

# Arianism

“Arian” redirects here. For other uses, see [Arian \(disambiguation\)](#).

Not to be confused with "[Aryanism](#)", which is a racial ideology.

**Arianism** is a [nontrinitarian](#) belief that asserts that [Jesus Christ](#) is the [Son of God](#), but is entirely distinct from and subordinate to the [God the Father](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Arianism is defined as those teachings attributed to [Arius](#), which are in opposition to current mainstream Christian teachings on the nature of the [Trinity](#) and the nature of Christ. It was first attributed to [Arius](#) (c. AD 250–336), a Christian [presbyter](#) in [Alexandria](#), [Egypt](#). The Arian concept of Christ is that the Son of God did not always exist, but was created by—and is therefore distinct from—God the Father. This belief is grounded in the [Gospel of John](#) (14:28)<sup>[2]</sup> passage: “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”

The trinitarian viewpoint was formally affirmed by the first two [Ecumenical Councils](#) of the Roman Church, thereby rejecting Arianism. All mainstream branches of Christianity consider Arianism to be [heterodox](#) and [heretical](#). The [Ecumenical First Council of Nicaea](#) of 325 deemed it to be a heresy. At the regional [First Synod of Tyre](#) in 335, Arius was exonerated.<sup>[3]</sup> After his death, he was again [anathemised](#) and pronounced a heretic again at the [Ecumenical First Council of Constantinople](#) of 381.<sup>[4]</sup> The Roman Emperors [Constantius II](#) (337–361) and [Valens](#) (364–378) were Arians or [Semi-Arians](#).

Arianism is also often used to refer to other [nontrinitarian](#) theological systems of the 4th century, which regarded [Jesus Christ](#)—the Son of God, the [Logos](#)—as either a created being (as in Arianism proper and [Anomoeanism](#)), or as neither uncreated nor created in the sense other beings are created (as in [Semi-Arianism](#)).

## 1 Origin

Main articles: [Arius](#) and [Arian controversy](#)

Arius taught that God the Father and the Son of God did not always exist together eternally.<sup>[5]</sup> Arians taught that the Logos was a divine being created by God the Father before the world. The Son of God is subordinate to God the Father.<sup>[6]</sup> In English-language works, it is sometimes

said that Arians believe that Jesus is or was a “creature”, in the sense of “created being”. Arius and his followers appealed to Bible verses such as Jesus saying that the father is “greater than I” ([John 14:28](#)), and “The Lord created me at the beginning of his work” ([Proverbs 8:22](#)).<sup>[7]</sup>

Controversy over Arianism arose in the late 3rd century and persisted throughout most of the 4th century. It involved most church members—from simple believers, priests and monks to bishops, emperors and members of Rome’s imperial family. Such a deep controversy within the Church during this period of its development could not have materialized without significant historical influences providing a basis for the Arian doctrines.<sup>[8]</sup> Of the roughly three hundred bishops in attendance at the [Council of Nicaea](#), only two bishops did not sign the [Nicene Creed](#), which condemned Arianism.<sup>[9]</sup> Two Roman emperors, [Constantius II](#) and [Valens](#), became Arians, as did prominent [Gothic](#), [Vandal](#) and [Lombard](#) warlords both before and after the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

Arius had been a pupil of [Lucian of Antioch](#) at [Lucian’s private academy](#) in [Antioch](#) and inherited from him a modified form of the teachings of [Paul of Samosata](#).<sup>[10]</sup> After the dispute over Arianism became politicized and a general solution to the divisiveness was sought—with a great majority holding to the Trinitarian position—the Arian position was officially declared [heterodox](#).

Arianism continued to exist for several decades, even within the family of the emperor, the imperial nobility, and higher-ranking clergy. But, by the end of the 4th century it had surrendered its remaining ground to Trinitarianism in the official Roman church hierarchy. In western Europe, Arianism, which had been taught by [Ulfilas](#), the Arian missionary to the Germanic tribes, was dominant among the [Goths](#) and [Lombards](#) (and, significantly for the late Empire, the [Vandals](#)); but it ceased to be the mainstream belief by the 8th century, as the rulers of these Germanic tribes gradually adopted Catholicism, beginning with [Clovis I](#) of the [Franks](#) in 496, then [Reccared I](#) of the [Visigoths](#) in 587 and [Aripert I](#) of the [Lombards](#) in 653. It was crushed through a series of military and political conquests, culminating in religious and political domination of Europe over the next 1,000 years by Trinitarian forces in the Catholic Church. Trinitarianism has remained the dominant doctrine in all major branches of the Eastern and Western Church and later within [Protestantism](#).

“In addition, if any writing composed by

Arius should be found, it should be handed over to the flames, so that not only will the wickedness of his teaching be obliterated, but nothing will be left even to remind anyone of him. And I hereby make a public order, that if someone should be discovered to have hidden a writing composed by Arius, and not to have immediately brought it forward and destroyed it by fire, his penalty shall be death. As soon as he is discovered in this offence, he shall be submitted for capital punishment. ... "

— Edict by Emperor Constantine against the Arians<sup>[11]</sup>

## 2 Beliefs

Virtually all **extant written material** on Arianism is criticism and refutations written by opponents, with most literature written by Arian advocates long having been destroyed by the Trinitarian churches. As such the original teachings of Arius and his followers are difficult to define precisely today.

Arians do not believe in the traditional doctrine of the Trinity, which holds that God encompasses three persons in one being.<sup>[12]</sup> The letter of Arian Auxentius<sup>[13]</sup> regarding the Arian missionary **Ulfilas**, gives the clearest picture of Arian beliefs. Arian **Ulfilas**, who was ordained a bishop by Arian **Eusebius of Nicomedia** and returned to his people to work as a missionary, believed: God, the Father, ("unbegotten" God; Almighty God) always existing and who is the only true God (John 17:3). The Son of God, Jesus Christ, ("only-begotten God" John 1:18;<sup>[14]</sup> Mighty God Isaiah 9:6) begotten before time began (Proverbs 8:22-29; Revelation 3:14; Colossians 1:15) and who is Lord/Master (1 Cor 8:6). The Holy Spirit (the illuminating and sanctifying power, who is neither God nor Lord/Master. **First Corinthians** 8:5-8:6 was cited as **proof text**:

Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth — as in fact there are many gods and many lords/masters — yet for us there is one God (Gk. *theos* – θεός), the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord/Master (*kyrios* – κύριος), Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

—NRSV

The creed of Arian **Ulfilas** (c. 311 – 383), which concludes a letter praising him written by Auxentius,<sup>[13]</sup> distinguishes God the Father ("unbegotten"), who is the only true God from Son of God ("only-begotten"), who is Lord/Master; and the Holy Spirit (the illuminating and sanctifying power), who is neither God nor Lord/Master:

I, **Ulfila**, bishop and confessor, have always so believed, and in this, the one true faith, I make the journey to my Lord; I believe in only one God the Father, the unbegotten and invisible, and in his only-begotten son, our Lord/Master and God, the designer and maker of all creation, having none other like him. Therefore there is one God of all, who is also God of our God; and in one Holy Spirit, the illuminating and sanctifying power, as Christ said after his resurrection to his apostles: "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49) and again "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8); Neither God nor Lord/Master, but the faithful minister of Christ; not equal, but subject and obedient in all things to the Son. And I believe the Son to be subject and obedient in all things to God the Father.<sup>[15]</sup>

The creed of Arian **Ulfila** in Latin:

Ego **Ulfila** episkopus et confessor semper sic credidi et in hac fide sola et uera transitum facio ad dominum meum: unum esse deum patrem solum ingenitum et inuisibilem et in unigenitum filium eius dominum et deum nostrum, opificem et factorem uniuerse creature non habentem similem suum ideo unus est omnium deus pater, qui et dei nostri est deus et unum spiritum sanctum, uirtutem inluminantem et sanctificantem, ut ait Christus post resurrectionem ad apostolos suos: ecce ego mitto promissum patris mei in uobis, uos autem sedete in ciuitate[m] Hierusalem, quoadusque induamini uirtute[m] ab alto; item et: accipietis uirtutem superueniente[m] in uos sancto spiritu-- nec deum nec dominum sed ministrum Cristi fidelem, nec equalem sed subditum et oboedientem in omnibus filio et filium subditum et oboedientem suo in omnibus deo patri.<sup>[16]</sup>

A letter from **Arius** (c. 250–336) to the Arian **Eusebius of Nicomedia** (died 341) succinctly states the core beliefs of the Arians:

Some of them say that the Son is an erucation, others that he is a production, others that he is also unbegotten. These are impieties to which we cannot listen, even though the heretics threaten us with a thousand deaths. But we say and believe and have taught, and do teach, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any way part of the unbegotten; and that he does not derive his subsistence from any

matter; but that by his own will and counsel he has subsisted before time and before ages as perfect as God, only begotten and unchangeable, and that before he was begotten, or created, or purposed, or established, he was not. For he was not unbegotten. We are persecuted, because we say that the Son has a beginning, but that God is without beginning. —Theodoret: Arius's Letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia, translated in Peters' *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe*, p. 41

### 3 First Council of Nicaea and its aftermath

In 321, Arius was denounced by a synod at Alexandria for teaching a heterodox view of the relationship of Jesus to God the Father. Because Arius and his followers had great influence in the schools of Alexandria—counterparts to modern universities or seminaries—their theological views spread, especially in the eastern Mediterranean.

By 325, the controversy had become significant enough that the Emperor Constantine called an assembly of bishops, the First Council of Nicaea, which condemned Arius' doctrine and formulated the original Nicene Creed of 325.<sup>[17]</sup> The Nicene Creed's central term, used to describe the relationship between the Father and the Son, is *Homoousios* (Ancient Greek: ὁμοούσιος), or *Consubstantiality*, meaning “of the same substance” or “of one being”. (The *Athanasian Creed* is less often used but is a more overtly anti-Arian statement on the Trinity.)

The focus of the Council of Nicaea was the nature of the Son of God, and his precise relationship to God the Father. (see Paul of Samosata and the Synods of Antioch). Arius taught that Jesus Christ was divine/holy and was sent to earth for the salvation of mankind<sup>[12]</sup> but that Jesus Christ was not equal to God the Father (infinite, primordial origin) in rank *and* that God the Father and the Son of God were not equal to the Holy Spirit (power of God the Father).<sup>[5]</sup> Under Arianism, Christ was instead not *consubstantial* with God the Father<sup>[18]</sup> since both the Father and the Son under Arius were made of “like” essence or being (see *homoiousia*) but not of the same essence or being (see *homoousia*).<sup>[18]</sup> God the Father is a Deity and is divine *and* the Son of God is not a Deity but divine (I, the LORD, am Deity alone. Isaiah 46:9).<sup>[12]</sup> God the Father sent Jesus to earth for salvation of mankind (John 17:3). *Ousia* is essence or being, in Eastern Christianity, and is the aspect of God that is completely incomprehensible to mankind and human perception. It is all that subsists by itself and which has not its being in another,<sup>[19]</sup> God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit all being uncreated.<sup>[20]</sup> Ac-

cording to the teaching of Arius, the pre-existent Logos and thus the incarnate Jesus Christ was a created being; that only the Son was directly created and begotten by God the Father, before ages, but was of a distinct, though similar, essence or substance from the Creator; his opponents argued that this would make Jesus less than God, and that this was heretical.<sup>[18]</sup> Much of the distinction between the differing factions was over the phrasing that Christ expressed in the New Testament to express submission to God the Father.<sup>[18]</sup> The theological term for this submission is *kenosis*. This Ecumenical council declared that Jesus Christ was a distinct being of God in existence or reality (*hypostasis*), which the Latin fathers translated as *persona*. Jesus was God in essence, being and or nature (*ousia*), which the Latin fathers translated as *substantia*.



*Constantine burning Arian books, illustration from a compendium of canon law, c. 825*

Constantine is believed to have exiled those who refused to accept the Nicene creed—Arius himself, the deacon Euzoios, and the Libyan bishops Theonas of Marmarica and Secundus of Ptolemais—and also the bishops who signed the creed but refused to join in condemnation of Arius, Eusebius of Nicomedia and Theognis of Nicaea. The Emperor also ordered all copies of the *Thalia*, the book in which Arius had expressed his teachings, to be burned. However, there is no evidence that his son and ultimate successor, Constantius II, who was an Arian Christian, was exiled.

Although he was committed to maintaining what the church had defined at Nicaea, Constantine was also bent



on pacifying the situation and eventually became more lenient toward those condemned and exiled at the council. First he allowed Eusebius of Nicomedia, who was a protégé of his sister, and Theognis to return once they had signed an ambiguous statement of faith. The two, and other friends of Arius, worked for Arius' rehabilitation. At the **First Synod of Tyre** in AD 335, they brought accusations against **Athanasius**, bishop of Alexandria, the primary opponent of Arius; after this, Constantine had Athanasius banished, since he considered him an impediment to reconciliation. In the same year, the Synod of Jerusalem under Constantine's direction readmitted **Arius** to communion in AD 336. **Arius**, however, died on the way to this event in Constantinople. Some scholars suggest that Arius may have been poisoned by his opponents.<sup>[21]</sup> Eusebius and Theognis remained in the Emperor's favour, and when Constantine, who had been a **catechumen** much of his adult life, accepted **baptism** on his deathbed, it was from Eusebius of Nicomedia.<sup>[22]</sup>

## 4 Theological debates



*Once the Orthodox Trinitarians succeeded in defeating Arianism, they censored any signs that the perceived heresy left behind. This mosaic in Basilica of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna has had images of the Arian king, Theoderic, and his court removed. However, on some columns their hands remain.*

The Council of Nicaea did not end the controversy,

as many bishops of the Eastern provinces disputed the *homoousios*, the central term of the Nicene creed, as it had been used by **Paul of Samosata**, who had advocated a **monarchianist Christology**. Both the man and his teaching, including the term *homoousios*, had been condemned by the **Synods of Antioch** in 269.

Hence, after Constantine's death in 337, open dispute resumed again. Constantine's son **Constantius II**, who had become Emperor of the eastern part of the Empire, actually encouraged the Arians and set out to reverse the Nicene creed. His advisor in these affairs was Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had already at the Council of Nicea been the head of the Arian party, who also was made bishop of Constantinople.

Constantius used his power to exile bishops adhering to the Nicene creed, especially **St Athanasius of Alexandria**, who fled to Rome. In 355 Constantius became the sole Emperor and extended his pro-Arian policy toward the western provinces, frequently using force to push through his creed, even exiling **Pope Liberius** and installing **Antipope Felix II**.

As debates raged in an attempt to come up with a new formula, three camps evolved among the opponents of the Nicene creed. The first group mainly opposed the Nicene terminology and preferred the term *homoiousios* (alike in substance) to the Nicene *homoousios*, while they rejected Arius and his teaching and accepted the equality and coeternality of the persons of the Trinity. Because of this centrist position, and despite their rejection of Arius, they were called "semi-Arians" by their opponents. The second group also avoided invoking the name of Arius, but in large part followed Arius' teachings and, in another attempted compromise wording, described the Son as being like (*homoios*) the Father. A third group explicitly called upon Arius and described the Son as unlike (*anhomoios*) the Father. Constantius wavered in his support between the first and the second party, while harshly persecuting the third.

The debates among these groups resulted in numerous synods, among them the **Council of Sardica** in 343, the **Council of Sirmium** in 358 and the double **Council of Rimini and Seleucia** in 359, and no fewer than fourteen further creed formulas between 340 and 360, leading the pagan observer **Ammianus Marcellinus** to comment sarcastically: "The highways were covered with galloping bishops." None of these attempts were acceptable to the defenders of Nicene orthodoxy: writing about the latter councils, **Saint Jerome** remarked that the world "awoke with a groan to find itself Arian."

After Constantius' death in 361, his successor **Julian**, a devotee of **Rome's pagan gods**, declared that he would no longer attempt to favor one church faction over another, and allowed all exiled bishops to return; this resulted in further increasing dissension among Christians. The Emperor **Valens**, however, revived Constantius' policy and supported the "Homoian" party, exiling bishops and often

using force. During this persecution many bishops were exiled to the other ends of the Empire, (e.g., *St Hilary of Poitiers* to the Eastern provinces). These contacts and the common plight subsequently led to a rapprochement between the Western supporters of the Nicene creed and the *homoousios* and the Eastern semi-Arians.

## 5 Theodosius and the Council of Constantinople

Main article: *Theodosius I*

It was not until the co-reigns of Gratian and Theodosius that Arianism was effectively wiped out among the ruling class and elite of the Eastern Empire. Theodosius' wife *St Flacilla* was instrumental in his campaign to end Arianism. Valens died in the *Battle of Adrianople* in 378 and was succeeded by *Theodosius I*, who adhered to the Nicene creed. This allowed for settling the dispute.

Two days after Theodosius arrived in Constantinople, 24 November 380, he expelled the *Homoiousian* bishop, *Demophilus of Constantinople*, and surrendered the churches of that city to *Gregory Nazianzus*, the leader of the rather small Nicene community there, an act which provoked rioting. Theodosius had just been baptized, by bishop *Acholius of Thessalonica*, during a severe illness, as was common in the early Christian world. In February he and *Gratian* had published an edict<sup>[23]</sup> that all their subjects should profess the faith of the bishops of Rome and Alexandria (i.e., the Nicene faith), or be handed over for punishment for not doing so.

Although much of the church hierarchy in the East had opposed the Nicene creed in the decades leading up to Theodosius' accession, he managed to achieve unity on the basis of the Nicene creed. In 381, at the *Second Ecumenical Council* in Constantinople, a group of mainly Eastern bishops assembled and accepted the *Nicene Creed of 381*,<sup>[24]</sup> which was supplemented in regard to the Holy Spirit, as well as some other changes: see *Comparison between Creed of 325 and Creed of 381*. This is generally considered the end of the dispute about the Trinity and the end of Arianism among the Roman, non-Germanic peoples.

## 6 Later debates

*Epiphanius of Salamis* labelled the party of *Basil of Ankyra* in 358 "*Semi-Arianism*". This is considered unfair by *Kelly* who states that some members of the group were virtually orthodox from the start but disliked the adjective *homoousios* while others had moved in that direction after the out-and-out Arians had come into the open.<sup>[25]</sup>

## 7 Early medieval Germanic kingdoms

Main articles: *Gothic Christianity* and *Germanic Christianity*

During the time of Arianism's flowering in *Constantinople*, the Gothic convert *Ulfilas* (later the subject of the letter of *Auxentius* cited above) was sent as a missionary to the Gothic barbarians across the *Danube*, a mission favored for political reasons by emperor *Constantius II*. *Ulfilas'* initial success in converting this Germanic people to an Arian form of Christianity was strengthened by later events. When the Germanic peoples entered the *Roman Empire* and founded successor-kingdoms in the western part, most had been Arian Christians for more than a century.



*Ceiling Mosaic of the Arian Baptistry*

The conflict in the 4th century AD had seen Arian and Nicene factions struggling for control of the Church. In contrast, in the Arian German kingdoms established on the wreckage of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century, there were entirely separate Arian and Nicene Churches with parallel hierarchies, each serving different sets of believers. The Germanic elites were Arians, and the majority population was Nicene. Many scholars see the persistence of Germanic Arianism as a strategy that was followed in order to differentiate the Germanic elite from the local inhabitants and their culture and also to maintain the Germanic elite's separate group identity.

Most Germanic tribes were generally tolerant of the Nicene beliefs of their subjects. However, the Vandals tried for several decades to force their Arian beliefs on their North African Nicene subjects, exiling Nicene clergy, dissolving monasteries, and exercising heavy pressure on non-conforming Christians.

By the beginning of the 8th century, these kingdoms had either been conquered by Nicene neighbors (Ostrogoths, Vandals, Burgundians) or their rulers had accepted Nicene Christianity (Visigoths, Lombards).



The Franks and the Anglo-Saxons were unique among the Germanic peoples in that they entered the empire as pagans and converted to Chalcedonian Christianity directly, guided by their kings, Clovis<sup>[26]</sup> and Æthelberht of Kent.

## 8 Remnants in the West, 5th to 7th centuries

However, much of southeastern Europe and central Europe, including many of the Goths and Vandals respectively, had embraced Arianism (the Visigoths converted to Arian Christianity in 376), which led to Arianism being a religious factor in various wars in the Roman Empire.<sup>[27]</sup> In the west, organized Arianism survived in North Africa, in Hispania, and parts of Italy until it was finally suppressed in the 6th and 7th centuries. Grimwald, King of the Lombards (662–671), and his young son and successor Garibald (671), were the last Arian kings in Europe.

## 9 Arianism resurfaces after the Reformation, 16th century

Following the Protestant Reformation from 1517, it did not take long for Arian and other non-trinitarian views to resurface. The first recorded English antitrinitarian was John Assheton who was forced to recant before Thomas Cranmer in 1548. At the Anabaptist Council of Venice 1550, the early Italian instigators of the Radical Reformation committed to the views of Miguel Servet (d.1553), and these were promulgated by Giorgio Biandrata and others into Poland and Transylvania.<sup>[28]</sup> The antitrinitarian wing of the Polish Reformation separated from the Calvinist *ecclesia maior* to form the *ecclesia minor* or Polish Brethren. These were commonly referred to as “Arians” due to their rejection of the Trinity, though in fact the Socinians, as they were later known, went further than Arius to the position of Photinus. The epithet “Arian” was also applied to the early Unitarians such as John Biddle though in denial of the pre-existence of Christ they were again largely Socinians not Arians.<sup>[29]</sup>

In the 18th century the “dominant trend” in Britain, particularly in Latitudinarianism, was towards Arianism, with which the names of Samuel Clarke, Benjamin Hoadly, William Whiston and Isaac Newton are associated.<sup>[30]</sup> To quote the *Encyclopædia Britannica*’s article on Arianism: “In modern times some Unitarians are virtually Arians in that they are unwilling either to reduce Christ to a mere human being or to attribute to him a divine nature identical with that of the Father.”<sup>[31]</sup> However, their doctrines cannot be considered representative of traditional Arian doctrines or vice versa.

A similar view was held by the ancient anti-Nicene

Pneumatomachi (Greek: Πνευματομάχοι, “breath” or “spirit” and “fighters”, combining as “fighters against the spirit”), so called because they opposed the deifying of the Nicene Holy Ghost. However, the Pneumatomachi were adherents of Macedonianism, and though their beliefs were somewhat reminiscent of Arianism,<sup>[32]</sup> they were distinct enough to be distinguishably different.<sup>[32]</sup>

The Iglesia ni Cristo is one of the largest groups that teaches a similar doctrine, though they are really closer to Socinianism, believing the Word in John 1:1 is God’s plan of salvation, not Christ. So Christ did not preexist.

### 9.1 Arianism today

Jehovah’s Witnesses are often referred to as “modern-day Arians” or sometimes “Semi-Arians”,<sup>[33][34]</sup> usually by their opponents.<sup>[35][36][37]</sup> While there are some significant similarities in theology and doctrine, the Witnesses differ from Arians by saying that the Son can fully know the Father (something Arius himself denied), and by their denial of literal personality to the Holy Spirit. Arius considered the Holy Spirit to be a person or a high-ranking angel, which had a beginning as a creature, whereas the Witnesses consider the Holy Spirit to be God’s “active force” or “energy”, which had no beginning, and is not an actual person. The original Arians also generally prayed directly to Jesus, whereas the Witnesses pray to God, through Jesus as a mediator.<sup>[38]</sup>

### 9.2 Adherents

The teachings of the first two ecumenical councils - which entirely reject Arianism - are held by the Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East and all Reformation-founded Protestant churches (Lutheran, Reformed/Presbyterian, and Anglican). Also, nearly all Protestant groups (such as Methodist, Baptist, most Pentecostals) entirely reject the teachings associated with Arianism. Modern groups which currently appear as embracing some of the principles of Arianism include Unitarians, Latter Day Saints (Mormon), the Jehovah’s Witnesses and some sects within Branhamism. Although the origins of their beliefs are not necessarily attributed to the teachings of Arius, many of the core beliefs are entirely similar.<sup>[39]</sup>

The Church of God (7th day) - Salem Conference may be considered to be Arian.

We believe in one true God who is the creator of all. He is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He sent his son to Earth to be a sacrifice for our sins. He is a separate being from his son, Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the power of God and not a separate being with a separate consciousness. We do not believe in

the teaching of the Trinity, in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three parts of a single being who is God. We believe the Father and the Son are separate beings with separate consciousnesses and that the Holy Spirit is not a conscious being but instead the power of God.

— FAQs – Does the Church of God (7th Day) believe in the Trinity?<sup>[40]</sup>

Other groups opposing the Trinity are not necessarily Arian.

- The Iglesia ni Cristo,<sup>[41]</sup> Christadelphians,<sup>[42]</sup> Church of God General Conference<sup>[43]</sup> and other "Biblical Unitarians" are typically Socinian in their Christology, not Arian.
- There are also various Binitarian churches, believing basically that God is two persons, the Father and Son, but the Holy Spirit is not a person. They include the Church of God (Seventh Day) and various offshoots, in particular the former Radio Church of God, founded by Herbert W. Armstrong, renamed the Worldwide Church of God, which after Armstrong's death converted to Trinity, causing many small churches to break off, most still loyal to the teachings of Armstrong, for example Philadelphia Church of God, the Living Church of God, and many others. Other Binitarian churches include the Gospel Assemblies, a group of Pentecostal denominations that believe God adopted the name Jesus, and the Church of Jesus Christ (Bickertonite), an offshoot of Mormonism, which believes God is two personages, not persons. Binitarian churches generally believe that the Father is greater than the Son. So that is a view somewhat similar to Arianism.
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints also rejects Trinitarian doctrine. Joseph Smith taught that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three separate and distinct entities, three omnipotent Gods, with the Father and the Son possessing physical bodies of flesh and bone but the Holy Ghost existing only as a spirit, enabling it to dwell within us. However, Mormon doctrine differs from Arianism in a number of ways, particularly in the doctrines of eternal progression and exaltation.<sup>[44]</sup>

## 10 See also

- Arian controversy
- Arius
- First Council of Nicea
- Christology
- Germanic Christianity

- Ilm al-Kalam
- Non-Trinitarian churches
- Nontrinitarianism
- Subordinationism
- Unitarianism

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## 11.2 Notes

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- [19] The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, SVS Press, 1997. (ISBN 0-913836-31-1) James Clarke & Co Ltd, 1991. (ISBN 0-227-67919-9) V Lossky pg 50–51
- [20] Orthodox Dogmatic Theology: A Concise Exposition Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky pages 57 As quoted by John Damascene:

God is unoriginate, unending, eternal, constant, uncreated, unchanging, unalterable, simple, incomplex, bodiless, invisible, intangible, indescribable, without bounds, inaccessible to the mind, uncontainable, incomprehensible, good, righteous, that Creator of all creatures, the almighty Pantocrator.
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- [23] "Sozomen's Church History VII.4". ccel.org.
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- [27] The inhibiting and paralyzing force of superstitious beliefs penetrated to every department of life, and the most primary and elementary activities of society were influenced. War, for example, was not a simple matter of a test of strength and courage, but supernatural matters had to be taken carefully into consideration. When Clovis said of the Goths in southern Gaul, "I take it hard that these Arians should hold a part of the Gauls; let us go with God's aid and conquer them and bring the land under our dominion", [note: see p. 45 (Book II:37)] he was not speaking in a hypocritical or arrogant manner but in real accordance with the religious sentiment of the time. What he meant was that the Goths, being heretics, were at once enemies of the true God and inferior to the orthodox Franks in their supernatural backing. Considerations of duty, strategy, and self-interest all reinforced one another in Clovis's mind. However, it was not always the orthodox side that won. We hear of a battle fought a few years before Gregory became bishop of Tours between king Sigibert and the Huns, [note: Book IV:29] in which the Huns "by the use of magic arts caused various false appearances to arise before their enemies and overcame them decisively." Medieval Study Guide to Gregory of Tours History of the Franks. —St Gregory of Tours





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- [42] Pearce F. *Jesus: God the Son or Son of God?* CMPA
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## 11.3 Further reading

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## 12 External links

- Documents of the Early Arian Controversy Chronological survey of the sources
- English translations of all extant letters relating to early Arianism
- A map of early sympathizers with Arius
-  William Barry (1913). "Arianism". *Catholic Encyclopedia*.
- Jewish Encyclopedia: Arianism
- Concordia Cyclopedia: Arianism (page 1) (page 2) (page 3)
-  "Arianism". *The American Cyclopædia*. 1879.
- *The Arians of the fourth century* by John Henry “Cardinal” Newman in “btm” format
- Concise Summary of the Arian Controversy

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