

Origen is typical of these as he saw Christ's pre-existent spirit (human) united and permeated by the Logos and then, at the incarnation, the spirit-saturated Logos (or maybe vice-versa) assumed a body which became so deified as to gather the proportions of ubiquity. This idea was made more complex by Origen's concept of the pre-existence and the later church would condemn him for it. But it was not an easily defined matter and we, from our pinnacle of sophistication in theological study, should be careful of passing too many severe judgments on those who have gone before us.

b. Suggested Readings

I have been suggesting readings in the early writers simply because they are foundational to the thought of later centuries. Our text and supplemental readings will help you more with later writers. But if you wanted to read something of early thought on this subject...the recommendation is for:

- (1) Irenaeus: Fragment 53
- (2) 1 Clement: To the Corinthians 36, 37
- (3) Cyprian: Second Treatise Against the Jews: figure 10.

c. Some observations

The Christological formulations clearly show the philosophic bind in which many of the fathers found themselves. On one hand they sought to expound the Scripture while on the other they had to meet the charges of the day and to defend the person of Christ from the "god-concepts" that roamed their world.

If you enjoy reading the earlier writers, you will find Tertullian and Irenaeus are closer to the later symbols of the church as they make their propositions. The African church, in the early periods, is somewhat more Biblical than are the churches of Alexandria and Asia. There are a few exceptions in individual teachers: particularly John Chrysostom in the eastern empire as well as Gregory Thaumaturgus and the Cappadocian fathers

2. The Arian Question

a. Brief Note on History

Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch in 26-272 AD, had been a leader of dynamic monarchianism tendencies. He was unwilling to see the Son as being the same substance of the Father and seems to have followed the dynamic understanding of this matter. His actual error is obscured but that there was an error on his concept of