

#### 4. The Council of Chalcedon: 451

##### a. The Political Setting:

The Empire situation and the role of the emperors

Political intrigue in the church and the rivalry of the sees.

##### b. The problem:

The church is at work on the two natures of Christ and trying to come to an understanding of His person. He is divine (Nicaea), human (Constantinople) and possessed fully of the qualities of both (Ephesus) but how do these relate? Eutychus, a monk under authority of Constantinople (Bishop Flavianus) began to teach a one nature theory in which the resultant person is neither man nor god as we would normally know them. The teaching is known as **monophysitism** or Eutychianism after the name of its early propagator. He was silenced by his bishop but the cause was taken up by Dioscurus of Alexandria and a big disagreement was in progress.

##### c. The conflict:

The arguments were many and the matter was made more complex by a council at Ephesus in 449..where Dioscurus and his friends packed the gathering place and kept things under control even using physical violence to attain their ends. They would not hear the Flavian side at all and the council is known as the "Robber Council" from an appropriate title given it by Leo of Rome.

##### d. The Meeting:

Called by the Emperor Marcian in 451 the council was widely represented and had many hot sessions before enacting the Creed given earlier in our syllabus. It was based on an opinion paper sent by Leo of Rome (known as his Tome) and made emphatic the teaching of the two natures of Christ known to us as the **hypostatic union**.