



Reception

Question



# The Nicene- Constantinopolitan Creed

A Symbol of Faith

*Image: Oldest extant manuscript of the Nicene Creed, dated to the 5th Century*



Life and  
Ministry of  
Jesus

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν

The word “creed” comes from the Latin credo, translated here as “we believe.” Credo is not simply belief in accurate propositions, but more deeply a sense of relationship or trust—an alternate translation might be “we give our heart,” “we trust,” “we rely upon.” Developed in the fourth century as a means of unifying a divided church, the Nicene Creed has been used by Christians in worship for almost two thousand years, and connects us to our ancient ancestors in the Communion of Saints. The Creed is used in worship not because it comprises a list of doctrinal statements one must affirm in order to be considered a Christian, but rather as a song of praise and confidence in the Holy Trinity: God in three persons who creates, redeems, and sanctifies a holy people.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not  
made, of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly  
human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and  
was buried.  
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his  
kingdom will have no end.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the  
Father,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.



Reception



Question



Timeline JS

110  
BCE

80  
BCE

60  
BCE

40  
BCE

20  
BCE

Life and Ministry...

House Churches

0

10

20

Who are we?

” Who is our G

50

70

90

100

120

0 – 33

# Life and Ministry of Jesus



The Nicene-  
Constantinopolitan  
Creed



House  
Churches

## Who do you say that I am?

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



Reception



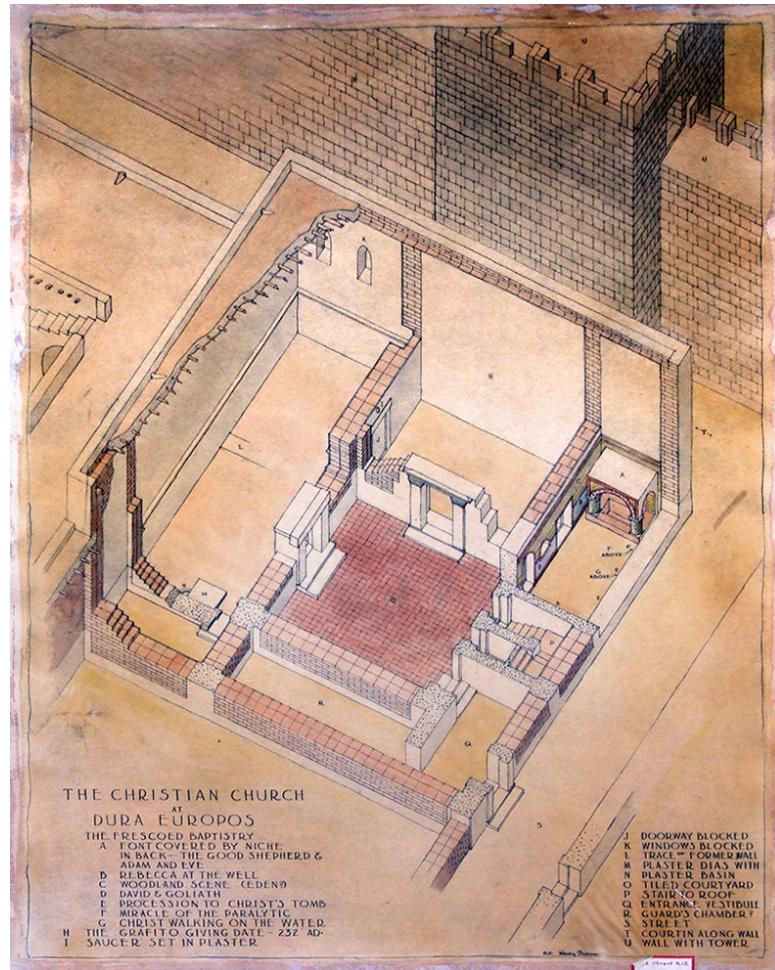
Question



Timeline JS



Life and  
Ministry of  
Jesus



Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν

## House Churches

33 – 180

# House Churches

Christians gathered in homes, listened to traveling preachers like Paul, Barnabas, Timothy, Thekla, Priscilla, and ate a common meal together.

Who are we?





Reception

Life and Ministry...

House Churches



Timeline JS

34 – 100

# Who are we?

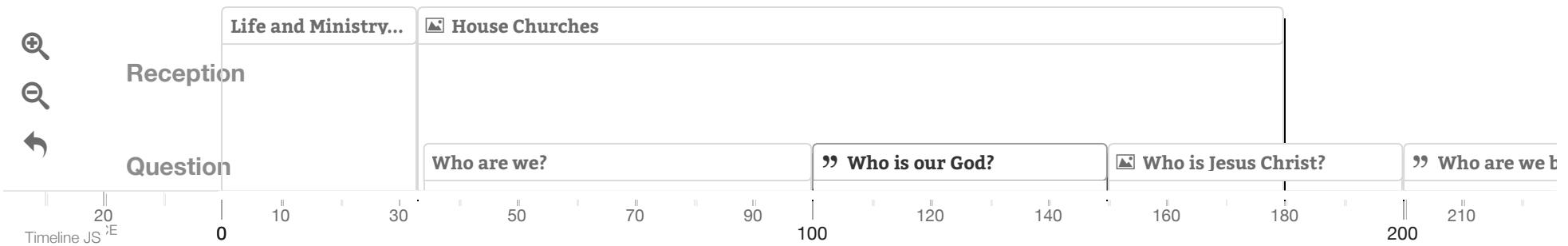
**Acts 15: The Council of Jerusalem**

<sup>1</sup>Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.' <sup>2</sup>And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders. <sup>3</sup>So they were sent on their way by the church, and as they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, they reported the conversion of the Gentiles, and brought great joy to all the believers. <sup>4</sup>When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. <sup>5</sup>But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, 'It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.'

<sup>6</sup>The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter...

House  
ChurchesWho is our  
God?

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιθῶμεν



*We believe in One God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.*

God from ages unto ages

## Who is our God?

1st Ecumenical Council

- **pistis:** We believe; denotes confidence and trust, to give/offer in context of a relationship.
- **ena theon:** One God.
- **poiytyn ... pantwn:** Maker of all things
  - Matter does not pre-exist (contra Plato)
  - Order out of Chaos (Genesis)
  - *ex nihilo:* out of nothing



Who are we?



Who is Jesus Christ?

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



try... House Churches

Reception



Timeline JS



Who is our God?

Jesus the Good Shepherd, Crypt of Lucina (2nd c.)

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν

Receiving Jesus

150 – 200

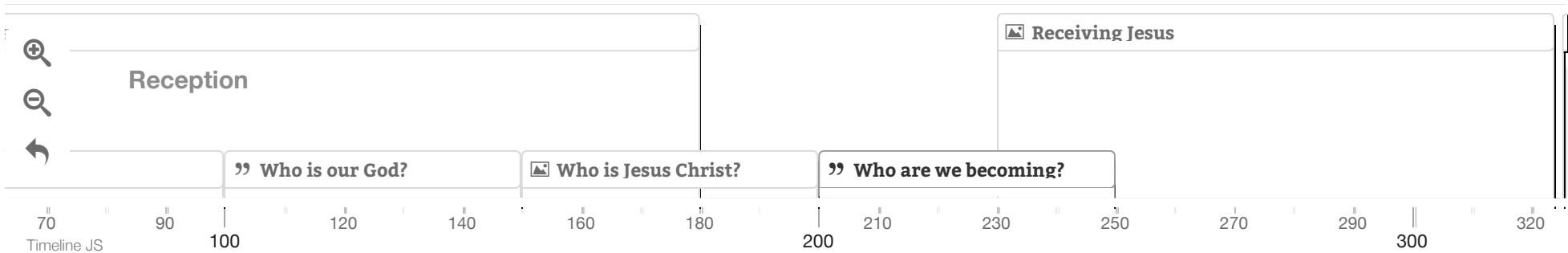
# Who is Jesus Christ?

The Issues:

- **Time:** Is Jesus Christ really and truly God from before time?
- **Creation:** Jesus a creature, or creator? Is creation **worthy** of divinity?
- **Is Jesus Divine?**
  - Does Jesus merely 'appear' human? Did he only appear to suffer and die?
  - Jesus 'from above'.
  - Docetism/Sabellianism/modalistic-monarchianism
- **Is Jesus human?**
  - Was Jesus simply a specially endowed human?
  - Jesus 'from below'.
  - Ebionism/dynamic monarchianism/Adoptionism

Who are we becoming?

What does the experience of God in Jesus



'That which He has not assumed, He has not healed.'

—**Gregory of Nazianzus**: *Epistle 101*

This 'Logic of Salvation':

...instinctively explains all the mysteries of Christology and the incarnate economy by reverting to the fundamentals: that the mission of the Son of God on earth was for no other reason than the same compassion God the Father had for the cosmos."

—John McGuckin



Who is Jesus  
Christ?



Receiving  
Jesus

Experiencing 'salvation'

## Who are we becoming?

**2 Peter 1:4**: Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may ... become participants in the divine nature.

**Irenaeus**, Bishop of Lyons (c. 130–202): God 'became what we are in order to make us what he is himself.' *Against Heresies*, Bk 5., preface.

**Clement of Alexandria** (c. 150–215): 'the Word of God became a human so that you might learn from a human how to become a god.' *Exhortation to the Greeks*, 1

**Athanasius**, Bishop of Alexandria (c. 296–373): 'For the Son of God became human so that we might become God [gods]'. *On the Incarnation*, 54, 3.

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιθῶμεν



Reception

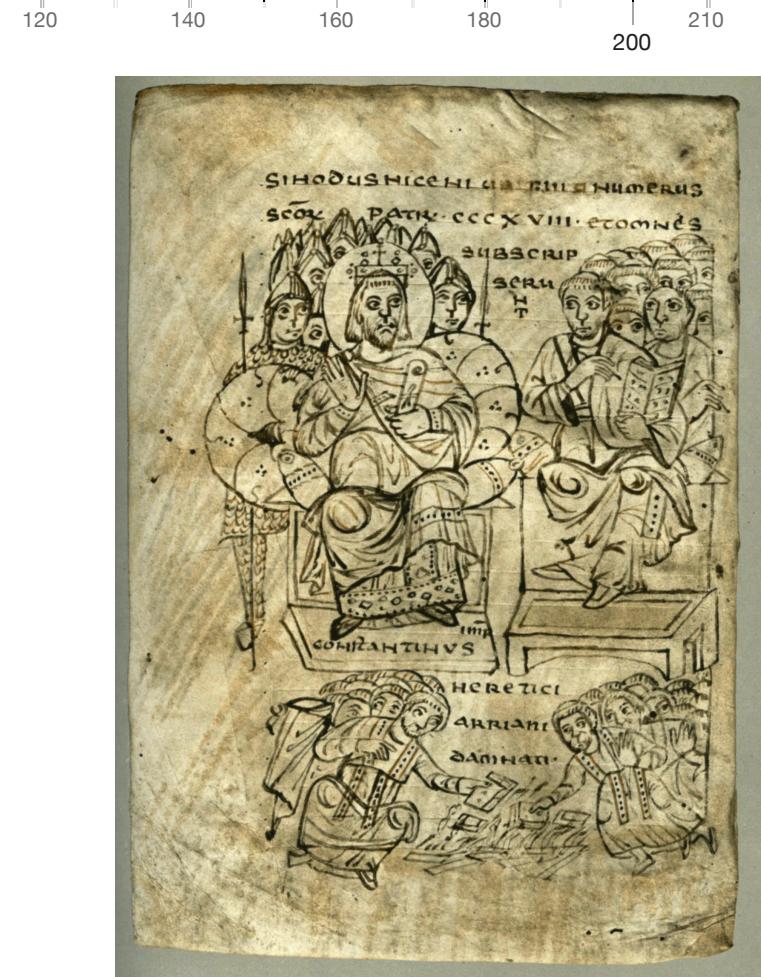


Who is our God?

Who is Jesus Christ?

" Who are we bec

Timeline JS



Who are we becoming?

Receiving Jesus

250 270 290 300

" 1st Counci...

Receiving Nicea

320 340

Time and time again...

# Receiving Jesus

The Players:

- Arius (c. 256–336): a priest of Alexandria: '**There was when he was not.**'
- Alexander, Archbishop of Alexandria: '**There was not when he was not.**'
- Eusebius (d. 341), another bishop, and cousin to the Emperor Constantine.
- Constantine, Emperor, ambivalent peacemaker.

1st Council of  
Nicea

From MS CLXV, Biblioteca Capitolare, Vercelli, a compendium of canon law produced in northern Italy ca. 825.

Constantine I burning Arian books.

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιθῶμεν



Reception

Receiving Jesus

” Who are we becoming?

Timeline JS      210      230      250      270      290      300      320

*And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;*

*who for us, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made human;*

*he suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*And in the Holy Ghost.*

Receiving  
Jesus

” 1st Counc...

Receiving Nicea

Timeline JS      320      340      360      380      400

May 325

# 1st Council of Nicea

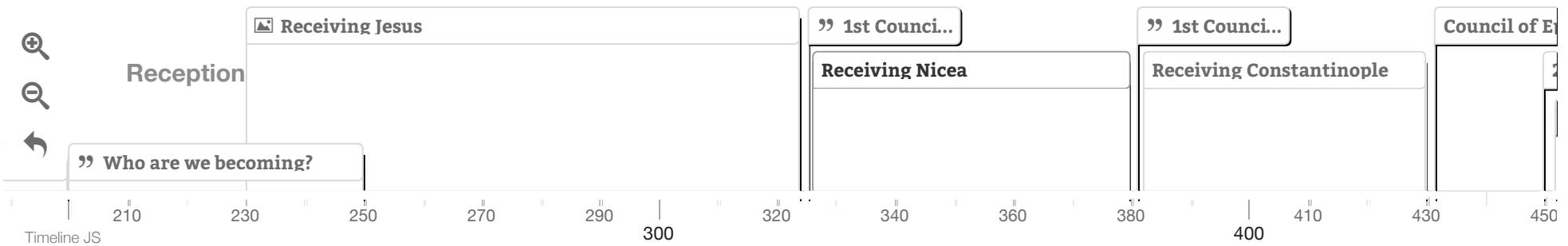
1st Ecumenical Council

- **yennthenta:** Begotten not made, that is, not a created being (contra Arius).
- **homoousios:** One in being, essence.
  - homoousios (same) vs. homoioussios (similar).
  - The only NON-scriptural concept in the Creed.
  - longstanding tradition of worshipping Christ as God and of experiencing that worship as divinizing
- **enanthropisanta:** (participle) humanizing, became human
- **For Our Salvation:** completes our humanity and lead the human race to its ultimate fulfillment

Council of E

Receiving  
Nicea

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



326 – 380

# Receiving Nicea

The Issues:

- Apollinarianism: emphasizes the unity of Jesus the detriment of the divine. Christ had a human body but divine mind. Effectively undercuts any claim that Jesus could freely act.
- Pneumatomachianism/Macedonians: Denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit

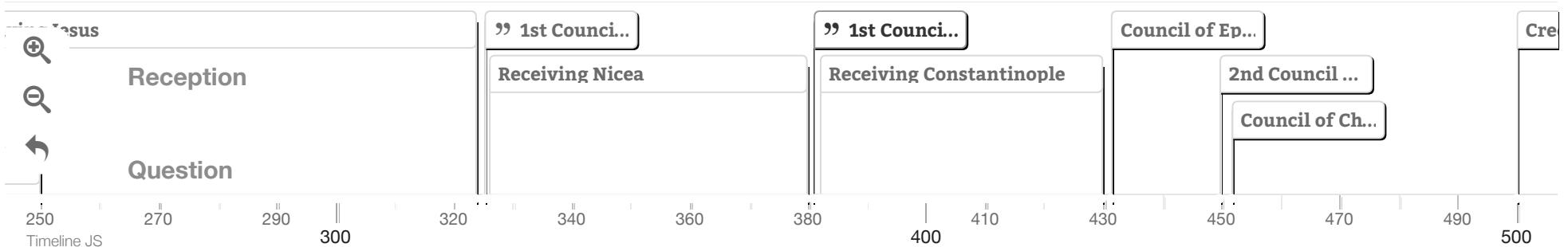
The Players:

- Constantius II, Emperor, Son of Constantine I and an Arian sympathizer.
- Arius and Eusebius, welcomed back by Constantius II.
- Apollinaris, Bishop of Laodicea (d. 390): Arian opponent who went to the other extreme. who so elevated the unity of the person of Jesus that claimed Christ had a human body but divine mind, undercutting any claim that Jesus could freely act.
- Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria (successor of Alexander), exiled.

1st Council of  
Nicea

1st Council of  
Constantinople

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,  
the giver of life, who proceeds from  
the Father,*

*who with the Father and the Son is  
worshipped and glorified,*

*who has spoken through the prophets.*

*We believe in one holy catholic and  
apostolic Church.*

*We acknowledge one baptism for the  
forgiveness of sins.*

*We look for the resurrection of the  
dead, and the life of the world to  
come.*



Receiving  
Nicea



Receiving  
Constantinople

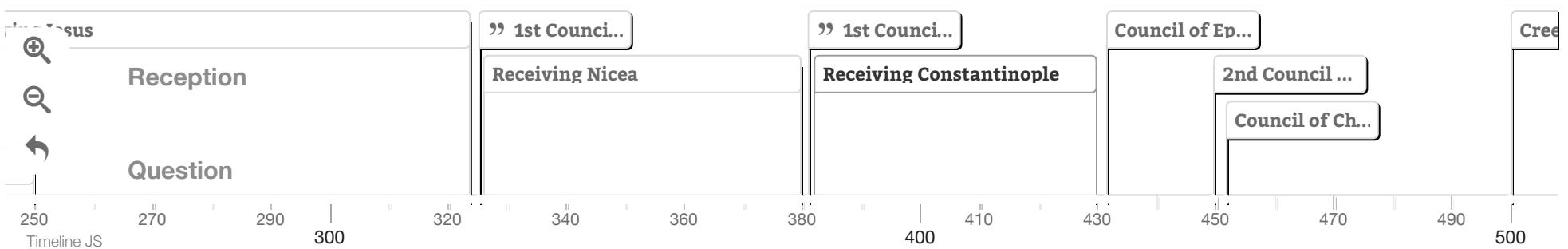
381

# 1st Council of Constantinople

2nd Ecumenical Council

- **Pneuma to Agion:** Proclaims the divinity of the Spirit
- **Proceeds from the Father:** a declaration of direct connection between God the Father and the spirit.
  - The *filioque* ('and the Son'): added in response to a local (Spanish) Arian controversy.
  - Theologically, runs the danger of subordinating the Spirit to the Son as well as the Father.
  - Ecclesiologically, inserted without conciliar consensus.
- **kath olos:** 'according to the whole.'

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



382 – 430

# Receiving Constantinople

The Issues:

- How many natures, wills, substances, persons?
- Is Mary the 'bearer of God' (*Theotokos*) or the 'bearer of Christ' (*Christokos*)?

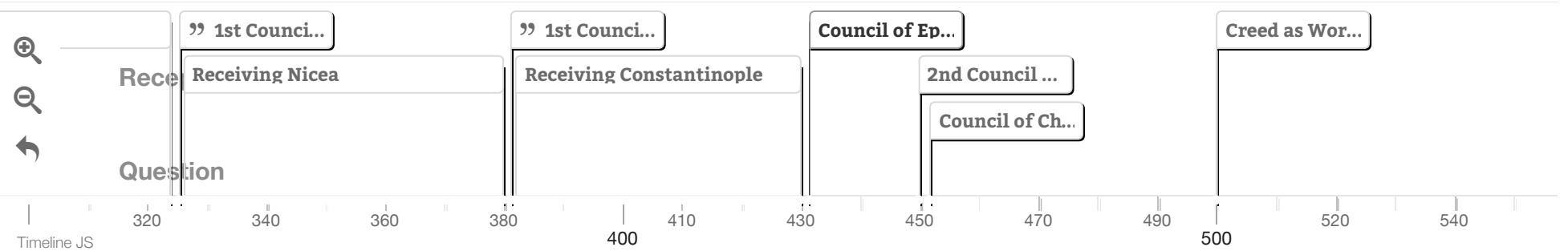
The Players:

- Nestorius (386–450), Patriarch of Constantinople: continued Apollinarianism by referring to Mary as *Christokos*.
- Antiochene School: emphasized distinction of two natures at the expense of articulating unity. They begin with the Jesus of the synoptic gospels.
- Alexandrian School: emphasizes divinity at the expense of either Jesus' human nature/soul (Arius, Apollinaris) or its salvific significance (Athanasius). They begin with the Jesus of the prologue of John, 'The Word was ...'

1st Council of  
Constantinople

Council of  
Ephesus

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



June 431

# Council of Ephesus

*3rd Ecumenical Council*

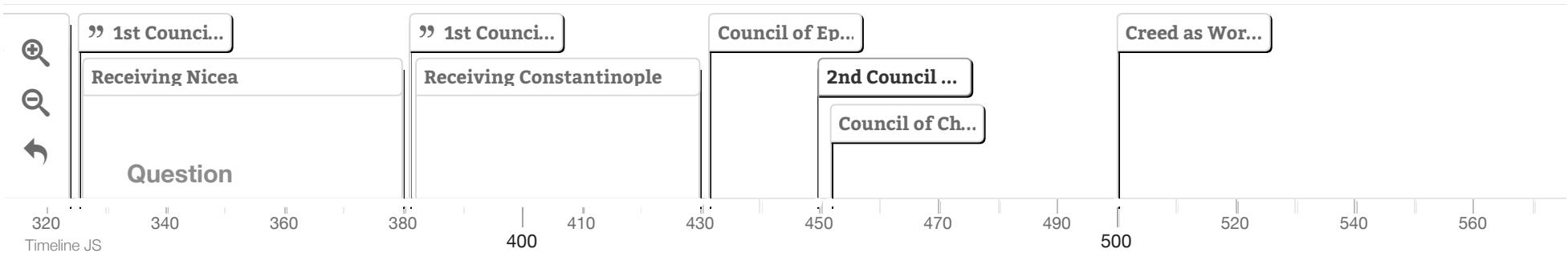
The Players:

- Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople.
- Cyril (c. 376 – 444), Patriarch of Alexandria
- Pope Celestine I, (d. 26 July 432)
- Theodosius II.

<  
Receiving  
Constantinople

2nd Council of  
Ephesus >

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



October 449

## 2nd Council of Ephesus

*The Robber Council of Ephesus*

- Monophysitism: Christ has a single 'nature', either divine, or a synthesis of divine and human.
- Eutyches of Constantinople (c. 380 – c. 456): Opposed Nestorians refusal to refer to Mary as *Theotokos* by asserting that Christ's nature was a fusion of divine and human elements.
- Pope Dioscorus I of Alexandria
- Pope Celestine I, (d. 26 July 432)
- Theodosius II. Seriously.

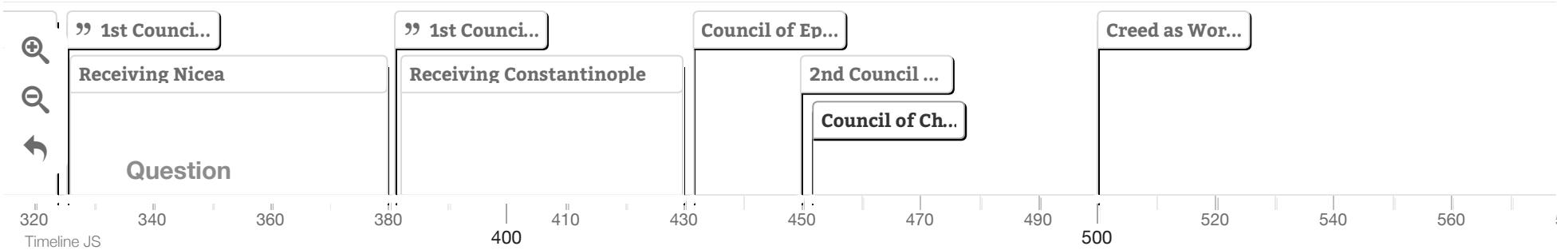


Council of  
Ephesus



Council of  
Chalcedon

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν



October 451

# Council of Chalcedon

*4th Ecumenical Council*

- Explicitly rejects the Second Council of Ephesus
- Monophysitism: Christ has a single 'nature', either divine, or a synthesis of divine and human.
- May rest almost entirely on how the word 'nature' or *physis* is understood.



2nd Council of  
Ephesus



Creed as  
Worship

Christ is the eternal Son of God, made known in two natures without confusion [i.e. mixture], without change, without division, without separation, the difference of the natures being by no means removed because of the union, but the property of each nature being preserved and coalescing in one *prosopon* [person] and one *hypostasis* [subsistence]--not parted or divided into two *prosopa* [persons], but one and the same Son, only-begotten, divine Word, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐνηνθρώπισεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς θεοποιηθῶμεν