



Apollinarism

Apollinarism or **Apollinarianism** is a Christological heresy proposed by Apollinaris of Laodicea (died 390) that argues that Jesus had a human body and sensitive human soul, but a divine mind and not a human rational mind, the Divine Logos taking the place of the latter.^[1] It was deemed heretical in 381 and virtually died out within the following decades.^[2]

History

The Trinity had been recognized at the First Council of Nicaea in 325, but debate about exactly what it meant continued. A rival to the more common belief that Jesus Christ had two natures was monophysitism ("one nature"), the doctrine that Christ had only one nature. Apollinarism and Eutychianism were two forms of monophysitism. Apollinaris's rejection of Christ having a human mind was considered an over-reaction to Arianism and its teaching that Christ was a lesser god.^[3]

Theodoret charged Apollinaris with confounding the persons of the Godhead and giving in to the heretical ways of Sabellius. Basil of Caesarea accused him of abandoning the literal sense of the scripture, and taking it up wholly with the allegorical sense. His views were condemned in a Synod at Alexandria, under Athanasius of Alexandria, in 362, and later subdivided into several different heresies, the main ones of which were the Polemians and the Antidicomarianites.

Apollinaris, considering the rational soul and spirit as essentially liable to sin and capable, at its best, of only precarious efforts, saw no way of saving Christ's impeccability and the infinite value of Redemption, except by the elimination of the human spirit from Jesus' humanity, and the substitution of the Divine Logos in its stead.^[1] Apollinarism was declared to be a heresy in 381 by the First Council of Constantinople.^[2]

Neo-Apollinarianism

Christian philosopher William Lane Craig has proposed a neo-Apollinarian Christology in which the divine Logos completes the human nature of Christ. Craig says his proposal is tentative and he welcomes critique and interaction from other scholars.^[4]

Craig also clarifies "what I called a Neo-Apollinarian Christological model" by stating that

What I argue in my Neo-Apollinarian proposal is that the *Logos* brought to the human body just those properties which would make it a complete human nature – things like rationality, self-consciousness, freedom of the will, and so forth. Christ already possessed those in his divine nature, and it is in virtue of those that we are created in the image of God. So when he brought those properties to the animal body – the human body – it completes it and makes it a human

nature. Against Apollinarius, I want to say that Christ did have a complete human nature. He was truly God and truly man. Therefore his death on our behalf as our representative before God was efficacious.^[5]

See also

- Dyophysitism – Christological position
- Miaphysitism – Christological doctrine
- Nestorianism – Umbrella term used for several related but distinct sets of Christian teachings

References

1. One or more of the preceding sentences incorporates text from a publication now in the public domain: Sollier, Joseph Francis (1907). "Apollinarianism". In Herbermann, Charles (ed.). *Catholic Encyclopedia*. Vol. 1. New York: Robert Appleton Company.
2. Sollier, Joseph. "Apollinarianism." *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01615b.htm>) Vol. 1. New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907. 8 February 2019
3. McGrath, Alister. 1998. *Historical Theology, An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. Chapter 1.
4. William Lane Craig and J.P. Moreland. 2003. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. InterVarsity Press. 608.
5. "Does Dr. Craig Have an Orthodox Christology? | Podcast | Reasonable Faith" (<https://www.reasonablefaith.org/media/reasonable-faith-podcast/does-dr.-craig-have-an-orthodox-christology/>).

Sources

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