

The Hypostatic Union and the Law of Non-Contradiction: A Modal-Logical Audit

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Abstract

Thesis: Chalcedonian Christology does not entail a contradiction merely by affirming that one person is fully divine and fully human. The contradiction appears only when that conciliar nucleus is conjoined with further claims about essential divine attributes, complete human cognition, genuine temptation, unqualified personal predication, and a single unrestricted modality. This paper isolates those additional claims and tests two resulting packages in normal classical modal logic. The epistemic package combines the Son's essential divinity, the necessary inclusion of omniscience in divinity, and the premise that a completely human cognitive life leaves open a possible human state of non-omniscience. The volitional package combines divine impeccability with an agential reading of temptation on which yielding is genuinely possible.

Both derivations are valid, but neither establishes that Chalcedon alone is inconsistent. Their soundness turns on explicit bridge premises. The paper therefore examines the strongest objections, adds an actuality variant motivated by Mark 13:32 and Luke 2:52, and evaluates six families of response: reduplicative predication, two-minds accounts, kenotic theories, compositional models, bi-modal semantics, and dialetheic Christology. Several strategies yield classically consistent interpretations; some may count as clarifications of conciliar predication rather than revisions of the doctrine. The audit's conclusion is diagnostic: any adequate account must state how nature-level properties bear on the one person, which modality governs the relevant possibility claims, and which account of complete humanity and temptation it adopts. The unqualified extended package is not jointly satisfiable, but the Hypostatic Union is not thereby shown to be incoherent without qualification.

Keywords: Incarnation, Hypostatic Union, Chalcedon, modal logic, omniscience, impeccability, temptation, non-contradiction

Introduction: The Chalcedonian Assertion

The Definition of Chalcedon presents Jesus Christ as one and the same Son, complete in divinity and complete in humanity, acknowledged in two natures “without confusion, without change, without division, without separation” (Tanner, 1990, vol. 1, pp. 83–87). The formula is intentionally restrictive. It excludes the fusion of the natures, the conversion of one nature into the other, and the division of Christ into two personal subjects. It also states that the distinguishing characteristics of each nature are preserved. The doctrine therefore requires an account in which genuine divine and human properties are retained while one person remains the subject of the union.

Let c designate the person of Christ, D the property of being fully divine, and H the property of being fully human. The minimal claim examined in this paper is:

$$D(c) \wedge H(c).$$

No contradiction follows from this conjunction alone. Different properties need not be contraries, and contrary-looking predicates need not be predicated at the same time, in the same respect, or through the same semantic relation. The difficulty arises only if the

properties associated with *D* and *H* impose incompatible modal profiles on the same subject under one reading. Analytic defenders have long treated this as the “fundamental problem” of Christology and have proposed multiple consistency strategies (Beall & Cotnoir, 2022; Morris, 1986; Pawl, 2015, 2016, 2020). A serious critique must therefore do more than place an exalted divine predicate beside a limiting human predicate. It must identify every bridge from nature to person and distinguish an inconsistency in an extended package from an inconsistency in Chalcedon itself.

This paper focuses on two test cases. The first is epistemic: if the Son is essentially divine, divinity necessarily includes omniscience, and complete human cognition requires a possible human state of non-omniscience, then one rigidly designated subject receives contradictory modal statuses. The second is volitional: if divinity necessarily excludes sin while genuine temptation requires the possibility of yielding, the same problem recurs. Omniscience and impeccability are not chosen because they exhaust the difficulties of Incarnation. They are chosen because mental and agential predicates expose the bearer question more sharply than predicates that can readily be distributed across spatial parts.

The argument proceeds in five stages. First, it separates the conciliar nucleus from the additional theses required by the proofs and specifies the modal semantics. Second, it presents the epistemic and volitional derivations, including a textually motivated actuality variant. Third, it addresses direct objections to the premises and inferences. Fourth, it evaluates leading reconciliation models by asking which premise or semantic assumption each model denies, qualifies, or reinterprets. Finally, it states what the derivations establish and what they leave open. The aim is not to make disagreement impossible. It is to make the logical location and theoretical implications of each disagreement explicit.

Doctrinal and Logical Framework

Minimal Chalcedonian Commitments

Conciliar Christology is richer than the single formula $D(c) \wedge H(c)$. For present purposes, however, its relevant commitments can be stated minimally:

1. **Numerical unity:** there is one personal subject, *c*, not two persons coordinated in action.
2. **Natural completeness:** the divine nature is not diminished and the human nature is not merely apparent or partial.
3. **Natural distinction:** divinity and humanity are not fused into a third kind.
4. **Property preservation:** the characteristic properties of each nature are preserved in the union.

These constraints generate the dialectical pressure, but not yet a contradiction. If the predicates are distributed between two personal subjects, numerical unity is threatened. If one nature lacks what is required for completeness, natural completeness is threatened. If

the natures are collapsed into a hybrid, natural distinction is threatened. Analytic defenders such as Pawl (2015, 2016) accordingly devote considerable attention to the meanings of “person,” “nature,” “same way,” and “incompatibility.” That strategy is not an ad hoc escape from Chalcedon: the definition itself combines personal unity, natural distinction, and preservation of natural characteristics. The formal question is how those clauses jointly determine the truth conditions of personal predications.

Conciliar Nucleus and Extended Package

The paper distinguishes three levels of commitment. The *conciliar nucleus* includes one person, two complete and distinct natures, and the preservation of their characteristic properties. A *classical extension* adds theses such as the Son’s essential divinity, divinity’s necessary inclusion of omniscience and impeccability, and a substantive account of Christ’s human knowledge and temptation. A *semantic implementation* determines whether predicates transfer unqualifiedly to the person, are indexed to a nature or cognitive range, and employ one or more modal operators. Pawl explicitly classifies impeccability and maximally comprehensive human knowledge as extensions of conciliar Christology rather than clauses stated by the early councils (Pawl, 2019, introduction and chs. 6–8).

The core inconsistency claim therefore targets the following extended, unqualified package:

1. the one person c is completely divine and completely human;
2. c is essentially divine;
3. divinity necessarily includes omniscience and excludes sin;
4. complete humanity requires a possible human state of non-omniscience;
5. genuine temptation is agential and therefore permits yielding;
6. the predicates apply to c at the same time and in the same respect under one unrestricted metaphysical modality.

The formal derivations show that this package is not jointly satisfiable. Whether an orthodox account must endorse every member is the substantive dispute.

Nature, Person, and the Bearer of Properties

A central ambiguity concerns what a nature is. An *abstract nature* may be understood as a property or structured complex of properties. A *concrete nature* may be understood as an individual constituent: in the human case, something like a body-soul composite or a complete human organism. The choice affects how properties pass from a nature to the person.

The present argument does not assume that the divine and human natures are identical. Nor does it infer that, because $D \neq H$, the subjects of those natures must be distinct. Leibniz’s

Law forbids identifying objects with different properties; it does not forbid one object from possessing different compatible properties. The relevant issue is instead whether mental and agential predicates terminate in the person.

Consider knowledge. A nature, if understood abstractly, does not literally entertain propositions. If understood concretely as a cognitive constituent, it may support a range of consciousness. Yet ordinary theological claims are personal: “Christ knows,” “Christ wills,” “Christ suffers,” and “Christ is tempted.” A defender therefore needs a transfer principle connecting nature-indexed facts to facts about c . Three broad possibilities are available:

1. **Unqualified transfer:** if the divine nature knows q , then c knows q ; if the human nature does not know q , then c does not know q .
2. **Selective transfer:** some nature-level predicates transfer to c , while their apparent contraries do not.
3. **Indexed predication:** the fundamental claims are not $K(c, q)$ and $\neg K(c, q)$ but $K_D(c, q)$ and $\neg K_H(c, q)$.

The first produces the sharpest contradiction. The second requires a principled rule of transfer. The third may be classically consistent. Because Chalcedon already distinguishes the natures and their characteristics, indexed predication can be defended as a clarification rather than a revision. Much of the later analysis asks whether a proposed index explains ordinary unqualified claims about Christ or merely replaces them.

Logical Vocabulary and Semantic Assumptions

The background logic is a two-sorted classical modal language: variables $x, y, \dots$ range over persons, while $q, r, \dots$ range over propositions. The constant c rigidly designates the same personal subject across the relevant possibilities. The predicates are evaluated at a fixed time during the incarnate life unless a time is displayed; temporal parameters are otherwise suppressed. A contradiction requires the same bearer, predicate content, time, and respect.

The operators $\Box$ and $\Diamond$ initially express one unrestricted metaphysical modality, with:

$$\Box\varphi \leftrightarrow \neg\Diamond\neg\varphi.$$

The core proofs require only normal modal logic K and this standard duality; they do not use reflexivity, S4, S5, a Barcan formula, or a controversial principle of modal collapse. The later actuality variant uses axiom T, $\Box\varphi \rightarrow \varphi$. Anyone who adopts nature-relative modalities or denies rigid cross-world reference rejects a stated semantic assumption rather than a hidden inference (Plantinga, 1974).

The epistemic predicates are:

$$\begin{aligned} O(x) &:= \forall q (\text{True}(q) \rightarrow K(x, q)), \\ \neg O(x) &\Leftarrow \exists q (\text{True}(q) \wedge \neg K(x, q)). \end{aligned}$$

Knowledge is treated as factive, and $O(x)$ means that x knows every proposition true at the point of evaluation. The displayed right-to-left implication is sufficient for the arguments; no controversial theory of propositions or complete definition of cognitive finitude is required. The analysis does not assume that every human is ignorant of the same truth or ignorant throughout every stage of life.

The volitional predicates are $S(x)$ for “ x sins” and $T(x)$ for “ x is genuinely tempted to sin.” The controversial bridge principle is:

$$T(x) \rightarrow \Diamond S(x).$$

The word *genuinely* does not settle the issue by definition. A defender may use “temptation” for external testing or experienced pressure while denying any metaphysical possibility of yielding. That use is coherent. The bridge applies only to an agential reading on which the prohibited action is genuinely available.

Burden of Proof and Criteria for a Successful Reply

The critic bears the burden of showing that the predicates are incompatible under a defensible reading. Because the formal validity is straightforward, the principal burden concerns soundness and doctrinal entailment. A successful classical reply should do four things:

1. provide a consistent interpretation or model;
2. preserve one personal subject;
3. preserve complete divinity and complete humanity;
4. explain the truth conditions of unqualified claims about what Christ knows, can do, and undergoes.

Merely adding the phrases “according to the divine nature” and “according to the human nature” is not yet a complete semantic account. The reply should specify whether the resulting predicates differ in sense, modality, bearer, cognitive access, time, or context-sensitive truth conditions. Once specified, the proposal can be tested for consistency and fidelity to its intended doctrine. A formal consistency model establishes possibility relative to its assumptions; it does not by itself establish theological truth.

The Epistemic Argument

The Divine Premise

Classical perfect-being theology commonly treats omniscience as essential rather than accidental to divinity (Swinburne, 1994, ch. 6). To avoid a scope shift, the argument

separates the Son's essential divinity from the necessary attribute inclusion:

$$\Box D(c), \quad (\text{E-D})$$

$$\Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c)). \quad (\text{D-O})$$

Normal modal logic validates closure of necessity under modus ponens:

$$\Box D(c) \wedge \Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c)) \rightarrow \Box O(c).$$

This formulation does not infer de re necessity from an actual classification. Both necessity premises are stated. A defender may deny either: some kenotic theories reject (D-O), while a view on which the Son could cease to be divine rejects (E-D). Neither denial is a formal error; each changes the targeted classical extension.

The Human Finitude Premise

One strong formulation would make necessary non-omniscience part of humanity:

$$H(x) \rightarrow \Box \neg O(x).$$

That premise invites counterexamples involving glorified, supernaturally informed, or otherwise elevated humans. The present argument uses a weaker, temporally fixed premise:

$$H(c) \rightarrow \Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c)). \quad (\text{H-F})$$

The conjunction inside the modal operator matters: the possible non-omniscient state is one in which c remains human, not merely a world in which the person has ceased to instantiate humanity. The claim is not that every human must actually remain ignorant. It is that a completely human cognitive life leaves open at least one human possibility of non-omniscience. Human cognition is characteristically acquired, selectively attended, embodied, and dependent on sensory, testimonial, or inferential routes.

The premise is contestable. A defender can distinguish the modal profile of the person from the finite operation of a human intellect: c may be unable to lack any truth because of divine cognition while still possessing a genuinely finite human faculty. Pawl's extended account even includes maximally comprehensive knowledge through Christ's human intellect, and functional-kenotic or divine-subconscious models offer other ways to construe the Gospel data (Pawl, 2019, chs. 7–8; Loke, 2013). Rejecting (H-F) therefore blocks the proof without contradicting the text of Chalcedon. The remaining question is whether the resulting account captures complete human cognitive life or only the possession of a human cognitive constituent.

The Derivation

The Hypostatic Union provides:

$$D(c) \wedge H(c). \quad (\text{HU})$$

From (E-D), (D-O), (H-F), and (HU):

1. $\Box D(c)$,
2. $\Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c))$,
3. $\Box O(c)$,
4. $H(c)$,
5. $H(c) \rightarrow \Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c))$,
6. $\Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c))$,
7. $\Diamond \neg O(c)$,
8. $\neg \Diamond \neg O(c)$,
9. $\perp$.

Steps 1–3 use normality; steps 6–7 use the valid implication $\Diamond(A \wedge B) \rightarrow \Diamond B$; step 8 uses modal duality. The derivation does not require axiom T.

A Textually Motivated Actuality Variant

The New Testament supplies more concrete pressure than a generic anthropology. Mark 13:32 says that no one knows the relevant day or hour, “nor the Son, but only the Father,” and Luke 2:52 says that Jesus “increased in wisdom” (NRSVue). Let q^* be the proposition concerning the day or hour and let t be the time of the saying. On a literal, unqualified reading:

$$\text{True}(q^*) \wedge \neg K_t(c, q^*),$$

which entails $\neg O_t(c)$. If metaphysical necessity is reflexive, axiom T gives $O_t(c)$ from $\Box O_t(c)$, producing an actual contradiction.

This variant is logically direct but exegetically and semantically defeasible. Traditional accounts may index the ignorance to the human intellect, distinguish possessed knowledge from conscious access, or construe the statement functionally (Loke, 2013; Pawl, 2019). The texts therefore motivate the bearer and access questions; they do not settle them without an account of unqualified personal knowledge.

What the Contradiction Does and Does Not Show

The argument does not show that divinity and humanity are incompatible by definition or that Chalcedon alone is inconsistent. It shows that a particular extended package is inconsistent:

$$\{\Box D(c), \Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c)), H(c), H(c) \rightarrow \Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c))\}.$$

A defender can block the result by denying a member, changing the modal operators, or indexing the predicates. The relevant question then becomes whether the resulting interpretation is a faithful account of the conciliar nucleus and the additional theological claims the defender intends to preserve.

The Impeccability-Temptation Argument

Impeccability and Temptability

Impeccability is stronger than actual sinlessness. A sinless agent does not sin; an impeccable agent cannot sin. Classical accounts commonly ground divine impeccability in the essential holiness of God (Swinburne, 1994, ch. 6; Crisp, 2007b; Crisp, 2009). As in the epistemic proof, the scope assumptions are separated:

$$\Box D(c) \quad \text{and} \quad \Box(D(c) \rightarrow \neg S(c)). \quad (\text{D-I})$$

Together they yield $\Box \neg S(c)$ and therefore $\neg \Diamond S(c)$.

The human side is not the crude claim that humanity requires actual moral failure. The New Testament depicts Jesus as tested or tempted (Matt. 4:1–11; Heb. 2:18; 4:15). Hebrews 4:15 says that he was tested “in every respect . . . as we are, yet without sin” (NRSVue, which notes “tempted” as an alternative rendering). The stronger agential interpretation is:

$$T(c) \rightarrow \Diamond S(c). \quad (\text{T-P})$$

The argument succeeds only if $T(c)$ is true on this stronger reading. The scriptural vocabulary also permits the weaker notion of testing, and James 1:13 says that God is not temptable by evil. These texts intensify the need for semantic care rather than deciding the modal question by themselves.

The Derivation

From the Hypostatic Union, divine impeccability, the attribution of genuine temptation, and (T-P):

1. $\Box D(c)$,
2. $\Box(D(c) \rightarrow \neg S(c))$,
3. $\Box \neg S(c)$,
4. $\neg \Diamond S(c)$,
5. $T(c)$,
6. $T(c) \rightarrow \Diamond S(c)$,
7. $\Diamond S(c)$,
8. $\perp$.

Defense of the Temptation Bridge

The bridge from temptation to possibility is not analytically true under every use of the word. An impeccable agent might experience hunger, fear, aversion, or an attractive presentation of wrongdoing without possessing the power to consent. The argument therefore distinguishes three notions:

1. **external testing:** circumstances confront the agent with hardship or an invitation;
2. **phenomenal pressure:** the agent experiences an attraction, aversion, or conflict;
3. **agential temptation:** wrongdoing is available as an action the agent could perform.

Only the third entails $\Diamond S(c)$. If Christ undergoes only the first or second, no formal contradiction follows. The comparison with ordinary human temptation is then made through shared pressure, reasons, suffering, or deliberative phenomenology rather than a shared categorical ability to sin. Pawl (2019, ch. 6) likewise examines whether Christ's impeccability can coexist with genuine temptation. The critic's claim is therefore conditional: agential temptability with alternative possibilities conflicts with divine impeccability; external testing or phenomenal pressure alone does not.

Objections to the Core Arguments

Objection 1: Humanity Does Not Entail Possible Ignorance

The defender may reject (H-F). Human nature, on this view, is specified by having a rational soul, a body, human faculties, and a human mode of operation. Nothing in that specification requires any possible failure to know. God could continuously elevate a human intellect so that the personal subject is omniscient in every accessible world.

Reply. This objection decisively blocks the epistemic derivation. It separates the possession and operation of a finite human faculty from the modal profile of the person who also possesses divine cognition. That distinction is compatible with the letter of Chalcedon and is developed in sophisticated accounts of Christ's knowledge (Loke, 2013; Pawl, 2019). The remaining issue is explanatory rather than formally contradictory: does "completely human" describe the structure and operation of a human intellect, or the total cognitive range of the personal subject? The proof requires the latter. A defender who adopts the former owes an account of cognitive integration, but does not thereby incur a contradiction.

Objection 2: Knowledge Is Relativized to Cognitive Faculties

Christ can know q through the divine intellect and fail to know q through the human intellect:

$$K_D(c, q) \wedge \neg K_H(c, q).$$

These are not contradictories because the subscripts mark different relations. No statement of the form $K(c, q) \wedge \neg K(c, q)$ follows.

Reply. The indexed conjunction is classically consistent. The unresolved issue is its relation to personal knowledge. Suppose at least one cognitive range knowing q is sufficient for $K(c, q)$. Then Christ knows q , and the unqualified claim that Christ is ignorant of q is false. Suppose every cognitive range must know q for $K(c, q)$. Then a limited human range prevents personal omniscience. Suppose both nature-indexed predications transfer without an aggregation rule. Then the contradiction returns at the personal level. Finally, suppose

ordinary knowledge claims are context-sensitive and select a range. That may be the correct semantics, but the context-selection rule must be stated. This objection is a viable solution; the audit asks what it makes true of the one person without qualification.

Objection 3: The Predicates Apply in Different Respects

Reduplicative predication states that Christ is omniscient *qua* divine and non-omniscient *qua* human. Classical logic permits an object to be P in one respect and not- P in another. A wall can be warm on one side and not warm on another without contradiction.

Reply. Different-respect predication works when the respect is part of the predicate's truth conditions. The critic should concede:

$$O_D(c) \wedge \neg O_H(c)$$

is not itself a contradiction. This is especially important because the conciliar formula preserves the characteristics of each nature rather than asserting that every nature-level predicate transfers in the same way. The remaining question is whether omniscience behaves like an aspectual property. Knowledge is normally attributed to a subject across its accessible cognitive resources. If c has personal access to every truth in one range, calling c ignorant requires qualification; if c lacks access to truths in the divine range, calling c omniscient requires qualification. Reduplication may therefore be a faithful clarification of Chalcedon. Its adequacy depends on a semantics for the corresponding unqualified claims (Beall & Henderson, 2019; Gorman, 2014).

Objection 4: The Predicates Are True at Different Times

Jesus may grow in wisdom at one stage while possessing comprehensive knowledge at another. Likewise, an episode of testing occurs at a time, while a divine attribute may be atemporal. Predicates at different times do not contradict.

Reply. Correct: no contradiction follows across different times or semantic levels. The audited proofs hold the time of evaluation fixed, and (H-F) places both continued humanity and non-omniscience inside the same possibility. The actuality variant likewise fixes the time t of Mark 13:32. If a defender limits omniscience to a different time or assigns divine knowledge to an atemporal respect, the proof is blocked unless an additional bridge connects that attribution to $O_t(c)$. Temporal indexing is therefore a genuine solution when developed consistently, not a detail the proof may suppress.

Objection 5: The Modal Operators Are Mis-scoped

An earlier argument might move illicitly from $\Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c))$ and the actual fact $D(c)$ to $\Box O(c)$. That inference would be invalid without the further premise $\Box D(c)$.

Reply. The revised derivation does not make that move. It states both $\Box D(c)$ and $\Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c))$, from which $\Box O(c)$ follows in normal modal logic. The same structure governs impeccability. A defender can still reject essential divinity, the necessary attribute

inclusion, rigid designation, or a single unrestricted accessibility relation. Each rejection blocks the proof at a displayed premise; none shows an illicit scope shift within the proof itself.

Objection 6: Temptation Does Not Require the Possibility of Sin

An agent may be tested even when perfect character guarantees success. Indeed, many compatibilists hold that freedom and moral significance do not require the categorical ability to do otherwise. Christ's inability to sin may result from who he is rather than from coercion or deficient agency.

Reply. This objection successfully rejects (T-P) if "temptation" means testing or phenomenal pressure. The volitional contradiction then fails. The residual question is comparative: in what sense is an impeccable subject tested "as we are" if the disobedient action is metaphysically unavailable? A compatibilist can answer that shared desires, reasons, suffering, and deliberation are sufficient. The paper therefore does not treat the argument as independent of theories of freedom or the semantics of the biblical terms. It identifies a conditional conflict between impeccability and temptation understood as an alternative possibility.

Objection 7: Impeccability Is Compatible with Significant Moral Agency

The inability of a perfectly good agent to sin need not undermine agency. The redeemed in heaven might be both free and unable to sin; likewise, Christ may act from an uncoerced will whose perfect character fixes the good.

Reply. This is a strong response to the claim that impeccability eliminates freedom. It does not refute the conditional derivation, whose bridge concerns possibility rather than praiseworthiness. It instead supplies a principled reason to reject that bridge. Accepting the reason defeats the impeccability-temptation argument while leaving the epistemic argument untouched.

Objection 8: Leibniz's Law Is Misapplied

A person can possess two non-identical natures without those natures possessing the same properties. Therefore, differences between divinity and humanity do not imply two persons.

Reply. Correct. The formal arguments do not infer two subjects from $D \neq H$, nor do they identify the natures. They derive incompatible modal predicates of c after applying transfer principles. Leibniz's Law becomes relevant only if a proposed model identifies distinct cognitive subjects or treats a part as numerically identical with the whole. The objection corrects an overly quick version of the critique but does not address the revised derivations.

Objection 9: The Incarnation Is a Mystery Beyond Classical Analysis

The defender may deny that human concepts adequately capture a unique divine reality. Apparent contradiction can indicate semantic or cognitive limitation rather than falsity.

Reply. Epistemic humility is compatible with classical logic, but the word “mystery” does not itself provide a consistency model. A defender may reasonably suspend judgment among several available models or hold that the correct semantics exceeds present understanding. The corresponding epistemic claim is then modest: no contradiction has been demonstrated in the doctrine as correctly understood. That stance rebuts an inference from apparent to actual contradiction, although it does not explain how the predicates cohere.

Evaluation of Leading Reconciliation Models

Reduplicative Predication

Reduplicative accounts distinguish what is true of Christ *qua* divine from what is true *qua* human. Such distinctions have deep roots in scholastic Christology and receive sophisticated contemporary treatment (Aquinas, 1947–1948; Beall & Henderson, 2019; Gorman, 2014; Pawl, 2016). Their principal strength is logical clarity: once the respects are built into the predicates, direct contradiction disappears.

Their principal question is semantic. If O_D and $\neg O_H$ are distinct predicates, what follows about $O(c)$? Pawl’s broader strategy denies that apparent contraries are predicated “in the same way.” Gorman distinguishes readings of negative *qua*-predications that do and do not license an inference to the unqualified denial. A complete account should therefore say which *secundum quid ad simpliciter* inferences are licensed. Reduplication can be a historically grounded interpretation of conciliar predication; it need not be described as a revision unless the target package explicitly requires both unqualified contradictories.

The Two-Minds Model

Morris (1986) develops a model on which Christ possesses a fully human range of consciousness and a divine range not wholly accessible to the human consciousness. Functional-kenotic and divine-subconscious variants develop related ideas (Loke, 2013; Moreland & Craig, 2003). The model explains how authentic human learning and limited awareness can coexist with divine knowledge without treating either range as illusory.

The challenge is personal aggregation. If the divine range is part of the one person’s cognitive life, the person possesses the knowledge even when the human range does not access it. If it is not part of the person’s accessible cognitive life, the sense in which that person is omniscient requires explanation. Two integrated but asymmetrical ranges of consciousness need not amount to two persons, but the model must articulate their first-person unity. The model is not refuted merely by noting different propositional contents; it stands or falls with its account of personal identity, access, and agency.

Kenotic Models

Kenotic Christology interprets the Incarnation as a self-emptying in which the Son relinquishes, suspends, or refrains from exercising certain divine attributes (Crisp, 2007a; Evans, 2006). Strong kenosis denies continuous possession of omniscience or omnipotence; functional kenosis preserves possession but limits exercise or conscious access.

Strong kenosis blocks the epistemic contradiction by denying (D-O) during the incarnate life. It thereby revises classical divine essentialism if omniscience is treated as essential. Functional kenosis preserves the attribute and therefore resembles a two-minds or access-limitation model. It can explain finite human experience by distinguishing possession of knowledge from its availability to ordinary human consciousness. Kenosis is thus a family of genuine solutions, with strong and functional forms denying different premises.

Compositional Models

On compositional accounts, the incarnate Son assumes a human body and soul as constituents of a larger whole (Crisp, 2007a; Hasker, 2017). The model supplies a concrete metaphysics for the union and can preserve one composite individual without treating the human nature as merely abstract.

The central issue is property inheritance. Some properties pass readily from parts to wholes; others do not. A person may possess one subsystem that represents q and another that does not. Whether the whole knows q depends on cognitive access and integration. Compositionism therefore supplies a location for the predications but does not by itself determine their personal truth conditions. Its success depends on a principled account of which divine and human mental properties are primarily or derivatively true of the whole.

Bi-Modal Semantics

Beall and Cotnoir (2022) propose that apparent Christological contradictions can be analyzed with distinct modal operators whose accessibility relations range over divine and creaturely possibilities. On a simplified representation:

$$\Box_D O(c) \wedge \Diamond_H \neg O(c)$$

does not entail a contradiction because $\Box_D$ and $\Diamond_H$ are not duals within one accessibility relation. This approach directly targets the modal structure rather than changing the personal bearer.

The model preserves robust divine and human modal profiles while denying their univocity. Its own authors present it as an outline and acknowledge the need for further metaphysical motivation. A critic may ask whether an unrestricted modality also governs what c can be simpliciter and, if so, how it relates to the two restricted relations. That is an explanatory question, not an internal refutation of the bi-modal consistency result.

Dialetheic Christology

Beall (2021) argues that Christology is genuinely contradictory rather than merely apparently so. A paraconsistent consequence relation prevents a true contradiction from entailing every proposition. On this view, preserving the full-stop divine and human predications takes priority over classical consistency.

Dialetheism does not merely “abandon logic.” It accepts that some contradictions are true while using a non-explosive consequence relation to block arbitrary inference (Beall, 2009). It therefore rejects unrestricted non-contradiction and some classical consequence principles, not every norm of valid reasoning. For defenders committed to classical logic, that change is prohibitive. For the audit, dialetheic Christology agrees that the full-stop package is inconsistent while contesting the inference from inconsistency to theological unacceptability.

Comparative Assessment

Table 1 identifies the blocking move made by each model. “Avoids” in the formal-result column means that the strategy can block the displayed contradiction when developed successfully; it does not mean that every metaphysical, exegetical, or theological question has been answered.

Table 1

Comparative Assessment of Reconciliation Strategies

Strategy	Blocking move	Formal result	Principal remaining question
Reduplicative predication	Makes the respect part of the predication	Avoids	Which inferences to unqualified personal claims remain valid?
Two-minds model	Distinguishes cognitive ranges and access relations	Avoids	What unifies the ranges as one first-person subject?
Strong kenosis	Denies continuous possession of some classical divine attributes	Avoids	Can full divinity survive the denial of an essential attribute?
Functional kenosis	Distinguishes possession from exercise or access	Avoids if specified	What does the person know without qualification?
Compositional model	Locates properties primarily in constituents	Potentially avoids	Which constituent properties transfer to the whole?
Bi-modal semantics	Uses distinct divine and creaturely accessibility relations	Avoids	Is there an unrestricted modality, and how is it related?
Dialetheic model	Accepts the contradiction and rejects explosion	Does not avoid	Which nonclassical consequence relation governs the theory?

The comparison yields two conclusions. First, several models provide formally coherent interpretations, so the derivations do not establish the unconditional incoherence of the Hypostatic Union. Second, no model preserves every member of the specifically *unqualified extended package* under one classical modality. The relevant disagreement is therefore not between logic and mystery in the abstract. It concerns which account of predication, cognition, modality, human completeness, or logical consequence best expresses the doctrine.

What Follows If the Contradiction Remains?

If the epistemic or volitional contradiction survives a defender's preferred semantics, at least six responses remain:

1. **Reject an attribute extension.** Omniscience or impeccability may be treated as contingent, functional, or voluntarily restricted.
2. **Reject an anthropological bridge.** Complete humanity may be defined structurally without possible personal ignorance or peccability.
3. **Qualify personal predication.** Divine and human predicates may be nature-indexed, range-relative, time-indexed, or context-sensitive.
4. **Adopt a constituent or two-minds metaphysics.** The model may distinguish cognitive bearers or ranges while supplying an account of personal unity.
5. **Pluralize the modality or revise the logic.** Bi-modal semantics may deny a single accessibility relation, while a paraconsistent framework may accept a contradiction without explosion.
6. **Change the doctrinal commitment.** The Incarnation may be interpreted nonliterally, held as an unresolved mystery, or rejected (Hick, 1993).

These options show why paraconsistency is not the only response. It is the response that preserves the conflicting unqualified predications *as conflicting* while denying that contradiction is fatal. The other strategies seek consistency by rejecting, qualifying, or reinterpreting at least one premise. Some of those moves may be doctrinal clarifications rather than concessions.

Scope and Limitations

The conclusion is deliberately conditional. It establishes inconsistency only for a specified package of claims in normal classical modal logic. A defender who rejects the human finitude premise, the temptation bridge, an essential-attribute premise, unqualified transfer from natures or cognitive ranges to the person, rigid cross-world predication, temporal co-instantiation, or a single unrestricted modality can block the corresponding derivation.

The paper also does not settle historical exegesis. Chalcedonian terms developed within late-antique metaphysical and theological debates that cannot be reduced without remainder to modern predicate logic (Cross, 2002; Davis et al., 2002). Formalization is used here as an audit of proposed truth conditions, not as a claim that the council fathers secretly endorsed a contemporary modal semantics.

Nor does the argument establish the falsity of Christianity or even the falsity of every doctrine called "Incarnation." Coherence is a necessary but not sufficient condition

for truth. Conversely, the provision of a formally consistent model shows possibility only relative to its assumptions; it does not establish doctrinal truth. The narrower result is that the familiar unqualified package requires more than the formula “one person, two natures” to be intelligible.

Finally, omniscience and impeccability are test cases. Other pairs—immutability and change, impassibility and suffering, necessity and contingency, atemporality and temporal life—may generate parallel problems (Beall & Cotnoir, 2022; Pawl, 2015, 2016). They should be assessed separately rather than assumed to rise or fall with the two arguments given here.

Conclusion

The Hypostatic Union is not refuted simply because divinity and humanity are different, and the conciliar nucleus alone does not entail either contradiction displayed here. The difficulty emerges when one person is assigned further modal profiles that classical logic treats as incompatible. The Son’s essential divinity plus the necessary inclusion of omniscience excludes possible non-omniscience; the stated human-finitude bridge requires a possible human state of non-omniscience. Essential divine impeccability excludes possible sin; the agential temptation bridge requires it. Under one bearer, time, respect, and unrestricted modality, the contradictions follow.

The strongest objections identify exactly where the arguments can be resisted. A defender may deny that complete humanity entails possible personal ignorance, deny that testing entails an available sinful action, index predicates to natures or cognitive ranges, distinguish times or modalities, or reject classical consequence. Several such responses are formally coherent and have historical or doctrinal motivation. They should be assessed as substantive theories, not dismissed as evasions merely because they deny a premise.

The resulting audit is therefore sharper than the claim that “God and humanity are opposites.” It is a dependency result. The unqualified extended package is not jointly satisfiable; a consistent account must deny, qualify, or reinterpret at least one of its members. That conclusion does not show that every such move revises Chalcedon, because nature-indexed predication and a distinction between personal and facultative cognition may be intended by the doctrine itself. What the audit requires is explicitness: an adequate account must state its bearer rules, temporal parameters, modal structure, anthropology, and logic. Only then can its consistency and theological fidelity be judged.

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Appendix A Formal Derivations

Epistemic Derivation

E1.	$D(c) \wedge H(c)$	Hypostatic Union
E2.	$\Box D(c)$	Essential divinity
E3.	$\Box(D(c) \rightarrow O(c))$	Necessary attribute inclusion
E4.	$H(c)$	$\wedge$ -elimination, E1
E5.	$\Box O(c)$	Closure of necessity, E2, E3
E6.	$H(c) \rightarrow \Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c))$	Human-finitude bridge
E7.	$\Diamond(H(c) \wedge \neg O(c))$	Modus ponens, E4, E6
E8.	$\Diamond \neg O(c)$	Modal consequence, E7
E9.	$\neg \Diamond \neg O(c)$	Modal duality, E5
E10.	$\Diamond \neg O(c) \wedge \neg \Diamond \neg O(c)$	$\wedge$ -introduction, E8, E9
E11.	$\perp$	Contradiction, E10

Actuality Variant

EA1.	$\Box O_t(c)$	From essential divinity and (D-O) at t
EA2.	$\Box O_t(c) \rightarrow O_t(c)$	Axiom T
EA3.	$O_t(c)$	Modus ponens, EA1, EA2
EA4.	$\text{True}(q^*) \wedge \neg K_t(c, q^*)$	Unqualified reading of Mark 13:32
EA5.	$\neg O_t(c)$	Definition of omniscience, EA4
EA6.	$O_t(c) \wedge \neg O_t(c)$	$\wedge$ -introduction, EA3, EA5
EA7.	$\perp$	Contradiction, EA6

Impeccability-Temptation Derivation

P1.	$\Box D(c)$	Essential divinity
P2.	$\Box(D(c) \rightarrow \neg S(c))$	Necessary divine impeccability
P3.	$\Box \neg S(c)$	Closure of necessity, P1, P2
P4.	$\neg \Diamond S(c)$	Modal duality, P3
P5.	$T(c)$	Agential temptation
P6.	$T(c) \rightarrow \Diamond S(c)$	Temptation bridge
P7.	$\Diamond S(c)$	Modus ponens, P5, P6
P8.	$\Diamond S(c) \wedge \neg \Diamond S(c)$	$\wedge$ -introduction, P4, P7
P9.	$\perp$	Contradiction, P8

Appendix B
Premise-Dependency Matrix

Table B1

Which Commitment Each Strategy Revises

Strategy	Essential-attribute package	Human or temptation bridge	Predication and bearer	Modality or logic
Reduplicative predication	Preserved	Preserved under an index	Qualified by respect	One classical modality
Two-minds model	Preserved	Preserved in human range	Personal aggregation specified	One classical modality
Strong kenosis	Attribute inclusion denied or weakened	Preserved	One person preserved	One classical modality
Functional kenosis	Preserved as possession	Preserved as experience	Access relation qualified	One classical modality
Compositional model	Preserved in a constituent	Preserved in a constituent	Whole-part transfer specified	One classical modality
Bi-modal semantics	Preserved under $\Box_D$	Preserved under $\Diamond_H$	One person preserved	Accessibility relations pluralized
Dialetheic model	Preserved	Preserved	Unqualified transfer retained	Paraconsistent consequence

Appendix C

Visualizing the Epistemic Argument

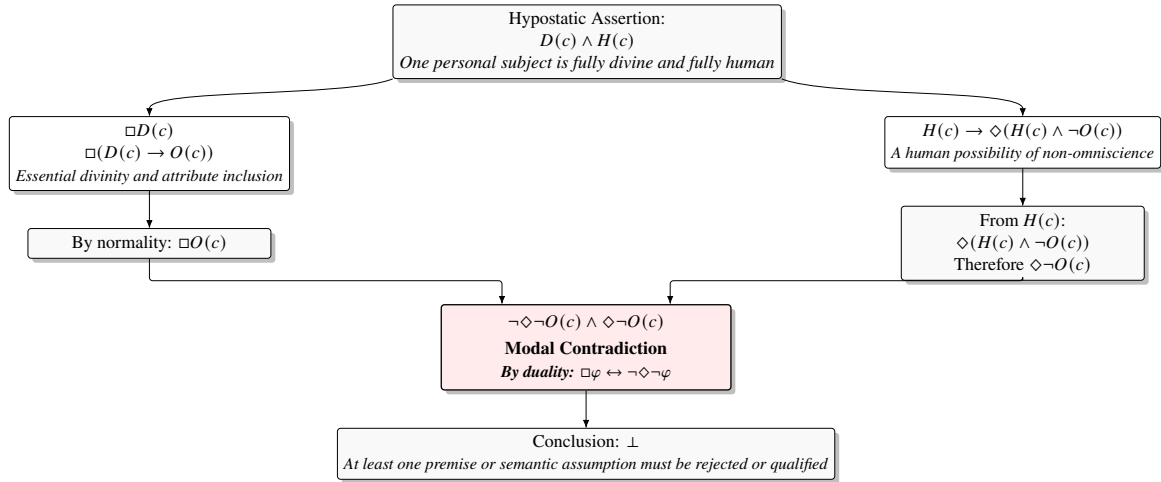


Figure C1

The audited epistemic derivation, with modal scope and continued humanity made explicit.

Appendix D

The Christological Decision Structure

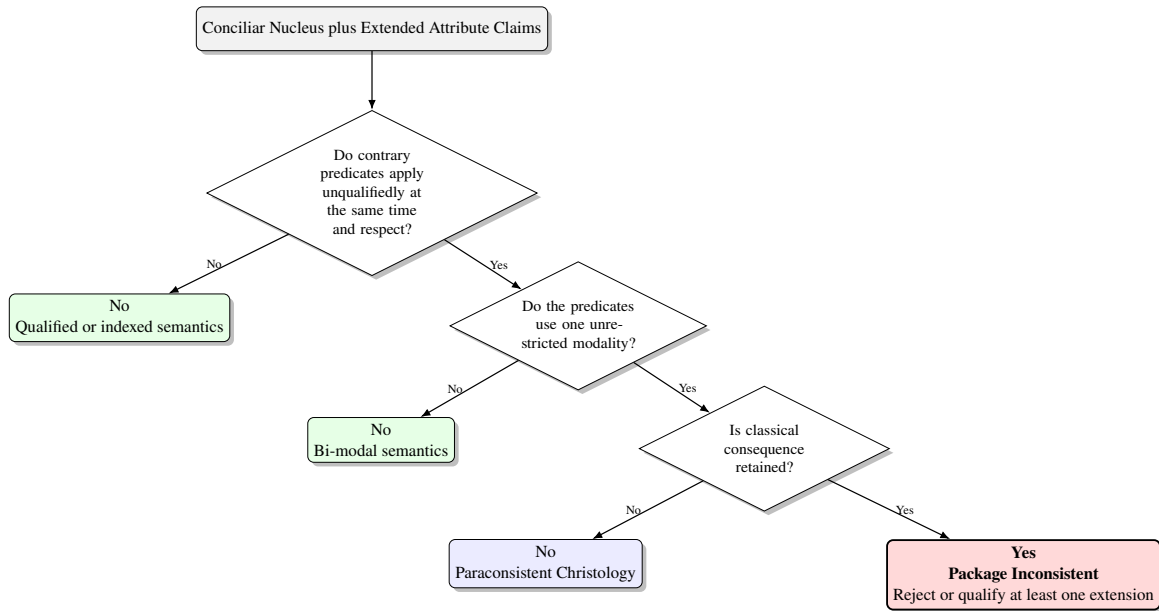


Figure D1

The principal decision points by which contemporary models avoid, relocate, or accept the contradiction.

Appendix E

Analogy Reductio: Fully Woman and Fully Man

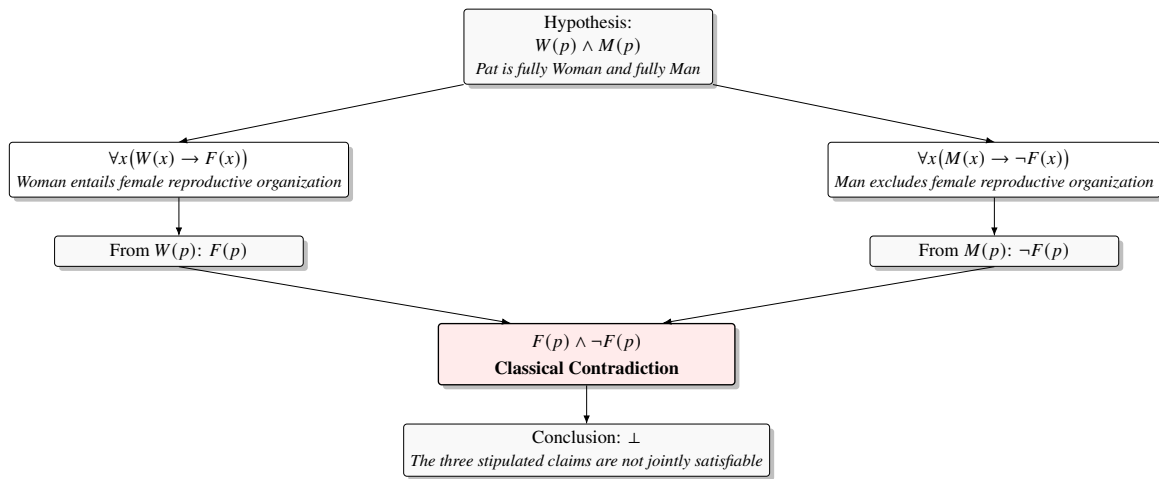
This analogy adopts, for dialectical purposes, the binary biological categories presupposed by much of the Hypostatic Union's intended audience. In this appendix, *Woman* and *Man* are stipulated technical labels for complete female and male reproductive-class profiles. They do not denote social identities, and the argument does not assume that every actual woman is fertile, that every actual man produces sperm, or that atypical cases are easy to classify. The relevant conditional claim is narrower: if the two complete profiles are defined by mutually exclusive organizing properties, one subject cannot instantiate both profiles in the same respect at the same time.

Human sex traits occur at multiple biological levels—including chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal and external anatomy, and reproductive function—and atypical development can make those levels diverge (Bhargava et al., 2021). The analogy therefore does not infer an individual's classification from a single marker. It asks what follows *within the stipulated complete-profile taxonomy* used by the target audience.

Let $W(x)$ mean that x is fully Woman in this stipulated biological sense, let $M(x)$ mean that x is fully Man in the same sense, and let $F(x)$ mean that x has a reproductive system organized according to the female reproductive role—an ova-oriented and, in its complete form, gestational organization. Let $p = \text{Pat}$. The reductio uses these premises:

- | | |
|---|--|
| A1. $W(p) \wedge M(p)$, | Pat is fully Woman and fully Man, |
| A2. $\forall x(W(x) \rightarrow F(x))$, | The complete Woman profile entails F , |
| A3. $\forall x(M(x) \rightarrow \neg F(x))$, | The complete Man profile excludes F . |

Every occurrence of p and F has the same bearer, content, time, and respect. A3 is not presented as a neutral definition binding every theory of sex. It states the exclusion principle already accepted by the binary essentialist for whom “fully Woman” and “fully Man” are complete and contrary biological profiles.

**Figure E1**

The Man/Woman reductio under the target audience's binary essentialist definitions.

Formal Derivation

A4.	$W(p)$	$\wedge$ -elimination, A1
A5.	$M(p)$	$\wedge$ -elimination, A1
A6.	$F(p)$	$\forall$ -elimination and modus ponens, A2, A4
A7.	$\neg F(p)$	$\forall$ -elimination and modus ponens, A3, A5
A8.	$F(p) \wedge \neg F(p)$	$\wedge$ -introduction, A6, A7
A9.	$\perp$	Contradiction, A8

The derivation is elementary classical logic. Its validity does not depend on fertility statistics, modal axiom T, or the absence of atypical bodies. Its soundness depends on A2 and A3, especially the target audience's exclusion principle in A3. Anyone who grants the stipulated meanings of “fully Woman” and “fully Man” must reject A1; anyone who accepts A1 must revise at least one of those meanings.

Tangible Content of the Two Profiles

The variable F is not intended as a verbal placeholder for “whatever makes a woman a woman.” It denotes a stipulated, system-level organizing pattern. The following features make that pattern visible. They are illustrations of the two complete human reproductive profiles, not independent claims that every actual member is fertile, produces gametes, or possesses every typical organ.

Table E1

Concrete Markers of the Stipulated Binary Profiles

Dimension	Fully Woman profile	Fully Man profile
Organizing role	Ova-oriented and, in complete form, gestational	Sperm-oriented and, in complete form, inseminating
Gametic role when functional	Production of large, non-motile ova	Production of small, motile sperm
Primary gonadal organization	Ovarian developmental organization	Testicular developmental organization
Reproductive tract in complete form	Uterine, cervical, and vaginal organization ordered toward gestation and birth	Seminal and ejaculatory organization ordered toward sperm delivery
Relation to gestation	The organism is of the reproductive type organized to gestate	The organism is not of the reproductive type organized to gestate

On this construal, Pat cannot be fully Woman and fully Man in several concrete ways. The same reproductive system cannot be both wholly organized and not wholly organized around the female reproductive role in the same respect. Within the stipulation, the same complete gonadal system cannot be wholly ova-oriented and wholly sperm-oriented in the same respect, and the same complete reproductive tract cannot both include and exclude organization toward gestation. An ovotestis or another mixed developmental condition may complicate real-world classification, but within this taxonomy it is an atypical or mixed realization, not the simultaneous complete realization of both contrary profiles.

Infertility does not by itself defeat the analogy. An infertile woman may retain a female reproductive organization even when she cannot produce ova or gestate; a sterile man may retain a male reproductive organization even when he cannot produce sperm. The central predicate concerns the organizing type of the system, not successful performance on a particular occasion.

Modal Strengthening

If the target audience additionally treats Pat's possession of each profile as essential and treats the profile rules as necessary, the same illustration can be given modal force:

$$\begin{aligned} \Box W(p), & \quad \Box(W(p) \rightarrow F(p)), \\ \Box M(p), & \quad \Box(M(p) \rightarrow \neg F(p)). \end{aligned}$$

By closure of necessity, these entail $\Box F(p) \wedge \Box \neg F(p)$. In any reflexive modal frame, axiom T then yields $F(p) \wedge \neg F(p)$. The non-modal derivation above is dialectically preferable, however, because it requires only the target audience's ordinary exclusion principle and does not add controversial theses about Pat's trans-world identity or the essentiality of sex-profile membership.

What the Analogy Does and Does Not Establish

The reductio does not prove from neutral biology that every human being fits neatly into one of two complete profiles. Nor does it adjudicate social identity or every variation in sex development. Its conclusion is explicitly conditional on the binary essentialist definitions commonly presupposed by the intended audience. That limitation makes the analogy dialectical rather than universal, but it also makes its force precise.

The analogy likewise does not independently prove that divinity and humanity are incompatible in the way the stipulated Woman and Man profiles are. It instead presses a consistency demand. An audience that rejects "fully Woman and fully Man" because the complete profiles transfer contrary properties to one bearer cannot answer the Christological argument merely by repeating "fully divine and fully human." The defender must identify a relevant difference: perhaps the Christological predicates are indexed to different respects, terminate in different constituents, use different modalities, or do not transfer unqualifiedly to the one person. Those are substantive replies, but the assertion of two complete natures by itself is not.