Councils, Synods, Writers listed in the CCC Index

Using ccel.org as a source, please provide a short overview of the following Ecumenical Councils: Nicaea I, CONSTANTINOPLE I, EPHESUS, CHALCEDON.

# ****Seven Ecumenical Councils****

Certainly! Let’s delve into the **Seven Ecumenical Councils**, significant gatherings in early Christian history. These councils shaped theological doctrine, church practice, and the unity of the Christian Church. Here’s a brief overview of each:

## [**First Council of Nicaea (325 AD)**](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html) [1](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html):

* + **Purpose**: Convened to address the Arian controversy, particularly the nature of Christ in relation to God the Father.
  + **Key Outcome**: The Nicene Creed was formulated, affirming Christ’s divinity and consubstantiality with the Father.
  + **Significance**: Established foundational Christological doctrine.

## [**First Council of Constantinople (381 AD)**](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html) [1](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html):

* + **Purpose**: Addressed the Arian heresy and further clarified the nature of the Holy Spirit.
  + **Key Outcome**: The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (Nicene Creed) was reaffirmed, emphasizing the Holy Spirit’s role.
  + **Significance**: Strengthened the Trinitarian understanding.

## [**Council of Ephesus (431 AD)**](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html) [1](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html):

* + **Purpose**: Dealt with the Nestorian controversy, which questioned the unity of Christ’s divine and human natures.
  + **Key Outcome**: Affirmed the title “Theotokos” (Mother of God) for Mary, emphasizing Christ’s unity.
  + **Significance**: Clarified Christology and upheld Mary’s role.

## [**Council of Chalcedon (451 AD)**](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html) [1](https://ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.html):

* + **Purpose**: Addressed the Monophysite controversy, focusing on Christ’s nature.
  + **Key Outcome**: Affirmed the “two natures” (divine and human) in Christ without confusion or separation.
  + **Significance**: Established the Chalcedonian Definition.

These councils played a crucial role in shaping Christian theology and remain relevant even today. Their decisions continue to guide the faith of millions worldwide.

## ****Second Council of Constantinople****

Certainly! The **Second Council of Constantinople**, also known as the **Fifth Ecumenical Council**, took place from **May 5 to June 2, 553 AD**. Here are the key points about this significant council:

1. **Purpose and Convocation**:
   * **Emperor Justinian I** convened the council in **Constantinople**.
   * The council aimed to address theological controversies and render judgments on specific issues.
2. **Participants**:
   * **168 bishops** assembled in the grand hall of **Hagia Sophia** for the council.
3. **Topics and Decisions**:
   * The council rejected **Nestorianism**, emphasizing the **unity of Christ’s person** in both divine and human natures.
   * It also addressed the teachings of **Origen and Evagrius**.
   * The council issued **14 canons** related to **Christology** and against the **Three Chapters**.
   * Additionally, **15 canons** condemned specific aspects of Origenism.
4. **Recognition**:
   * The Second Council of Constantinople is recognized by both the **Eastern Orthodox Church** and the **Catholic Church**.
   * [It is also accepted by the **Old Catholics** and some other Christian denominations, although Protestant opinions vary1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Council_of_Constantinople)[2](https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/constantinople-ii-council)[3](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Second_Council_of_Constantinople)[4](https://amazingbibletimeline.com/blog/ecumenical-council-of-constantinople/)[5](https://www.britannica.com/event/Second-Council-of-Constantinople-553).

In summary, this council played a crucial role in shaping early Christian theology and addressing doctrinal disputes. Its decisions continue to influence Christian thought and practice.

## ****Third Council of Constantinople****

The **Third Council of Constantinople**, also known as the **Sixth Ecumenical Council**, took place in **Constantinople** from **680 to 681 AD**. Here are the key points about this significant council:

1. **Purpose and Context**:
   * The council aimed to address the **Monothelite controversy**.
   * Monothelitism was a heretical belief that Christ had only one will (a divine will), denying His full humanity.
2. **Participants**:
   * **174 bishops** attended the council, representing both the **Eastern** and **Western** churches.
3. **Decisions and Canons**:
   * The council affirmed the **dyothelite** position, asserting that Christ had **two wills** (divine and human) without division or confusion.
   * It condemned Monothelitism and the teachings of **Sergius I**, **Honorius I**, and **Pyrrhus**.
   * The council issued **27 canons**, addressing various theological and disciplinary matters.
4. **Legacy and Recognition**:
   * The Third Council of Constantinople is recognized by the **Eastern Orthodox Church**, the **Catholic Church**, and some other Christian denominations.
   * Its decisions contributed to the development of **Christological** and **ecumenical** theology.

In summary, this council played a crucial role in resolving the Monothelite controversy and reaffirming the orthodox understanding of Christ’s nature and wills. Its impact reverberates through Christian history and doctrine.

## ****Second Council of Nicaea****

The **Second Council of Nicaea**, also known as the **Seventh Ecumenical Council**, convened in **787 AD** in **Nicaea** (present-day İznik, Turkey). Here are the key points about this significant council:

1. **Purpose and Context**:
   * The council aimed to resolve the **Iconoclastic Controversy**.
   * This controversy had its roots in **726 AD**, when **Byzantine Emperor Leo III** issued a decree against the worship of **icons** (religious images of Christ and the saints).
2. **Background**:
   * The veneration of icons had been banned by **Emperor Constantine V** and supported by the **Council of Hieria** in **754 AD**, which controversially labeled itself as the **seventh ecumenical council**.
   * However, the Second Council of Nicaea, held only **33 years later**, overturned the decisions of the Council of Hieria.
   * [Both **Catholic** and **Orthodox** churches reject the Council of Hieria, as none of the **five major patriarchs** were represented there1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Council_of_Nicaea)[2](https://www.britannica.com/event/Second-Council-of-Nicaea-787).
3. **Decisions and Restoration**:
   * The Second Council of Nicaea aimed to **restore the use and veneration of icons** that had been suppressed by imperial edict during the reign of **Leo III**.
   * The council affirmed the importance of **holy images** in Christian worship and sought to end the iconoclastic policies.
   * It recognized the value of icons in conveying spiritual truths and connecting believers to the divine.
4. **Recognition**:
   * The Second Council of Nicaea is recognized as the **last of the first seven ecumenical councils** by the **Eastern Orthodox Church**, the **Catholic Church**, and other Christian denominations.
   * While **Protestant opinions** on it vary, its impact on Christian theology and practice remains significant.

In summary, this council played a crucial role in restoring the veneration of icons and affirming their place in Christian worship, bridging the gap between the material and the spiritual in religious devotion.