

4. The Dynamic Monarchians

Whereas the outstanding heresy of the second century was Gnosticism, the outstanding heresy of the third century was Monarchianism. Its concern was to preserve the unity of the Monarch of the universe, God; and the Logos doctrine of the Fathers of the second century seemed to endanger that unity. The Logos conceived of as a distinct divine Person appeared to deny monotheism.

In the west, Theodotus of Byzantium and Artemon of Syria propounded this view, and in the east Paul of Samosata further developed the view (he was excommunicated for it by a synod in A.D. 269). These men held that the Logos is not a divine Person, but is the impersonal divine reason; and that this Logos came upon the man Jesus at his baptism, constituting him the Christ. The Logos penetrated the humanity of Jesus progressively, as it did that of no other man. As a result, the man Jesus was gradually deified. Although he cannot be regarded as God in the strict sense of the word, nevertheless he is worthy of divine honor.

Dynamic Monarchianism

