

7. The Apollinarians

Apollinaris was bishop of Laodicea in Syria, and died about A.D. 390. He held to a trichotomous view of man's nature; and believed that the soul was the seat of animal life, and the spirit the seat of a rational, moral, and spiritual life. He held that in man the spirit (πνεύμα) is the seat of sin. For Apollinaris, this meant that if Christ had a human spirit, He would have been sinful. Therefore, in place of the human spirit, Christ must have had the Logos; and thus Christ was comprised of divine Logos, human soul, and human body. In this manner Apollinaris preserved the deity and the sinlessness of Christ.

Unfortunately, in this formulation Apollinaris lost the true humanity of Christ. His critics pointed out that if Christ had no human spirit, then humanly speaking He was on the same level as the beasts of the field, i.e., without reason, morality, or spiritual faculties. They also pointed out that if this were so, Christ could not be our perfect Redeemer, since only a God-man could die a death of infinite value.

APOLLINARIANISM



MAN



CHRIST