A collection of “isms”

**Cerinthianism.** Cerinthus, c. A.D. 100?, Jewish-Christian religious leader, b. Ephesus. He held tenets influenced by Gnosticism and similar to those of the Ebionites. He taught that the Christ descended into Jesus at his baptism and left him again before the Passion. *Columbia Encyclopedia.*

Cerinthus distinguished between Jesus and Christ. Jesus was mere man, though eminent in holiness. He suffered and died and was raised from the dead, or, as some say Cerinthus taught, He will be raised from the dead at the Last Day and all men will rise with Him. At the moment of baptism, Christ or the Holy Ghost was sent by the Highest God, and dwelt in Jesus teaching Him, what not even the angels knew, the Unknown God. This union between Jesus and Christ continues till the Passion, when Jesus suffers alone and Christ returns to heaven. Cerinthus believed in a happy millennium which would be realized here on earth previous to the resurrection and the spiritual kingdom of God in heaven. *Catholic Encyclopedia.*

**Docetism:** Jesus wasn’t really there; an apparition. God cannot be physical. (Platonic.) Greek: ὄφεις (dokeo); to seem, or appear; to think, suppose. Christ’s suffering and death were only an appearance. A phantom body or shadow.

**Docetism,** an early Christian heresy affirming that Jesus Christ had only an apparent body. The doctrine took various forms: Some proponents flatly denied any true humanity in Christ; some admitted his incarnation but not his sufferings, suggesting that he persuaded one of his followers — possibly Judas Iscariot or Simon of Cyrene — to take his place on the cross; others ascribed to him a celestial body that was incapable of experiencing human miseries.

This denial of the human reality of Christ stemmed from dualism, a philosophical doctrine that viewed matter as evil. The docetists, acknowledging that doctrine, concluded that God could not be associated with matter. They could not accept a literal interpretation of John 1:14 that the “Word became flesh.”

Although docetism is alluded to in the New Testament, it was not fully developed until the 2nd and 3rd centuries, when it found an ally in Gnosticism. It occasioned vigorous opposition by early Christian writers, beginning with Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus early in the 2nd century. Docetism was officially condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451. “Docetism,” *Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia.* (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

**Donatism,** a heretical Christian movement of the 4th and 5th centuries, which claimed that the validity of the sacraments depends on the moral character of the minister. It arose as a result of the consecration of a bishop of Carthage in AD 311. One of the three consecrating bishops was believed to be a traditor, that is, one of the ecclesiastics who had been guilty of handing over their copies of the Bible to the oppressive forces of the Roman emperor Diocletian. An opposition group of 70 bishops, led by the primate of Numidia, formed itself into a synod at Carthage and declared the consecration of the bishop invalid. They held that the church must exclude from its membership persons guilty of serious sin, and that therefore no sacrament could rightly be performed by a traditor. The synod excommunicated the Carthaginian bishop when he refused to appear before it. Four years later, upon the death of the new bishop, the theologian Donatus the Great became bishop of Carthage; the movement later took its name from him. As a result of the desire of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great to settle the dispute, it was submitted to various ecclesiastical bodies and in 316 to the emperor himself; in each case the consecration of the bishop elected originally, in 311, was upheld.

Constantine the Great at first attempted to suppress the Donatists by force, but in 321 he adopted a policy of tolerance; the policy was reversed, however, by his youngest son, Constans I, who instituted a regime of persecution. In 411 a debate between the Donatist and Catholic bishops was held at Carthage to settle the dispute. The outcome was once again adverse to the Donatists. As a result, they were deprived of all civil rights in 414, and, in the following year, their assemblies were banned under penalty of death. The movement then began to decline, but it survived until the Moorish conquests of the 7th and 8th centuries. “Donatism,” *Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia.* (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

**Marcionism/Marcionites** [Catholic Encyclopedia (online).] Heretical sect founded in A.D. 144 at Rome by Marcion and continuing in the West for 300 years, but in the East some centuries longer, especially outside the Byzantine Empire. They rejected the writings of the Old Testament and taught that Christ was not the Son of the God of the Jews, but the Son of the good God, who was different from the God of the Ancient Covenant. They anticipated the more consistent dualism of Manichaeanism and were finally absorbed by it. As they arose in the very infancy of Christianity and adopted from the beginning a strong ecclesiastical organization, parallel to that of the Catholic Church, they were perhaps the most dangerous foe Christianity has ever known....

**LIFE OF MARCION**

Marcion was son of the Bishop of Sinope in Pontus, born c. A.D. 110, evidently from wealthy parents. He is described as nautes, nauclerus, a ship owner, by Rhodion and Tertullian, who wrote about a generation after his death. Epiphanius (Haeres., XLII, ii) relates that Marcion in his youth professed to lead a life of chastity and asceticism, but, in spite of his professions, fell into sin with a young maiden. In consequence his father, the bishop, cast him out of the Church. He besought his father for reconciliation, i.e. to be admitted to ecclesiastical penance, but the bishop stood firm in his refusal.... Irenaeus states that Marcion flourished under Pope Anicetus (c. 155-166) [involut sub Aniceto]. Though this period may mark Marcion’s greatest success in Rome, it is certain that he arrived there earlier, ... c. A.D. 140 after the death of Hyginus, who died that year and apparently before the accession of Pius I....

... it is obvious that Marcion was already a consecrated bishop. A layman could not have disputed on Scripture with the presbyters as he did, nor have threatened shortly after his arrival: “I will divide your Church and cause within her a division, which will last forever”, as Marcion is said to have done....

His final breach with the Roman Church occurred in the autumn of 144, for the Marcionites counted 115 years and 6 months from the time of Christ to the beginning of their sect. Tertullian roughly speaks of a hundred years and more. Marcion seems to have made common cause with Cerdo (q.v.), the Syrian Gnostic, who was at the time in Rome; that his doctrine was actually derived from that Gnostic seems unlikely. Irenaeus relates (Adv. Haeres., III, iii) that St. Polycarp, meeting Marcion in Rome was asked by him: Dost thou recognize us? and gave answer: I recognize thee as the first born of Satan. This meeting must have happened in 154, by which time Marcion had displayed a great and successful activity, for St. Justin Martyr in his first Apology (written about 150), describes Marcion’s heresy as spread everywhere....

**DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE**

We must distinguish between the doctrine of Marcion himself and that of his followers. Marcion was no Gnostic dreamer. He wanted a Christianity untrammeled and undefiled by association with Judaism.
Christianity was the New Covenant pure and simple. Abstract questions on the origin of evil or on the essence of the Godhead interested him little, but the Old Testament was a scandal to the faithful and a stumbling-block to the refined and intellectual gentiles by its crudity and cruelty, and the Old Testament had to be set aside. The two great obstacles in his way he removed by drastic measures. He had to account for the existence of the Old Testament and he accounted for it by postulating a secondary deity, a demiurgus, who was god, in a sense, but not the supreme God; he was just, rigidly just, he had his good qualities, but he was not the good god, who was Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The metaphysical relation between these two gods troubled Marcion little; of divine emanation, aenos, syzygies, eternally opposed principles of good and evil, he knows nothing. He may be almost a Manichee in practice, but in theory he has not reached absolute consistency as Mani did a hundred years later.

Marcion had secondly to account for those passages in the New Testament which countenanced the Old. He resolutely cut out all texts that were contrary to his dogma; in fact, he created his own New Testament admitting but one gospel, a mutilation of St. Luke, and an Apostolicon containing ten epistles of St. Paul. The mantle of St. Paul had fallen on the shoulders of Marcion in his struggle with the Judaisers. The Catholics of his day were nothing but the Judaisers of the previous century. The pure Pauline Gospel had become corrupted and Marcion, not obscurely, hinted that even the pillar Apostles, Peter, James, and John had betrayed their trust. He loves to speak of “false apostles”, and lets his hearers infer who they were. Once the Old Testament has been completely got rid of, Marcion has no further desire for change. He makes his purely New Testament Church as like the Catholic Church as possible, consistent with his deep seated Puritanism....

His theological outlook is limited to the Bible, his struggle with the Catholic Church seems a battle with texts and nothing more. The Old Testament is true enough, Moses and the Prophets are messengers of the Demiurge, the Jewish Messias is sure to come and found a millennial kingdom for the Jews on earth, but the Jewish messias has nothing whatever to do with the Christ of God. The Invisible, Indescribable, Good God (aoratos akatanomastos agathos theos), formerly unknown to the creator as well as to his creatures, has revealed Himself in Christ. How far Marcion admitted a Trinity is uncertain. His dialogue “De Recta in Deum Fide”, has often been ascribed to Origen, but it is beyond doubt that he is not the author. The work was probably composed about A.D. 300. It was originally written in Greek and translated by Rufinus. It is a refutation of Marcionism and Valentinianism. The first half is directed against Marcionism, which is defended by Megethius (who maintains three principles) and Marcus (who defends two). (Berlin ed. of the Fathers by Sande Bakhuyzen, Leipzig, 1901).

(1) St. Justin the Martyr (150) refers to the Marcionites in his first Apology; he also wrote a special treatise against them. This, however, mentioned by Ireneaus as Syntagma pros Markiona, is lost. Ireneaus (Haer., IV, vi, 2) quotes short passages of Justin containing the sentence: “I would not have believed the Lord Himself if He had announced any other than the Creator”; also, V, 26, 2.

(2) Ireneaus (c. 176) intended to write a special work in refutation of Marcion, but never carried out his purpose (Haer., I, 27, 4; III, 12, 13); he refers to Marcion, however, again and again in his great work against Heresies especially III, 4, 2; III, 27, 2; IV, 38, 2 sq.; III, 11, 7, 25, 3.

(3) Rhodon (180-192) wrote a treatise against Marcion, dedicated to Callistion. It is no longer extant, but is referred to by Eusebius (H. E. V, 13) who gives some extracts.

(4) Tertullian, the main source of our information, wrote his “Adversus Marcionem” (five books) in 207, and makes reference to Marcion in several of his works: “De Praescriptione”, “De Carne Christi”, “De Resurrectione Carnis”, and “De Anima”. His work against Apelles is lost.

(5) Pseudo-Tertullian, (possibly Commodian. See H. Waiz, “Ps. Tert. Gedicht ad M.”, Darmstadt, 1901) wrote a lengthy poem against Marcion in doggerel hexameters, which is now valuable. Pseudo-Tertullian’s (possibly Victorinus of Pettau) short treatise against all heresies (c. A.D. 240) is also extant.

(6) Adamantius -- whether this is a real personage or only a nom de plume is uncertain. His dialogue “De Recta in Deum Fide”, has often been ascribed to Origen, but it is beyond doubt that he is not the author. The work was probably composed about A.D. 300. It was originally written in Greek and translated by Rufinus. It is a refutation of Marcionism and Valentinianism. The first half is directed against Marcionism, which is defended by Megethius (who maintains three principles) and Marcus (who defends two). (Berlin ed. of the Fathers by Sande Bakhuyzen, Leipzig, 1901).

(7) St. Hippolytus of Rome (c. 220) speaks of Marcion in his “Refutation of All Heresies”, book VII, ch. 17-26; and X, 15

(8) St. Epiphanius wrote his work against heresies in 374, and is the second main source of information in his Ch. xiii-xliv). He is invaluable for the reconstruction of Marcion’s Bible text, as he gives 78 and 40 passages from Marcion’s New Testament where it differs from ours and adds a short refutation in each instance.

(9) St. Epraem (373) maintains in many of his writings a polemic against Marcion, as in his “Commentary on the Diatessaron” (J.R. Harris, “Fragments of Com. on Diates.”, London, 1895) and in his “Metrical Sermons” (Roman ed., Vol II, 437-560, and Overbeck’s Epraem etc., Opera Selecta).

(10) Eznik, an Armenian Archpriest, or possibly Bishop of Bagrawand (478) wrote a “Refutation of the Sects”, of which Book IV is a refutation of Marcion. Translated into German, J.M. Schmid, Vienna, 1900.

http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09645c.htm

Ebionites: ... were a group of Jewish Christians located in different regions of the Mediterranean from at least the second to the fourth centuries. The distinguishing characteristics of this group, at least in the eyes of their Christian oppo-nents, was their attempt to combine...
Jewish views and lifestyles with the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. In particular, they were said to have emphasized their monotheistic belief in only one God to such an extreme that they denied, as a consequence, Jesus’ own divinity. At the same time, the Ebionites differed from non-Christian Jews in asserting that Jesus was the sacrifice for the sins of the world and that all other sacrifices had therefore become meaningless. Among other things, this belief led them to embrace a vegetarian diet (since most meat was procured, in the ancient world, through the religious act of sacrificing an animal). [Bart D. Ehrman, The New Testament and Other Early Christian Writings (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.136.]

Arianism, a fourth-century (c. A.D. 300-400) heresy that denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, regarding him as only the greatest of creatures. Arianism was condemned by the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325, but it continued to divide the empire for some time [Germanic tribes and the eastern part of the Roman Empire, particularly].

“Other Christian leaders insisted that Father and Son were essentially different. Although both were divine, the Father God held an essential priority. As the singular, eternal, unchanging, and unknowable deity, the Father was above and beyond the world. Born of the Father, the only-begotten Son of God, the divine logos, held a secondary position in the Christian divinity.” [David Chidester, Christianity: A Global History, 99.]

Monophysitism, Christian schismatic sect of the 5th and 6th centuries that maintained that Christ had only one (divine) nature, thereby opposing the orthodox doctrine that he was both divine and human. The Monophysites were mainly confined to the Eastern church and gained little strength in the West. At the directive of Pope Leo I, the Council of Chalcedon in 451 attempted to steer a middle course between the orthodox and Monophysite views (see Chalcedon, Council of). The resulting edict did not satisfy the Monophysites, and the controversy continued, the Monophysites being supported by the Copts and the Eutychian sect. The Eastern church, in an effort to suppress the heresy, in the first half of the 6th century excommunicated the Monophysites, who thereupon formally seceded from the parent church. The Monophysites split into two factions over controversies regarding the incorruptibility of Christ's body. After 560 a third faction, the Trithesists, arose; they interpreted the three persons of the Deity as three separate gods and hence were regarded by the other factions as heretics.

In Egypt, Syria, and Mesopotamia the Monophysite congregations remained strong throughout the controversy. Although finally condemned in 680-81, at the sixth ecumenical council, Monophysitism continues in some churches to this day. The modern Abyssinian church, Armenian church, Coptic church, and Jacobite church are all Monophysite bodies. “Monophysitism,” Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia. (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Monothelitism, 7th-century view that maintained, in conformity to traditional Christian doctrine, that Christ had two distinct natures, divine and human, but also held that the two natures are manifested in but one will and activity (see Christology). The doctrine of Monothelitism was first promulgated about 624 by Byzantine emperor Heraclius, in an attempt to reconcile the orthodox point of view, that Christ has two natures, with the heretical belief of the Monophysites (see Monophysitism), that he has but one; by this reconciliation Heraclius hoped to bring back into the church the thousands of Monophysites who had been excommunicated for heresy. The result of the promulgation of Monothelitism, however, was not greater unity in the church and empire, but further division. Controversy on the question of whether the energy and will of Christ was of a single or dual nature became so violent that in 648 Emperor Constans II forbade all discussion of the subject. It was revived on the accession of Emperor Constantine IV in 668 and remained a disturbing issue until it was finally declared a heresy by the third Council of Constantinople in 680. The council declared that just as there are in Christ two natures, so there are two wills, a human and a divine, the human will being subordinate to the divine. “Monothelitism,” Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia. (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Montanism, 2nd-century heretical movement. It was founded by the prophet Montanus in Phrygia, now part of Turkey. About 156, Montanus appeared in a small village, fell into a trance, and began prophesying in what he claimed was the voice of the Holy Spirit. With two young women, Prisca and Maximilla, he traveled teaching his doctrine throughout Asia Minor.

Montanism held that the Holy Spirit (or Paraclete) appeared through Montanus and his associates. Montanists taught that Christ's second coming was imminent and that one fallen from grace could not be redeemed. Followers were instructed to seek — not flee — persecution and even martyrdom.

Montanism found adherents at the time that the state's opposition to Christianity was waning. The church was becoming a part, rather than a foe, of the contemporary world. Followers of Montanism shunned the secular, concentrating on preparations for Christ's return.

About 177, church leaders, fearing the potentially divisive effects of the movement, excommunicated the Montanists. Thereafter a separate sect, Montanism reached a culmination in 3rd-century Carthage, where it was supported by the Roman theologian Tertullian. By the 6th century, Montanism had all but vanished. “Montanism,” Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia. (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Nestorianism: AD 400–500 — Christ is two separate and completely different person: the human part and the god part. The human part was tempted, suffered, and died. Named after Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople— what he meant was misquoted. Condemned at the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. Developed into a separate church. Mary mother of human Jesus only; not mother of the Son of God.

Eutychianism: AD 448–451 — Christ did not have two distinct natures; the god part absorbed the human part and so it was the god part that was tempted, suffered, and died. The doctrine was condemned, and Eutyches was excommunicated. Eutyches had been in a monastery outside Constantinople.

Mandaean (Aramaic manda, “knowledge”) [NB: gnosia, “knowledge,” Greek], a Gnostic sect found in an area south of Baghdad in Iraq and in an adjacent area of Iran. The sect has about 65,000 followers worldwide. The name Mandaean is the Aramaic equivalent of Gnostic. Mandaean are also known as Sabians (“baptists”).

The Mandaean sect, once thought to have emerged in Mesopotamia or Persia sometime before the 4th century AD, is now generally believed to have migrated there from the Palestinian-Syrian region, where it probably originated in the 1st or 2nd century AD or even in pre-Christian times. Mandaean rituals and texts reflect Persian, Judaic, and Christian influences.

The major teachings of the Mandaeans are derived from the ancient esoteric doctrine of Gnosticism. Mandaean believe that the human soul, imprisoned in the body and the material universe, can be saved through revealed knowledge, a rigorously ethical life, and ritual observances. They also believe in the mediation of a redeemer,
called Manda da Hayye ("Knowledge of Life") or Hibel-Ziwa. This redeemer once dwelled on earth, where he triumphed over the demons who are its rulers and who try to keep the soul imprisoned. He can thus assist the soul in its ascent through the heavenly spheres toward its final reunion with the Supreme God.

The Mandaeans may have originally derived the idea of a redeemer from the Christian conception of Jesus Christ and may have begun, as did other Gnostic sects, as a heretical offshoot of Christianity. They have been hostile to Christianity, however, since Byzantine times and have traditionally regarded Jesus as a false messiah. Instead, they revere John the Baptist and strongly emphasize the importance of frequent baptism, which serves as a ritual of purification. Unlike the ancient Gnostic sects, the Mandaeans have traditionally regarded marriage and procreation as important moral obligations. The Mandaeans, called Nasoreans ("observers" of the rites), form a caste apart from the laity. "Mandaeans," Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia. (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Manichaeism, ancient religion named for its founder, the Persian sage Mani (circa 216-76?); for a period of several centuries, it presented a major challenge to Christianity.

Life of Mani — Mani was born into an aristocratic Persian family in southern Babylonia (now in Iraq). His father, a pious man, brought him up in an austere baptist sect, possibly the Mandaeans. At the ages of 12 and 24, Mani experienced visions in which an angel designated him the prophet of a new and ultimate revelation. On his first missionary journey, Mani reached India, where he was influenced by Buddhism. With the protection of the new Persian emperor, Shapur I (reigned 241-72), Mani preached throughout the empire and sent missionaries to the Roman Empire. The rapid expansion of Manichaeism provoked the hostility of the leaders of orthodox Zoroastrianism, and when Bahram I (reigned 274-77) succeeded to the throne, they persuaded him to have Mani arrested as a heretic, after which he either died in confinement or was executed.

Doctrines — Mani proclaimed himself the last prophet in a succession that included Zoroaster, Buddha, and Jesus, whose partial revelations were, he taught, contained and consummated in his own. Besides Zoroastrianism and Christianity, Manichaeism reflects the strong influence of Gnosticism.

The fundamental doctrine of Manichaeism is its dualistic division of the universe into contending realms of good and evil: the realm of Light (spirit), ruled by God, and the realm of Darkness (matter), ruled by Satan. Originally, the two realms were entirely separate, but in a primal catastrophe the realm of Darkness invaded the realm of Light, and the two became mixed and engaged in a perpetual struggle. The human race is a result and a microcosm of this struggle. The human body is material, therefore evil; the human soul is spiritual, a fragment of the divine Light, and must be redeemed from its imprisonment in the body and the world. The path of redemption is through knowledge of the realm of Light imparted by the succession of divine messengers that includes Buddha and Jesus and ends in Mani. With this knowledge the human soul can conquer the carnal desires that perpetuate its imprisonment and so ascend to the divine realm.

The Manichaeans divided themselves into two classes according to their degree of spiritual perfection. Those who were called the elect practiced strict celibacy and vegetarianism, abstained from wine, did no labor, and preached. They were assured of ascent to the realm of Light after death. The auditors, much more numerous, were those of lower spiritual attainment. They were permitted marriage (although procreation was discouraged), observed weekly fasts, and served the elect. They hoped to be reborn as the elect (see Transmigration).

Eventually all fragments of divine Light would be redeemed, the world would be destroyed, and Light and Darkness would be eternally separated.

Extent and Influence — During the century after Mani’s death, Manichaeism spread as far as China in the East and gained followers throughout the Roman Empire, especially in North Africa. The 4th-century theologian St. Augustine was a Manichaean for nine years before his conversion to Christianity. He subsequently wrote polemics against the movement, which was also condemned by several popes and Roman emperors. Although Manichaeism as a distinct religion had disappeared in the West by the early Middle Ages, its continuing influence can be traced in the medieval dualistic heresies of the Albigenses, Bogomils, and Paulicians, and much of the Gnostic-Manichaeist world view survives in many modern religious movements and sects, including theosophy and the anthroposophy of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner.

Sources — Mani, believing that the failure of previous prophets to record their teachings led to their dilution and distortion by disciples, wrote several books to serve as the scripture of his religion. Fragments of these, along with hymns, catechisms, and other texts, were found in Eastern Turkistan and Egypt during the early 20th century. Other sources for Manichaean doctrines include the writings of St. Augustine and other opponents. “Manichaeism,” Microsoft(R) Encarta(R) 98 Encyclopedia. (c) 1993-1997 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.

Pelagianism, in Christian theology, a rationalistic and naturalistic heretical doctrine concerning grace and morals, which emphasizes human free will as the decisive element in human perfectibility and minimizes or denies the need for divine grace and redemption. The doctrine was formulated by the Romano-British monk Pelagius, a man of considerable learning and austere moral character. About 390 he went to Rome, where, appalled by the lax morals of Roman Christians, he preached Christian asceticism and recruited many followers. His strict moral teaching had particular success in southern Italy and Sicily and was preached openly there until the death (circa 455) of his foremost disciple, Julian of Eclanum.

Pelagius denied the existence of original sin and the need for infant baptism. He argued that the corruption of the human race is not inborn, but is due to bad example and habit, and that the natural faculties of humanity were not adversely affected by Adam’s fall. Human beings can lead lives of righteousness and thereby merit heaven by their own efforts. Pelagius asserted that true grace lies in the natural gifts of humanity, including free will, reason, and conscience. He also recognized what he called external graces, including the Mosaic law and the teaching and example of Christ, which stimulate the will from the outside but have no indwelling divine power.

For Pelagius, faith and dogma hardly matter because the essence of religion is moral action. His belief in the moral perfectibility of humanity was evidently derived from Stoicism.

Pelagius settled in Palestine about 412 and enjoyed the support of John, bishop of Jerusalem. His views were popular in the East, especially among the Origenists (see Origen). Later, his disciples Celestius and Julian were welcomed in Constantinople (present-day Istanbul) by the patriarch Nestorius, who sympathized with their doctrine of the integrity and independence of the will (see Nestorianism).

Starting in 412, St. Augustine wrote a series of works in which he attacked the Pelagian doctrine of human moral autonomy and developed his own subtle formulation of the relation of human freedom to divine grace. As a result of Augustine’s criticisms, Pelagius was accused of heresy, but he was acquitted at synods at Jerusalem and Diospolis. In 418, however, a council at Carthage condemned Pelagius and his followers. Soon afterward Pope Zosimus...
also condemned him. Nothing more is known of Pelagius after this
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**Apollinarianism.** The fourth-century heresy, named after
Apollinarius of Laodicea, that denied the existence of a mortal,
human, rational soul in Jesus Christ. The heresy was condemned by
the Council of Constantinople in 381.

**Arianism** A fourth-century heresy that denied the divinity of Jesus
Christ, regarding him as only the greatest of creatures. It was
condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325, but it continued to
divide the empire for some time.

"Other Christian leaders [like Arius] insisted that Father and Son
were essentially different. Although both were divine, the Father God
held an essential priority. As the singular, eternal, unchanging, and
unknowable deity, the Father was above and beyond the world. Born
of the Father, the only-begotten Son of God, the divine logos, held a
secondary position in the Christian divinity.” [David Chidester,
Christianity: A Global History, 99.]

**Gnosticism.** The earliest of Christian heresies, which denied that the
Word of God had taken on human flesh (the incarnation). Besides
stressing the role of inner enlightenment or saving knowledge of
God, available only to the few, it also denied the goodness of creation
and the material order. [Platonic: matter is evil; spirit (non-matter) is
good.]

**Macedonianism.** A fourth-century heresy, named after Bishop
Macedonius of Constantinople, that denied the divinity of the Holy
Spirit. It was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 381.

**Modalism.** A general theological approach to the Trinity, during the
3rd, 4th, and 5th centuries that viewed the three Persons as three
different modes, aspects, or energies of the one God's operations, but
not as three distinct Persons.

**Orthodox Christianity.** The term “orthodox” originally was applied
only to those who accepted the teachings of the Council of Chalcedon
(451) on the divinity and humanity of Christ. Today the term applies
more commonly to Christian churches of the East that are not in
communion with Rome, particularly the Russian Orthodox and Greek
Orthodox churches.

**Council of Chalcedon** (451). The ecumenical council of 451 that
definitively taught that in Jesus Christ there is only one divine Person
but two natures, one divine and one human. ”Christian leaders held
that the Father and Son were essentially equal. They affirmed that the
Father and the Son were the same in essence, in eternity, and in
divinity. Both were God. Drawing on terms developed by Tertullian,
Christians could understand their God, the Trinity, as one substance
in three persons. In this formulation, Father, Son, and Spirit were
essentially all equal.” [David Chidester, Christianity: A Global
History, 99.]