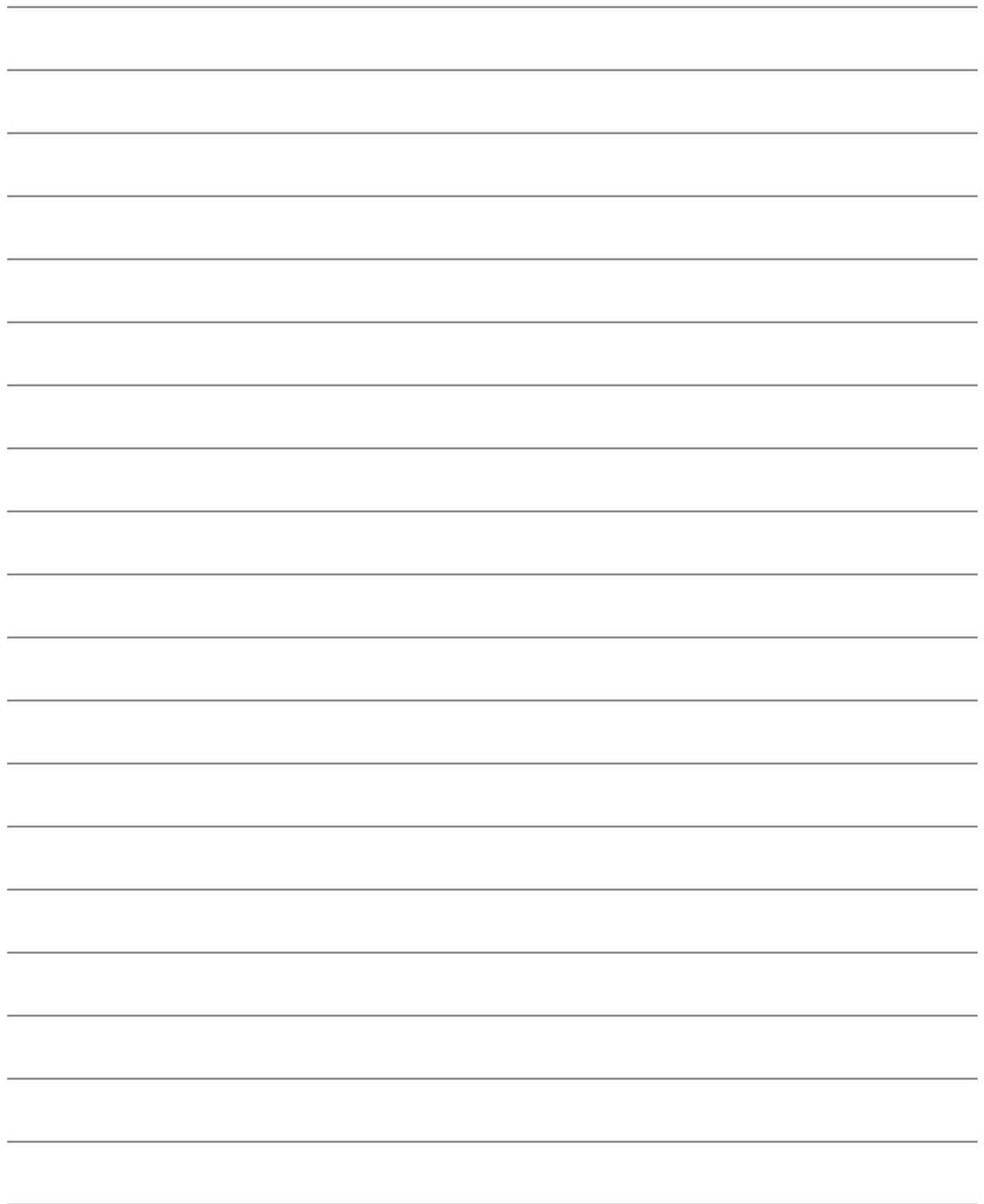
“For it is not my desire to act towards you as a man-pleaser, but as pleasing God, even as also you please Him. For neither shall I ever have such [another] opportunity of attaining to God; nor will you, if you shall now be silent, ever be entitled to the honor of a better work. For if you are silent concerning me, I shall become God's; but if you show your love to my flesh, I shall again have to run my race. Pray, then, do not seek to confer any greater favor upon me than that I be sacrificed to God while the altar is still prepared; that, being gathered together in love, you may sing praise to the Father, through Christ Jesus, that God has deemed me, the bishop of Syria, worthy to be sent for from the east unto the west. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again to Him.” (to the Romans)



### ***Review Questions***

1. St. Polycarp and St. Ignatius were disciples of St. John the Beloved. True or False? (A: True)
2. What did St. Ignatius nickname himself as? (A: Theophorus “the God-bearing”)
3. Why was St. Ignatius wanting to be martyred? (A: His love of martyrdom ultimately springs from a deep conviction that only by union with Christ's Passion will he participate in Christ's glory.)
4. What were the teachings of the Judaizers? (A: People who did not accept the authority of the New Testament.)
5. What were the teachings of the Docetists? (A: People who held that Christ's sufferings and death were apparent but not real.)

|  <i>Books</i>                                                                                        |  <i>Supplementary Material</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br><a href="#"><u>St. Ignatius of Antioch: The Epistles</u></a>                                     | <a href="#"><u>Saint Ignatius of Antioch   Biography, Writings, &amp; Martyrdom   Britannica</u></a>            |
| <br><a href="#"><u>Bearing God: The Life and Works of St. Ignatius of Antioch the God-Bearer</u></a> |                                                                                                                 |



## 2.2 *Fathers of the East and West*

# St. Cyril On The Incarnation

### PATRISTICS

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## Christology and Us

Christology is part of theology that is concerned with the nature and work of Jesus, including such matters as the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and His human and divine nature and their relationship. Christology is the study of Christ and His purpose. Studying His person is crucial as it provides us with the understanding of who He (God) is. This proper understanding clarifies a major scope of the purpose of us being here. We will develop on this later and the impact of different Christological arguments and their implications.

Christ is not His last name. Rather, it is a Greek term χριστός (chrīstós) meaning “Messiah”. Just the usage of the name of Jesus Christ makes the entirety of the difference. Christ means Messiah. Thus by simply using His name of Jesus Christ, you are proclaiming a faith. an understanding of who He is and His relation to you.

Some Heresies on the Hypostasis of the Son are against His Person - Eihionism / Adoptionism: Christ was a man, merely a human being and God adopted him (Islamic) Manicheanism / Paulicianism: Similar to Eihionism.

Another Heresy was against the Son Divinity - Arianism: Denied the Divinity of Christ Semi-Arians: Son is like the Father or a fan of the Father – a creation of the Father Anomoeanism: Extreme Arianism.

Against His humanity - Eutychianism / Monophysitism: Divinity absorbed humanity Gnosticism: Denied His Humanity Docetism: Did not take a real body: Ghost like – no incarnation Marcionism/Valentianism: God of OT is separate & inferior than Christ the Saviour. Against His nature - Nestorianism: Split the Divinity and Humanity Apollinarism: Christ was not in need of soul and spirit Pelagianism: Based on Work, not on grace of God Semi-Pelagianism: Giving more weight to action which defies “without God you cannot do anything”

## Definition of “The One Nature” Between Two Extremes

Eutyches: “I confess that our Lord had two natures before they were united, but I confess that after the union He had one nature” Nestorius: [Jesus was a] “God-bearer”. St. Cyril’s definition : “The One Nature of the Incarnate Logos”

St. Severus’s definition of Eutyches - “When we say ‘one incarnate nature of God the Word’, as Athanasius the proponent of the truth and the apostolic faith said in the books on the Incarnation of the Word, we use ‘nature’ in place of ‘individual designation’, denoting the one hypostasis of the Word himself, like that of Peter also or of Paul, or of any other single man. Wherefore also, when we say ‘one nature which became incarnate’, we do not say it absolutely, but by adding one nature of the Word Himself clearly denote the one hypostasis.” St. Severus – Letter 65 to Eupraxias (Oriental Orthodox Library, P.117)

St. Cyril’s definition of Eutyches - “The union was “at the level of concrete existence,” meaning by this simply that the Word’s nature, that is, his concrete existence, which is the Word Himself, was genuinely united to a human nature, quite apart from any change or confusion, as we have said often enough. He is reckoned to be, and actually is, a single Christ; the same individual is both God and man.” St. Cyril of Alexandria. [Three Christological Treatises](#): 1. One Nature is not a mixture of the two natures into one new nature, 2. One Nature is not a union of two persons, 3. One Nature is one hypostasis = One Person out of two natures.

Implication on the Sayings and Actions of the Lord - “On the one hand, some of the sayings are very especially proper to His divinity. Others again are proper to His humanity. But others very specially pertain to a certain middle position, because they reveal the Son as God and man, both at the same time and in Him. Yet we say that those proper to His divinity and those proper to His humanity are the sayings of the one Son.” Cyril of Alexandria. [Letters, 1–50](#).

‘So far, then, as the question of the manner of the Only-Begotten’s becoming man appears for purely mental consideration by the mind’s eye, our view is that there are two united natures but one Christ, Son and Lord, the Word of God become man and incarnate.’ - St Cyril of Alexandria. “First Letter to Succensus”

Do not, therefore, divide in these instances the expressions about the Lord, for they have in the same person what is proper to God and what is proper to His humanity; but rather apply them to the one Son, that is, to God the Word made flesh.

## **Definition of The One Nature - The Difference between Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox - The Sixth Ecumenical Council and the Tome of Leo**

The sixth Ecumenical Council – The Definition of Faith - “Following the five Holy Ecumenical Councils and the Holy and approved Fathers, with one voice defining: [...] One and the same Christ our Lord the Only-Begotten Son of two natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, inseparably, indivisibly to be recognized, the peculiarities of neither nature being lost by the union but rather the proprieties of each nature being preserved, concurring in one Person and in one subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons but one and the same Only-Begotten Son of God, the Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. [...]

Liturgy of St. Basil/St. Gregory/St. Cyril “He made it one with His divinity, without mingling, without confusion, and without alteration.”

We glorify two natural operations indivisibly, immutably, inconfusedly, inseparably in the same our Lord Jesus Christ our true God. That is to say a divine operation and a human operation according to the divine preacher Leo, who most distinctly asserts as follows: “For each form does in communion with the other what pertains properly to it, the Word, namely, doing that which pertains to the Word, and the flesh that which pertains to the flesh.” For we will not admit one natural operation in God and in the creature, as we will not exalt into the divine essence what is created, nor will we bring down the glory of the divine nature to the place suited to the creature. [...]

His two natures shone forth in His one subsistence in which He both performed the miracles and endured the sufferings through the whole of His economic conversation, [...] for although joined together yet each nature wills and does the things proper to it and that indivisibly and inconfusedly.”  
[The Third Council of Constantinople: The Definition of Faith.](#)

“For neither do His Divine acts affect His human, nor His human acts His Divine, since both concur in this way and to this very end that in their operation His twofold qualities be not absorbed the one by the other, nor His individuality doubled.” Leo the Great. [Letters](#)

## Exchange of Properties

### **St. Severus' Objection to the Tome of Leo**

“We therefore anathematize [...] those who separate the properties, and apportion them to each nature apart. When the one Christ has once been divided (and He is divided by the fact that they speak of two natures after the union), separated into a distinct diversity go the operations and properties which are the offspring of this division, as the words of Leo's impious letter state in what he said: ‘For each of the forms effects in partnership with the other that which belongs to itself, the Word doing that which belongs to the Word, and the body performing the things which belong to the body.’ St. Severus of Antioch – Letter 1 to Oecumenius (Oriental Orthodox Library, P.17-19)

“Again the Tome of Leo says: ‘For each of the natures preserves its own property without diminution.’ Distributing the properties to the two severally as one who divides the one and only Christ into two natures.” St. Severus – Letter 1 to Oecumenius (Oriental Orthodox Library, P.17-19)

‘So far, then, as the question of the manner of the Only-Begotten's becoming man appears for purely mental consideration by the mind's eye, our view is that there are two united natures but one Christ, Son and Lord, the Word of God become man and incarnate.’

### **St. Cyril and the Analogy of Iron and Fire**

“Against these things it is well to set the much-honored words of the holy Cyril: ‘For, as fire when it takes hold of wood and is introduced into it, prevails over it, and does not make it cease being wood, but rather changes it into the appearance and force of fire, and performs all its own acts in it, and is already reckoned as one with it, so understand in the case of Christ also. For, since God was ineffably united with manhood, He has preserved it as what we say it is, and He Himself also has remained what he was. But, after He has once been united, He is reckoned as one with it, appropriating its qualities to Himself, but He Himself also carried on the operation of His nature in it.’” St. Severus of Antioch – Letter 1 to Oecumenius (Oriental Orthodox Library, P.17-19)

### **The Use of the Word “Mingling”**

Liturgy of St. Basil/St. Gregory/St. Cyril “He made it one with His divinity, without mingling, without confusion, and without alteration.” “The things of His humanity are to be placed with His divinity because of His commingling. For it was not a heavenly man who came down from heaven but

rather God who was mingled with man. And the Lord of glory, who was God, could not be crucified unless He received a body.” Cyril of Alexandria. Letters, 51–110.

### **“Mingling” – Not Like Liquids**

“For the name mixture, some of the holy fathers too have put: but since you say that you are afraid lest any confusion be deemed to take place, as in the case of liquids mingled with one another, I rid you from your fears, for not so did they deem (how could they?) but they used the word improperly, anxious to declare the extreme union of the things that had come together.” Cyril of Alexandria. Five Tomes against Nestorius; Scholia on the Incarnation; Christ Is One; Fragments against Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, the Synousiasts

‘But if the two natures have been brought into one mingling, because they happen to be of different substances, neither one is preserved, but both have disappeared after they have been blended.’ - Cyril of Alexandria. (1987). Letters

### **Without Confusion**

“to assert instead that the union was “at the level of concrete existence,” meaning by this simply that the Word’s nature, that is, His concrete existence, which is the Word himself, was genuinely united to a human nature, quite apart from any change or confusion, as we have said often enough. He is reckoned to be, and actually is, a single Christ; the same individual is both God and man.” St. Cyril of Alexandria, Three Christological Treatises

## **Other Analogies The Sun and the Mud**

“The sun itself, when it casts its rays upon the very mud and mire, preserves its radiance quite unimpaired. And the divine, uncontaminated nature, which is above all else and which is quite incapable of suffering any of the things that normally cause distress: how could it be harmed by contact with what is lesser? Will it not rise above the nature that is inferior, and, by illuminating it with its own good things, transport it to what is incomparably better?” Cyril of Alexandria. Festal Letters, 13–30.

## Other Analogies The Wool and the Dye

“Is it not totally obvious [...] that the saving union was the means by which he injected himself into our own way of life? And also so that by making the human soul His very own He might demonstrate that it was superior to sin, as if He had dyed it like a piece of wool with His own nature’s unshakeable immutability?” St. Cyril of Alexandria. Three Christological Treatises.

## Other Analogies By St. Cyril and other Father

Wood and Fire, The Two Goats One Killed and the Other Let Go into the Wilderness, The Shepherd holding the Sheep on His Shoulders, The Lily of the Valleys and the Scent that it Emits, Golden Pot of Manna, Bread Dipped in Wine, The Vessel of Ointment and the Odour, Drop of Vinegar in the Ocean.

## Why is Christology so Important? Partakers of the Divine Nature

“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:2–4

‘justly marvel at the incomparable mercy of the divine nature toward us, which graces those whom He has made with what belongs to Him and shares with His creatures what belongs to Himself alone.’ -Saint Cyril of Alexandria. Commentary on John (Vol. 2, p. 307).

‘But when He was led astray by the deception of the devil, He despised the creator. He trampled on the law that was marked out for Him and grieved His benefactor. The benefactor took back the grace that was given to Him. When, for the first time, the one who came to life heard, “Earth you are, and to earth you will return,” the likeness to God was then marked with a false stamp through the sin that rushed in, and the engraving was no longer distinct. It became more obscure in him, so to speak, and darkened by the transgression. When the human race reached a great multitude and sin ruled over all of them, it thoroughly plundered the soul of each one, and nature was stripped of the original grace. The Spirit also departed completely, and the rational creature fell into utter irrationality,

not even recognizing the creator Himself' Saint Cyril of Alexandria. Commentary on John. (Vol. 1, p. 81-2)

### **Review of Part 1: Christology & Grace**

St. Paul prays that the grace may increase in our lives. Thus we will shortly ask ourselves, what is the meaning of grace increasing in our lives?

All gifts from God are a grace. Him taking on the human nature is a gift and thus a grace He gave all mankind. Grace is a gift that leads to salvation. Because, at the creation, we were abounding in grace, and through the fall of man, mankind was stripped of this original grace. Thus the incarnation of Christ, graces us with a new nature that leads us towards the path of salvation.

### **By Grace you have been saved through faith**

Saint Paul clearly teaches: “by grace you have been saved through faith” (Ephsians 2:8). Grace is inseparable from salvation. How we understand grace will affect our understanding of salvation. The Orthodox Church teaches, as do the Holy Scriptures, that we are saved by grace through faith. The question is, “What is grace and how is it acquired (i.e. what is faith)?”

### **Partakers of Divine nature through the gifts of Grace**

It is mentioned in John 1:16, “grace for grace”. The early church fathers teach us that there is a grace in the Old testament given to men through the law of Moses and is raised and upgraded to a new grace – a grace and truth through Jesus Christ. It is through Grace that we are partakers of the divine nature.

Similarly extracted from <https://www.suscopts.org/q&a/index.php?qid=718> - St. Athanasius says “When once transgression had begun men came under the power of the corruption proper to their nature and were bereft of the grace which belonged to them as creatures in the Image of God. God created man for incorruption and as an image of His own eternity; but by envy of the devil death entered into the world. When this happened, men began to die, and corruption ran riot among them and held sway over them to an even more than natural degree, because it was the penalty of which God had forewarned them for transgressing the commandment. Indeed, they had in their sinning surpassed all limits; for, having invented wickedness in the beginning and so involved themselves in death and corruption, they had gone on gradually from bad to worse, not stopping at any one kind of evil, but continually, as with insatiable appetite, devising new kinds of sins. Adultery and thefts were

everywhere, murder and rapine filled the earth, law was disregarded in corruption and injustice, all kinds of iniquities were perpetrated by all, both singly and in common.

God became man so that “For He became Man that we might be made good.” Athanasius of Alexandria. Athanasius: On the Incarnation of the Word of God. “In short, what is ours has become His in the economic appropriation, in order that we too, in what is peculiarly His, might ascend with Him and through Him, gaining that thing by the kindness that is from Him.” Cyril of Alexandria. Festal Letters, 13–30. “He took what is ours and gave us what is His.” Midnight Praises

### **That we may become partakers of His divine nature**

‘The union with the vine of the branches that proceed from it belongs to the faculty of choice, and the vine’s union with us is relational. By a good choice, we have drawn near through faith and have become His offspring, receiving the honor of adoption from Him.’ Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). Commentary on John. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 210). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

‘those who are united to Him and fixed and rooted in Him, so to speak, who have come to share in His nature by participation in the Holy Spirit, are the branches. His Holy Spirit is what unites us to Christ our Savior.’ Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). Commentary on John. (D. Maxwell, Trans.) (Vol. 2, p. 210). Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press Academic.

‘Paul expounds for us one true and general reason for the incarnation of the Only-Begotten when he says that God the Father was pleased “to recapitulate all things in Christ,” and that the term and the act of “recapitulation” refers to bringing back and taking up what had fallen into an unrecognizable end to what it was in the beginning. Saint Cyril of Alexandria. (2015). Commentary on John.

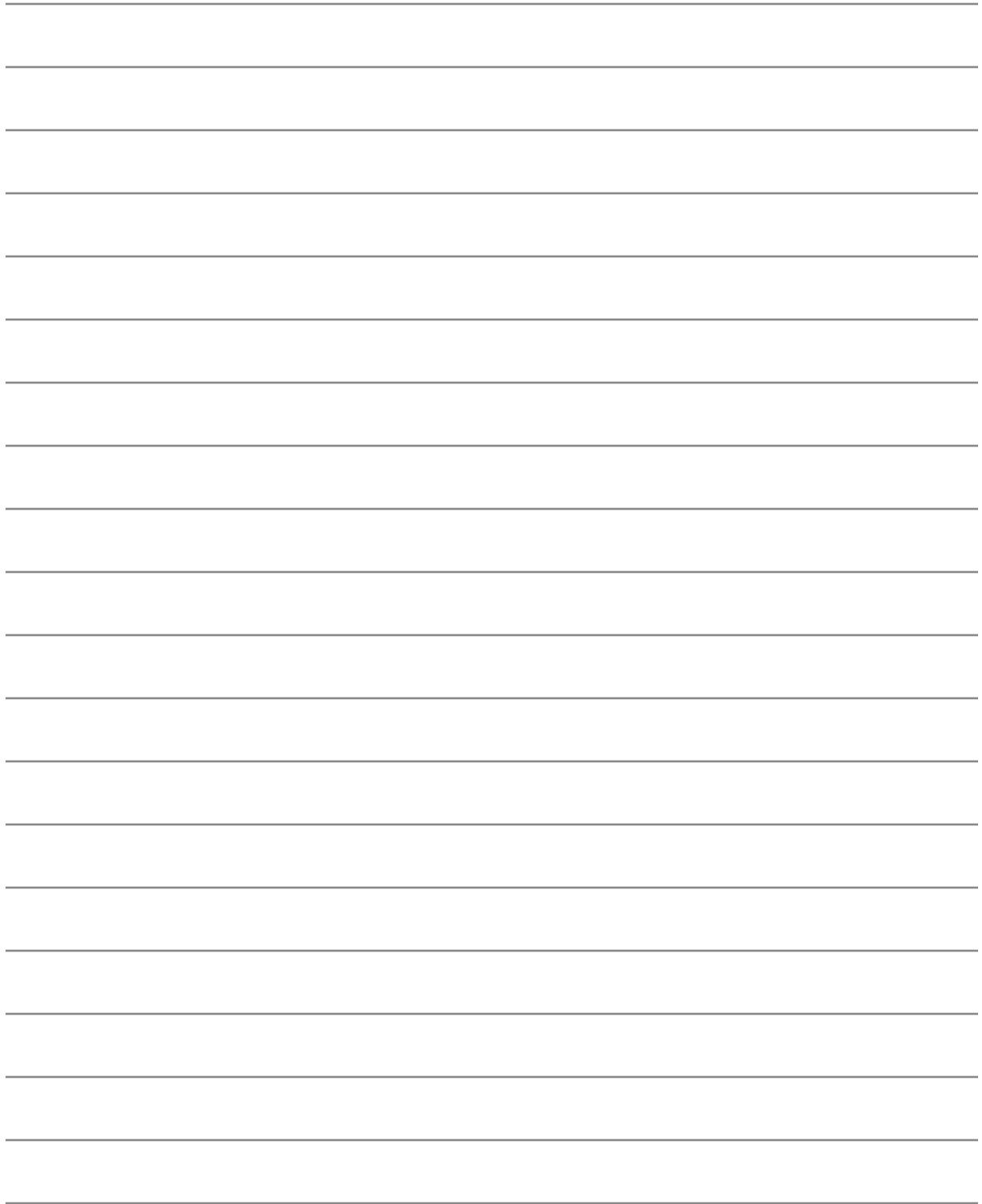
## **Conclusion**

St. Cyril: “The One Nature of the Incarnate Logos” One Nature ≠ A mixture of the two natures into one new nature, One Nature ≠ A union of two persons, One Nature = One hypostasis = One Person out of two natures. There was no mixing/mingling of the natures in Christ but there was a mixing/mingling of the properties (ex: iron in the fire). All actions and sayings in the Gospels are attributed to the one Person of Jesus Christ and not to individual natures. His incarnation blesses us with the ability of being united with Him and restoring our image and likeness through grace. This is what St. Peter means when he says that we become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4)



### ***Review Questions***

1. What is Christology? [Christology is part of theology that is concerned with the nature and work of Jesus, including such matters as the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and His human and divine nature and their relationship. ]
2. What are some of the heresies on the Hypostasis of Christ? [There was a heresies against His Person, against His Humanity, against His Divinity and against His Nature.]
3. What is One Nature? [One Hypostasis = One Person out of two natures.]
4. What is NOT One Nature? [A mixture of the two natures into one new nature. A union of two persons.]
5. What do we confess at every Holy Liturgy of St. Basil, St. Gregory and St. Cyril? [He made It One with His divinity without mingling, without confusion, and without alteration.]
6. How did St. Cyril clarify the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ? [For it was not a heavenly man who came down from heaven but rather God who was mingled with man. And the Lord of glory, who was God, could not be crucified unless he received a body.]
7. What is Christology to grace? [All gifts from God are a grace. Christ taking on the human nature is a gift and thus a grace He gave all mankind. A gift that leads to salvation.]
8. What is grace to faith? [The Holy Scriptures teaches us, “by grace you have been saved through faith” (Ephesians 2:8).]
9. Why is Christology so important? [As St Peter wrote we are “His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue“ 2 Peter 1:3]



## 2.2 *Fathers of the East and West*

# St. Augustine & St. Ambrose

### PATRISTICS

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## St. Augustine the Philosopher

St. Augustine, a prominent figure in Christian history, was born in Tagaste, near Carthage, in 354 AD. His father, Patricius, adhered to pagan beliefs, while in stark contrast, his mother, St. Monica, was a devoted Christian. This juxtaposition of religious beliefs within his family played a significant role in shaping Augustine's spiritual journey.

At the tender age of 11, Augustine, accompanied by a group of friends, engaged in an act of theft. They ventured into a neighbor's garden and stole fruit, not driven by hunger, but solely because it was forbidden. This incident, as recounted in his autobiography, "The Confessions," became a pivotal moment in Augustine's understanding of human nature and the need for divine grace.

Reflecting on this act of theft, Augustine realized that he did not steal the fruit out of necessity or hunger. Instead, he was motivated by a perverse desire to transgress boundaries and defy societal norms, because "it was not permitted." He acknowledged that his nature was inherently flawed, tainted by a love for his own error rather than the object he erred for. "It was foul, and I loved it. I loved my own error—not that for which I erred, but the error itself." This profound realization led Augustine to conclude that human beings possess a natural inclination toward sin and are in dire need of the transformative grace of Jesus Christ.

At the tender age of 17, he continued pursuing his studies of rhetoric, a subject that held a profound fascination for him. However, his family's financial situation was strained, making it challenging for them to support his educational endeavors. Despite these obstacles, he was determined to further his knowledge and skills in the art of persuasion and communication. Driven by an intense desire to fit in and be accepted by his peers, he embraced a hedonistic lifestyle. He indulged in extravagant parties, lavish entertainment, and sought out the company of those who shared his

taste for pleasure and excitement. He believed that by conforming to the social norms and expectations of his time, he could gain the approval and admiration he craved.

Nevertheless, deep down, he couldn't shake the feeling that his pursuit of superficial pleasures was ultimately unfulfilling. He longed for something more meaningful and substantial in his life. However, he struggled to reconcile his desire for acceptance with his inner yearning for purpose and authenticity. As he grappled with these internal conflicts, he found himself questioning the choices he was making and the direction his life was taking. The dissonance between his outward behavior and his true aspirations created a sense of unease within him, propelling him on a journey of self-discovery and reevaluation.

“woe is me! And dare I affirm that You held Your peace, O my God, while I strayed farther from You? Did You then hold Your peace to me? And whose words were they but Yours which by my mother, Your faithful handmaid, You poured into my ears, none of which sank into my heart to make me do it? For she desired, and I remember privately warned me, with great solicitude, not to commit fornication; but above all things never to defile another man's wife. These appeared to me but womanish counsels, which I should blush to obey. But they were Yours, and I knew it not, and I thought that You held Your peace, and that it was she who spoke, through whom You held not Your peace to me, and in her person was despised by me, her son, the son of Your handmaid, Your servant. But this I knew not; and rushed on headlong with such blindness, that among my equals I was ashamed to be less shameless, when I heard them pluming themselves upon their disgraceful acts, yea, and glorying all the more in proportion to the greatness of their baseness; and I took pleasure in doing it, not for the pleasure's sake only, but for the praise. What is worthy of despise but vice? But I made myself out worse than I was, in order that I might not be dispraised; and when in anything I had not sinned as the abandoned ones, I would affirm that I had done what I had not, that I might not appear abject for being more innocent, or of less esteem for being more chaste.” He had a thirst for knowledge, saying “I studied books of eloquence, wherein I was eager to be eminent from a damnable and inflated purpose, even a delight in human vanity.”

Due to his intake of erroneous information, he embraced Manichaeism, a religion that rigidly divides all things into inherently good or evil. Driven by a profound belief in the pursuit of knowledge, he embarked on a journey to establish a school in the heart of Rome in the year 383 AD. Rome, renowned for its vibrant intellectual scene, was believed to be the abode of the most skilled and brilliant rhetoricians of the era. The custom at this school was for students to pay their fees to the professor on the final day of the academic term. However, a regrettable pattern emerged: many

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students diligently attended classes throughout the term, eagerly absorbing the wisdom imparted by their esteemed professor, only to vanish on the day of payment. This behavior left the professor in a precarious financial position, as he relied on these fees for his livelihood. “But I deceived her, when she violently restrained me either that she might retain me or accompany me, and I pretended that I had a friend whom I could not quit until he had a favorable wind to set sail. And I lied to my mother — and such a mother!— and got away.”

St. Augustine lived for 15 years out of wedlock, a period that he later reflected upon in his "Confessions." In this deeply personal text, St. Augustine delved into his emotions, motivations, and spiritual struggles during those years. He lived with his partner for 15 years, during which time they had a son named Adeodatus. He expressed deep remorse for his actions, recognizing that they deviated from the Christian principles he held dear. As a young scholar in Milan, St. Augustine had risen to the position of professor of rhetoric when his mother, St. Monica, convinced him to dismiss his unnamed mistress in pursuit of a high-society Milanese girl's hand in marriage. The arrangement required Augustine to remain celibate for two years, until the girl reached a marriageable age. However, his intense sexual desires hindered his ability to uphold his commitment. Soon after sending away the mother of his son, Adeodatus, he succumbed to temptation and took another mistress. St. Augustine described the turmoil within his soul, torn between his longing for spiritual fulfillment and his entanglement in earthly passions:

“Meanwhile my sins were being multiplied, and my mistress being torn from my side as an impediment to my marriage, my heart, which clave to her, was racked, and wounded, and bleeding. And she went back to Africa, making a vow unto You never to know another man, leaving with me my natural son by her. But I, unhappy one, who could not imitate a woman, impatient of delay, since it was not until two years' time I was to obtain her I sought — being not so much a lover of marriage as a slave to lust — procured another, (not a wife, though,) that so by the bondage of a lasting habit the disease of my soul might be nursed up, and kept up in its vigour, or even increased, into the kingdom of marriage. Nor was that wound of mine as yet cured which had been caused by the separation from my former mistress, but after inflammation and most acute anguish it mortified, and the pain became numbed, but more desperate. (Confession 6:15)

Against the advice of his mother, who didn't want him to marry someone of a lower class, he was married to the woman for fifteen years, as well as had a son with her. Confessions, all somewhat very relatable to common age issues. Disobedience to parents, trying to fit in, life of sexuality, seeking

elegance, etc... These are all things of which many, in modern age, struggle with, but if one can repent and confess, our Lord will take them back with open arms.

## Engulfed in a Worldly Society: Friends and Confessions

During his early years, St. Augustine formed a profound friendship with a contemporary companion who shared his academic pursuits and interests. This friendship, as St. Augustine himself reflects, was “sweeter to me than all the sweetness of my life thus far.” The two friends bonded over their shared studies and activities. However, their friendship took an unexpected turn when St. Augustine, influenced by Manichean beliefs, attempted to sway his friend away from his Christian faith. St. Augustine was able to “turn him away from the true faith” and “turn him toward those superstitious and harmful fables which my mother mourned in me” (namely, Manichaeism) so that, “With me, this man went wandering off in error and my soul could not exist without him” (Conf. 4.4.7). St. Augustine's friend, whom he never names, succumbed to Augustine's persuasion and abandoned his true faith, much to the dismay of St. Augustine's mother, who had been mourning St. Augustine's own involvement with Manichaeism.

Consequently, St. Augustine and his friend embarked on a misguided journey together, with St. Augustine's soul feeling incomplete without his companion. Their bond deepened in their shared error, as they both strayed from the path of truth. However, their journey took a dramatic turn when St. Augustine's friend fell severely ill and approached death's door. Fearing the worst, his family arranged for him to be baptized, a religious ritual that St. Augustine scoffed at and assumed his friend would share his disdain for. To St. Augustine's surprise and dismay, when his friend recovered, he discovered that his attitude had transformed. St. Augustine, expecting his friend to dismiss the baptism as mere religious nonsense, was shocked to find that his friend had embraced it wholeheartedly. “Immediately, as soon as I could talk to him,” writes Augustine:

And I did this as soon as he was able, for I never left him and we hung on each other overmuch—I tried to jest with him, supposing that he also would jest in return about that baptism which he had received when his mind and senses were inactive, but which he had since learned that he had received. But he recoiled from me, as if I were his enemy, and, with a remarkable and unexpected freedom, he admonished me that, if I desired to continue as his friend, I must cease to say such things” (Conf. 4.4.7).

In the depths of his being, he felt an inconsolable sorrow, a profound emptiness that gnawed at his soul. The loss of his first close friend had shattered his world, leaving him adrift in a sea of grief and uncertainty. He wandered through his native place, once familiar and comforting, now transformed into a torture chamber. Every street, every corner, held memories of his friend—laughter shared, secrets whispered, and moments of pure joy. Now, those memories turned into sharp, piercing thorns, reminders of what was lost and could never be regained. A profound hatred filled his heart as he looked upon the places where his friend was not. The places that once held the promise of happiness and companionship now seemed cruel and taunting, for they could not offer him the one thing he longed for the most. They could not say, "Look, he is coming," as they had when his friend was alive and absent.

My heart was utterly darkened by this sorrow and everywhere I looked I saw death. My native place was a torture room to me . . . And all the things I had done with him—now that he was gone—became a frightful torment. My eyes sought him everywhere, but they did not see him; and I hated all places because he was not in them, because they could not say to me, "Look, he is coming," as they did when he was alive and absent (Conf. 4.4.9).

## Early Church Fathers' Relationships Influencing One Another

Throughout the history of early Christianity, there have been numerous spiritually fruitful friendships that serve as a testament to the importance of surrounding oneself with spiritually-minded individuals. Among the most notable of these relationships are those between St. Paul and St. Timothy, as evidenced in the Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy. Their friendship was characterized by mutual respect, admiration, and a shared commitment to spreading the teachings of Christ.

Another remarkable friendship was that between St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, as revealed in the Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp. These two men shared a deep bond of faith and love for the Church, and their letters to each other offer valuable insights into the spiritual lives of early Christians. In addition to these well-known pairings, St. Maximus and Domadius were also close companions. Their friendship was built on a foundation of mutual support and encouragement, and they worked together to advance the cause of Christianity in their community.

Collaboration was also a key aspect of the friendship between St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil. Together, they authored the work "On the Priesthood," which remains an important text for understanding the role and responsibilities of priests in the Church. In previous chapters, we explored

the influential friendship of the Cappadocian Fathers: St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. Their intellectual pursuits and shared theological insights shaped the development of Christian thought and continue to inspire believers today.

Finally, we turn our attention to the friendship between St. Augustine and St. Ambrose, which will be the focus of this chapter. Their relationship was pivotal in St. Augustine's spiritual transformation. St. Ambrose served as a mentor and guide to St. Augustine, helping him to navigate his struggles with faith and identity and ultimately leading him to embrace Christianity.

These friendships serve as inspiring examples of the power of spiritual companionship. They remind us that surrounding ourselves with like-minded individuals can help us grow in faith, overcome challenges, and fulfill our potential as followers of Christ.

## **St. Ambrose**

St. Ambrose, born between 337 and 339 AD in what is now Germany, hailed from a rich family. His birthplace remains uncertain, but historical accounts suggest it was somewhere within the Germanic region. From an early age, St. Ambrose displayed a keen intellect and an aptitude for learning.

In his youth, St. Ambrose relocated to Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire, to pursue higher education. He immersed himself in the study of rhetoric, the art of effective and persuasive speaking and writing. Through rigorous training, he mastered the use of figures of speech and compositional techniques, honing his skills in oratory and argumentation.

After completing his studies, St. Ambrose returned to his homeland, where he gained recognition for his eloquence and wisdom. In 374 AD, a significant event transpired in Milan, the capital of the Western Roman Empire. The bishop of Milan, who adhered to Arianism—a controversial theological doctrine that denied the full divinity of Jesus Christ—passed away, leaving a void in the leadership of the Christian community.

At this time, tensions escalated between the Arians and those who believed in the divinity of Christ. Both factions, recognizing St. Ambrose's exceptional qualities, converged in their support for him to become the next bishop of Milan. Remarkably, St. Ambrose was not yet a deacon or a priest, nor had he received baptism, when he was chosen for this esteemed position. To prepare for his role as bishop, St. Ambrose underwent an intensive period of study and instruction in Christianity. Within a

week of his formal baptism, he received ordination, a sacred ceremony that marked his elevation to the highest rank of the clergy.

St. Ambrose was described as the “..complete man with amazing gifts. He was both active and contemplative. He was intellectual and he was an orator. He was someone who won over St. Augustine and beat him on his own ground. He was always able to cope with the most difficult situations and tasks without any effort.” He advocated for the poor and the weak. One of his many writings is “The Story of Naboth” where he advocates for the just sharing of possessions. He made sure to educate the clergy to stay away from Arianism. He also wrote a series called: “On the Duties of the Clergy,” Finally, some of his other works are regarding the Holy Spirit, on the Mysteries, as well as on Repentance.

## St. Ambrose’s Influence on St. Augustine

In Book 5 of his Confessions, St. Augustine recounts his arrival in Milan and his encounter with St. Ambrose, the bishop of the city. St. Augustine had heard of St. Ambrose’s reputation as an eloquent speaker, and he was eager to experience his oratory firsthand. He was not disappointed. St. Ambrose’s sermons were powerful and persuasive, and St. Augustine was captivated by his ability to communicate the Christian faith in a way that was both intellectually stimulating and spiritually moving.

St. Augustine’s initial attraction to Ambrose was primarily based on his eloquence. However, as he listened to St. Ambrose preach more regularly, he began to appreciate the depth of his faith and his commitment to the Christian community. St. Augustine was particularly impressed by St. Ambrose’s ability to defend the faith against the objections of the Manichees, a Gnostic sect that St. Augustine had been associated with for many years. St. Ambrose’s preaching helped St. Augustine to see that the faith was not as irrational or indefensible as he had once thought. He began to understand that the Bible could be interpreted figuratively as well as literally, and that this opened up new possibilities for understanding the Christian faith.

“to Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop... whose eloquent discourse did then plentifully dispense unto Thy people ... **That man of God received me as a father**, and showed me an Episcopal kindness on my coming. Thereafter **I began to love him....** And **I listened diligently** to him preaching to the people, not with that intent I ought, but, as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it answered the fame thereof, or flowed fuller or lower than was reported; ... For first, these things also had now begun to appear to me capable of defense; and the Catholic faith, for which I had thought nothing could be said against the Manichees’ objections, I

now thought might be maintained without shamelessness; especially after I had heard one or two places of the Old Testament resolved, and oftentimes “in a figure,” which when I understood literally, **I was slain spiritually...**“

St. Augustine's encounter with St. Ambrose was a turning point in his spiritual journey. It was through Ambrose's influence that St. Augustine eventually came to embrace the faith and to become one of the most influential theologians in the history of the church. In addition to his preaching, St. Ambrose also showed St. Augustine great personal kindness. He welcomed St. Augustine into his home and treated him like a son. In his *Confessions*, St. Augustine states, "That man of God received me as a father would, and welcomed my coming as a good bishop should." This paternal care helped St. Augustine to heal from the wounds of his past and to begin to rebuild his life on a new foundation.

Why did St. Augustine come back to Christ? He returned because of the tears of his mother, St. Monica, as well as due to the wisdom and the intellectual capabilities of his bishop: St. Ambrose. God saw that “Augustine was a sincere seeker of the truth.” God worked through St. Ambrose to reveal Himself to St. Augustine. Moreover, the tears of St. Monica depicts what kind of heart she had, and her own relationship with Christ. Our beloved God sees each and everyone of us. He knows who is a “truth seeker,” and who is not. God will never forsake a “Truth seeker,” but rather, guide them to Himself. We should all strive to be inspiring like St. Ambrose. Our service can make a difference, just like that of St. Ambrose on St. Augustine.

St. Augustine and his surroundings provide us with one of the most striking examples of one running along the Lord's path with sincere zeal. He did just like the rabbit that was able with merely one hop to accomplish what the turtle had done in a number of days. St. Augustine was very far from God. He did not know the Lord for thirty long years, and many people had already surpassed him in the way of righteousness and godliness. Yet the minute he came to his senses and was drawn by the Lord, he was able to reach the first ranks with merely a few hops. With a few more, he became a spiritual counselor. With some more hops, he became one of the saints. Now, we all chant the name of St. Augustine until today. How so? He would run. He ran along the paths of the Lord, unlike those who are merely satisfied with their information desks and only content to point the way. Rather, St. Augustine was a man serious in his pursuit. Draw me away! We will run after you.

## St. Augustine Notable Books

St. Augustine's writings covered a wide range of theological and philosophical topics. His "Confessions" is a deeply personal work in which he reflects on his life, his struggles, and his eventual

conversion to Christianity. It provides insights into his inner thoughts and emotions and is considered a classic of Christian literature.

The "City of God" is a monumental work in which he addresses fundamental questions of theology and philosophy. He explores the nature of God, the problem of evil, the relationship between faith and reason, and the destiny of human beings. The "City of God" is a profound and ambitious work that has influenced Christian thought for centuries.

St. Augustine's writings on the Trinity, "De Trinitate", focus on the concept of the Logos, the Divine Word, and His relationship to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He argues that the Logos is not merely a created being but an eternal aspect of God's nature and that the Trinity is a mystery that can only be understood through faith.

In his work "On Christian Doctrine", St. Augustine outlines principles for interpreting and teaching the Scriptures. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the context and genre of biblical texts and of seeking to discover the truth in their content. He also discusses the need to defend scriptural truth when it is attacked, arguing that the Scriptures are the authoritative word of God.

St. Augustine's writings have had a profound impact on Christian theology and thought. His insights into the human condition, the nature of God, and the relationship between faith and reason have influenced countless thinkers and continue to be studied and debated today.



### ***Review Questions***

1. What is St. Augustine's most notable work? (A: Confessions)
2. True or false? His mother was a pagan. (A: False)
3. True or false? St. Augustine was born a devout Christian. (A: False)
4. Who inspired him to find Christianity again? (A: St. Ambrose)
5. What religion did he fall into before finding our Lord? (A: Manichaeism)
6. What did said religion preach? (A: It claims that everything falls under good or evil.)
7. True or false? St. Ambrose came from a poor family. (A: False)
8. Why did St. Augustine come back to Christ? (A: He returned because of the tears of his mother, and the wisdom of St. Ambrose.)
9. What is another relationship, like St. Augustine and St. Ambrose between Church

Fathers? (A: St. Paul and St. Timothy.)

10. Name two more of St. Augustine's works or their topics. (Sample A: City of God, as well as his writing on the Trinity.)



Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines.