

Short Study Paper 32

Docetism:

Docetism: The name comes from the Greek word *dokesis*, meaning "to seem." Docetism taught that Christ was not a human being in the fallen Adamic nature. He did not have a real, actual, fallen, sinful human body. The Docetists taught that Christ did not take on the sinful and fallen flesh of Adam from Mary. Christ came in the likeness of men, even in the likeness of sinful flesh, but not in sinful flesh. This is Biblical.

Christ seemed to be no different from any other man in outward appearances. The issue here is not the form of Christ as a man, or whether or not Mary fashioned Him as a man, but did Christ take on fallen, sinful flesh and substance from Mary? That is the issue in Docetism. The Imperialists distorted this early Christology and tried to make it appear that the Docetists taught that Christ was not really a man and did not really have human flesh.

Of course, modern historians and theologians, taking their clues from early Imperialists, continue to misrepresent the issues and wrongly present what the early Docetists actually did teach. However, I am certain there were radical and extreme views among them as has always been the case dealing with controversial subjects.

The Docetistic controversy was over the issue of Christ's taken on the fallen and sinful flesh of Adam.