

# Christian Councils

## Non-Ecumenical<sup>i</sup> Councils

Church councils are formal meetings of bishops and representatives (pastors and chorepiscopi<sup>ii</sup>) meet to regulate points of doctrine or discipline. While lacking the authority of the decisions made in ecumenical councils, the teachings and decrees of these pre- ecumenical councils were useful in the binding of the faithful in varying degrees especially in Carthage and Elvira. The following councils were held prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> council in Nicea.

The Council of Rome in 155 A.D.

The Council of Rome in 193 A.D.

The Council of Ephesus in 193 A.D.

The Council of Carthage in 251 A.D.

The Council of Iconium in 258 A.D.

The Council of Antioch in 264 A.D.

The Council of Arabia in 246-247 A.D.

The Synod<sup>iii</sup> of Elvira in 306 A.D.

The Synod of Carthage in 311 A.D.

The Synod of Neo-Caesarea in 314 A.D.

The Synod of Ancyra in 314 A.D.

The Synod of Arles in 314 A.D.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Council

<b>Name:</b>	Council at Jerusalem
<b>Dates:</b>	circa 48-50 A. D.
<b>Convened by:</b>	Paul, Barnabus, the three pillars and the apostles in Jerusalem
<b>President:</b>	The three pillars [Peter, James and John]
<b>Subject Discussed</b>	Circumcision, The custom of Moses, leaving idols, eating animals that have been strangled and sexual immorality. <b>[See Acts 15:1, 29]</b>
<b>Attendees:</b>	Unknown

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Council

<b>Name:</b>	First Council of Nicaea
<b>Dates:</b>	May 20-June 19 325 A. D.
<b>Convened by:</b>	Emperor Constantine I
<b>President:</b>	Hosius of Corduba and Emperor Constantine I
<b>Subject Discussed:</b>	Arianism, the nature of Christ, celebration of Passover (Easter), ordination of eunuchs, prohibition of kneeling on Sundays and from Easter to Pentecost, validity of baptism by heretics, lapsed Christians, sundry other matters.
<b>Attendees:</b>	318
<b>Scriptural Response:</b>	<b>John 10:30; 17:22; 14:6,10,11</b>

**Arianism:** In [Christianity](#), **Arianism** is a [Christological](#)<sup>[1]</sup> concept which asserts the belief that [Jesus Christ](#) is the [Son of God](#) who was begotten by [God the Father](#) at a point in time, is distinct from the [Father](#) and is therefore subordinate to the Father.<sup>[2]</sup> Arian teachings were first attributed to [Arius](#) (c. AD 256–336), a Christian [presbyter](#) in [Alexandria](#), [Egypt](#). The teachings of Arius and his supporters were opposed to the theological views held by [Homoousian](#) Christians, regarding the nature of the [Trinity](#) and the nature of Christ. The Arian [concept of Christ](#) is based on the belief that the Son of God did not always exist but was begotten by God the Father.<sup>[2]</sup>

There was a dispute between two interpretations (Arianism and Homoousianism) based upon the theological orthodoxy of the time, and both of them attempted to solve its theological dilemmas.<sup>[2]</sup> So there were, initially, two equally orthodox interpretations which initiated a conflict in order to attract adepts and define the new orthodoxy.<sup>[2]</sup> [Homoousianism](#) was formally affirmed by the first two [Ecumenical Councils](#). The Ecumenical [First Council of Nicaea](#) of 325 deemed Arianism to be a heresy.<sup>[3]</sup> All mainstream branches of Christianity now consider Arianism to be [heterodox](#) and [heretical](#).<sup>[4]</sup>

**Homoousion:** ([/hɒmooˈuːsiən/](#) [HOM-oh-OO-see-ən](#); [Greek](#): ὁμοούσιος, [translit.](#) *homooúsios*, [lit.](#) 'one in being', from ὁμός, *homós*, "same" and οὐσία, *ousía*, "being") is a [Christian theological](#) doctrine pertaining to the [Trinitarian](#) understanding of [God](#). The [Nicene Creed](#) describes [Jesus \(God the Son\)](#) as being ὁμοούσιος, "one in being" or "of single essence", with [God the Father](#). It is one of the cornerstones of theology in [Nicene Christianity](#).

The term was adopted at the [First Council of Nicaea](#) to clarify the [ontology](#)<sup>iv</sup> of [Christ](#). In [Latin](#), which is lacking a [present participle](#) of the [verb 'to be'](#), the translation [consubstantialis](#) is used ([substantia](#) being the traditional Latin translation of the [Aristotelian](#) term *ousia*).

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Council

**Name:** First Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** May-July 381 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Theodosius  
**President:** Timothy of Alexandria, [Meletius of Antioch](#), [Gregory Nazianzus](#), and [Nectarius of Constantinople](#)  
**Subject Discussed:** Arianism, the nature of Christ, celebration of Passover (Easter), ordination of eunuchs, prohibition of kneeling on Sundays and from Easter to Pentecost, validity of baptism by heretics, lapsed Christians, sundry other matters.  
**Attendees:** 150  
**Scriptural Response:**

### 4<sup>th</sup> Council of Ephesus

**Name:** First Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** May-July 381 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Theodosius  
**President:** Timothy of Alexandria, [Meletius of Antioch](#), [Gregory Nazianzus](#), and [Nectarius of Constantinople](#)  
**Subject Discussed:** Arianism, the nature of Christ, celebration of Passover (Easter), ordination of eunuchs, prohibition of kneeling on Sundays and from Easter to Pentecost, validity of baptism by heretics, lapsed Christians, sundry other matters.  
**Attendees:** 200-250  
**Scriptural Response:**

### 5<sup>th</sup> Council of Chalcedon

**Name:** First Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** October – November 451 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Marcian  
**President:** A board of government officials and senators, led by the patrician<sup>v</sup> Anatolius  
**Subject Discussed:** The judgments issued at the the 2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Ephesus in 449, the alleged offences of Bishop Dioscorus of Alexandria, the relationship between the divinity and humanity of CHRIST, many disputes involving particular bishop and sees.  
**Attendees:** 520  
**Scriptural Response:**

## 6<sup>th</sup> Council of Ephesus

**Name:** Third Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** May 5 - June 553 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Justinian I  
**President:** [Eutychius of Constantinople](#)  
**Subject Discussed:** Nestorianism and Origenism  
**Attendees:** 152  
**Scriptural Response:**

## 7<sup>th</sup> Council of Ephesus

**Name:** Third Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** November 7 – September 16 680 – 681 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Constantine IV  
**President:** Patriarch George I of Constantinople  
**Subject Discussed:** Nestorianism and Origenism  
**Attendees:** 300  
**Scriptural Response:**

## 8<sup>th</sup> Council of Nicea

**Name:** Third Council of Constantinople  
**Dates:** September 24 – October 23 787 A. D.  
**Convened by:** Emperor Constantine IV and Empress Irene (as regent<sup>vi</sup>)  
**President:** Patriarch George I of Constantinople  
**Subject Discussed:** Iconoclasm  
**Attendees:** 350  
**Scriptural Response:**

## Types of Christians

**Eastern Orthodox** – Of or consisting of the Eastern churches that form a loose federation according primacy of honor to the patriarch of Constantinople and adhering to the decisions of the first seven ecumenical councils and to the Byzantine rite.

**Oriental Orthodox** – of the communion of Eastern Christian Churches that recognize only three ecumenical councils – The First Council of Nicaea, the First Council of Constantinople and the Council of Ephesus. They reject the dogmatic definitions of the Council of Chalcedon.

**Church of the East** – consists of four main church families: the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Eastern Catholic churches that are in communion with Rome but still maintain Eastern liturgies.

**Roman Catholics** – The branch of Christianity headed by the pope, which is governed by a hierarchy with the pope at the top and at the lower levels, bishops and priests.

**Protestants** – A Christians who were influenced by Martin Luther, a Catholic professor who protested the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, in his *Ninety-Five Theses or Disputation on the Power of Indulgences* which was a list of propositions for an academic disputation written in 1517 by Martin Luther a professor of moral theology at the University of Wittenberg, Germany.

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<sup>i</sup> **Ecumenical** [**Greek.** *the habitable world.*] General; universal; as an ecumenical council.

<sup>ii</sup> **Chorepiscopi** – [Chor-e-pis-copi] means a rural bishop. In fact, a chorbishop is an honorary prelate, or archpriest in several of the Eastern Christian Churches

<sup>iii</sup> **Synod** -

<sup>iv</sup> **Ontology** is the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations

<sup>v</sup> **Patrician** – An aristocrat of nobleman

<sup>vi</sup> **Regent** – A person appointed to administer a country because the monarch is a minor or is absent or incapacitated.