







AN EXACT EXPOSITION OF THE ORTHODOX  
FAITH





JOHN OF DAMASCUS

AN EXACT  
EXPOSITION OF THE  
ORTHODOX FAITH

*Translated from the Greek by S. D. F. Salmond*

*From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II, Vol. 9,  
edited by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D.*

*First Edition by the*

HOLY NATIVITY PRESS

GATINEAU, QUEBEC

2026

THE HOLY NATIVITY COMPANION

*Receive a daily word from the Church Fathers,  
curated from annotated editions like this one.*



[holynativitypress.com](http://holynativitypress.com)

First Edition by the Holy Nativity Press, 2026.

The text of *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* is translated by S.  
D. F. Salmond, from *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series II*,  
Vol. 9, ed. Philip Schaff (1898), now in the public domain.

Subject and scripture indices and series notes copyright © 2026 by the  
Holy Nativity Press, Gatineau, Quebec. All rights reserved.

Scripture references follow the King James Version; Septuagintal  
references follow Brenton's English Septuagint.

For bulk orders, please contact  
[contact@holynativitypress.com](mailto:contact@holynativitypress.com)

## ABOUT THIS SERIES

The *Holy Nativity Patristic Library* presents the foundational texts of the early Christian Fathers in carefully typeset pocket editions. Each volume is drawn from the public-domain English translations of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* and the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* – the thirty-eight-volume collection edited by Philip Schaff and his collaborators between 1886 and 1900, which remains the most comprehensive English-language gathering of the patristic writings ever assembled.

We have undertaken to issue these works one at a time, as portable single-author editions, so that they may travel where the original folio volumes cannot – in a coat pocket, on a long flight, beside a hospital bed. Each volume preserves the Schaff translation and the translator's introduction. The foot-

note apparatus is retained where it serves the text; we have set aside those notes that pertain only to the nineteenth-century volume context, and any commentary at variance with the Orthodox confession of the Fathers themselves. We add a subject index and a scripture index for the text in hand.

The texts are typeset in IM Fell English, a face cut by John Fell in seventeenth-century Oxford and freely available again through the work of Igino Marini. The Greek is set in Philokalia, designed for the Athonite tradition.

HOLY NATIVITY PRESS

*Gatineau, Quebec*

## CONTENTS

<i>About This Series</i>	vii
--------------------------	-----

### AN EXACT EXPOSITION OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH

<i>Note</i>	3
<i>Prologue</i>	5
<i>An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith</i>	15
Book I	15
Ch. I. That the Deity is incomprehensible, and that we ought not to pry into and meddle with the things which have not been delivered to us by the holy Prophets, and Apostles, and Evangelists	15

Ch. II. Concerning things utterable and things unutterable, and things knowable and thing unknowable	17
Ch. III. Proof that there is a God	20
Ch. IV. Concerning the nature of Deity: that it is incomprehensible	24
Ch. V. Proof that God is one and not many	29
Ch. VI. Concerning the Word and the Son of God: a reasoned proof	31
Ch. VII. Concerning the Holy Spirit, a reasoned proof	33
Ch. VIII. Concerning the Holy Trinity	37
Ch. IX. Concerning what is affirmed about God	64
Ch. X. Concerning divine union and separation	67
Ch. XI. Concerning what is affirmed about God as though He had body	68
Ch. XII. Concerning the Same	71
Ch. XIII. Concerning the place of God: and that the Deity alone is uncircumscribed	78
Ch. XIV. The properties of the divine nature	86
Book II	89
Ch. I. Concerning æon or age	89

Ch. II. Concerning the creation	92
Ch. III. Concerning angels	92
Ch. IV. Concerning the devil and demons	99
Ch. V. Concerning the visible creation	102
Ch. VI. Concerning the Heaven	102
Ch. VII. Concerning light, fire, the lumina- ries, sun, moon and stars	110
Ch. VIII. Concerning air and winds	123
Ch. IX. Concerning the waters	126
Ch. X. Concerning earth and its products	132
Ch. XI. Concerning Paradise	136
Ch. XII. Concerning Man	143
Ch. XIII. Concerning Pleasures	153
Ch. XIV. Concerning Pain	155
Ch. XV. Concerning Fear	156
Ch. XVI. Concerning Anger	156
Ch. XVII. Concerning Imagination	158
Ch. XVIII. Concerning Sensation	159
Ch. XIX. Concerning Thought	163
Ch. XX. Concerning Memory	163
Ch. XXI. Concerning Conception and Articulation	165
Ch. XXII. Concerning Passion and Energy	166
Ch. XXIII. Concerning Energy	176
Ch. XXIV. Concerning what is Voluntary and what is Involuntary	178

Ch. XXV. Concerning what is in our own power, that is, concerning Free-will	182
Ch. XXVI. Concerning Events	185
Ch. XXVII. Concerning the reason of our endowment with Free-will	186
Ch. XXVIII. Concerning what is not in our hands	188
Ch. XXIX. Concerning Providence	189
Ch. XXX. Concerning Prescience and Predestination	196
 Book III	 203
Ch. I. Concerning the Divine Œconomy and God's care over us, and con- cerning our salvation	203
Ch. II. Concerning the manner in which the Word was conceived, and con- cerning His divine incarnation	207
Ch. III. Concerning Christ's two natures, in opposition to those who hold that He has only one	210
Ch. IV. Concerning the manner of the Mutual Communication	218
Ch. V. Concerning the number of the Na- tures	221

Ch. VI. That in one of its subsistences the divine nature is united in its entirety to the human nature, in its entirety and not only part to part	224
Ch. VII. Concerning the one compound subsistence of God the Word	230
Ch. VIII. In reply to those who ask whether the natures of the Lord are brought under a continuous or a discontinuous quantity	235
Ch. IX. In reply to the question whether there is Nature that has no Subsistence	239
Ch. X. Concerning the Trisagium (“the Thrice Holy”)	240
Ch. XI. Concerning the Nature as viewed in Species and in Individual, and concerning the difference between Union and Incarnation: and how this is to be understood, “The one Nature of God the Word Incarnate.”	245
Ch. XII. That the holy Virgin is the Mother of God: an argument di- rected against the Nestorians	250
Ch. XIII. Concerning the properties of the two Natures	256
Ch. XIV. Concerning the volitions and free-will of our Lord Jesus Christ	256
Ch. XV. Concerning the energies in our Lord Jesus Christ	271

Ch. XVI. In reply to those who say “If man has two natures and two energies, Christ must be held to have three natures and as many energies.”	288
Ch. XVII. Concerning the deification of the nature of our Lord’s flesh and of His will	292
Ch. XVIII. Further concerning volitions and free-wills: minds, too, and knowledges and wisdoms	295
Ch. XIX. Concerning the theandric energy	300
Ch. XX. Concerning the natural and innocent passions	304
Ch. XXI. Concerning ignorance and servitude	306
Ch. XXII. Concerning His growth	308
Ch. XXIII. Concerning His Fear	310
Ch. XXIV. Concerning our Lord’s Praying	312
Ch. XXV. Concerning the Appropriation	315
Ch. XXVI. Concerning the Passion of our Lord’s body, and the Impassibility of His divinity	316
Ch. XXVII. Concerning the fact that the divinity of the Word remained inseparable from the soul and the body, even at our Lord’s death, and that His subsistence continued one	318

Ch. XXVIII. Concerning Corruption and Destruction	320
Ch. XXIX. Concerning the Descent to Hades	322
Book IV	325
Ch. I. Concerning what followed the Res- urrection	325
Ch. II. Concerning the sitting at the right hand of the Father	326
Ch. III. In reply to those who say "If Christ has two natures, either ye do service to the creature in wor- shipping created nature, or ye say that there is one nature to be wor- shipped, and another not to be wor- shipped."	327
Ch. IV. Why it was the Son of God, and not the Father or the Spirit, that be- came man: and what having become man He achieved	329
Ch. V. In reply to those who ask if Christ's subsistence is create or uncreate	333
Ch. VI. Concerning the question, when Christ was called	334
Ch. VII. In answer to those who enquire whether the holy Mother of God bore two natures, and whether two natures hung upon the Cross	336

Ch. VIII. How the Only-begotten Son of God is called first-born	339
Ch. IX. Concerning Faith and Baptism	340
Ch. X. Concerning Faith	349
Ch. XI. Concerning the Cross and here further concerning Faith	350
Ch. XII. Concerning Worship towards the East	356
Ch. XIII. Concerning the holy and im- maculate Mysteries of the Lord	359
Ch. XIV. Concerning our Lord's ge- nealogy and concerning the holy Mother of God	372
Ch. XV. Concerning the honour due to the Saints and their remains	380
Ch. XVI. Concerning Images	387
Ch. XVII. Concerning Scripture	391
Ch. XVIII. Regarding the things said concerning Christ	396
Ch. XIX. That God is not the cause of evils	409
Ch. XX. That there are not two Kingdoms	413
Ch. XXI. The purpose for which God in His foreknowledge created persons who would sin and not repent	416
Ch. XXII. Concerning the law of God and the law of sin	417