

In some of my more important papers in christology, I have distinguished between more "mythological" and more "legendary" ways of expressing the meaning of Jesus for us. I've also taken the more mythological way to include both "adoptionist" and "incarnationist" christologies; and I've argued that the more legendary way is dependent upon some form of the more mythological way and is inadequate apart from it, since all that the legendary way by itself can possibly express is that Jesus was a human being in principle like every other, even if in fact indefinitely unlike all others, because he was perfectly obedient to God, unreservedly open to God, and so on.

All of this still seems to me to be right—and illuminating. Of particular importance, however, is recognizing that revisionary christologies are typically more or less clear-cut instances of following the legendary way independently of the mythological way, even as classical christologies are comparably clear-cut instances of following the mythological way, either in its adoptionist or its incarnationist form or in the compromise form eventually worked out in the Chalcedonian definition.

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