

the Person of Jesus. Attempts to correct this situation will now follow and one of the first of these attempts is that of Nestorius of Constantinople. Patriarch (Bishop in a glorified way) in 428, Nestorius enjoyed the popularity of the eastern emperor, Theodosius II and his court. He seems to have been able and what he hoped to achieve seems to be praiseworthy even if the end result was less than what should have been accomplished. He reacted against the Alexandrian thinking in Christology on the assumption that it deprived Christ of real humanity. He was, so to speak, on the opposite pole from Apollinaris. It is not, however, easy to understand his position in his attempt at fathoming the "two natures" (god and man) question. The following is the explanation of Peter Toon in the New International Dictionary of the Christian Church:

First of all, he taught that the human and divine natures remained unaltered and distinct in their union within Jesus of Nazareth. He could not conceive of the Divine logos being involved in human suffering or change, and so he wanted to hold the natures apart. Secondly, he emphasized that Jesus Christ lived a human life which involved growth, temptation and suffering. This would have been impossible, he argued, if the human nature had been fused and overcome with the Divine nature. To solve the problem, Nestorius explained that Jesus Christ, the person described in the Gospels, was the "common prosopon," the prosopon of union.

While the strong point of Nestorianism is its attempt to do full justice to the manhood of Christ (a true Savior of men), its weak point is that it places the two natures alongside each other with little more than a moral or sympathetic union between them. (p. 7000)

Foundational to understanding the issues of this problem was the understanding of some disputed terminology. The term theotokos had been used by Athanasius and others to describe the Virgin Mary ("god-bearer"). Nestorius could not accept this use (calling Mary the mother of God) unless it were to be used in connexion with the kindred term anthrotokos (man-bearer). He preferred that neither be used and the term christokos be chosen to indicate the Mary-Jesus relationship. But the Alexandrians assumed, or taught at least, that in so doing he was denying the full nature and oneness of the person born of Mary. To them it seemed he was saying Mary had some form of single child that was really a set of twins...or something like that.

#### c. The resolution

Theodosius II called for a council to discuss the whole matter...the Council of Ephesus of 431.