

As in all debates there were various contradictions in terms and discussions. A large group headed by Eusebius of Caesarea sought a compromise but neither party really wished for such. The Emperor wanted a resolution and at the end of the summer the Arian ideology was overthrown and the Nicene Creed propounded. (The text of the Creed is printed on page 64--if you have forgotten) All who took part in the debate were expected to sign the finished document and all but Arius and two lesser bishops signed...although not all were in agreement. Arius was banned and the Empire gave his support to the creed although he seems to have privately though Alexander and Athanasius were a bit over-bearing. Christ was fully identified as "very God of very God."

d. The Aftermath

We leave most of the details for church history...they will probably not be fully discussed there! But the emperor was persuaded by skilfull politicians to remove his endorsement of the creed, Athanasius was exiled as a trouble maker (five times he would be banished over this issue) and the emperor was prepared to have the church announce for Arius. Arius died in 336 just before they were to reinstate him and his teaching would vex the church for the next 45 years...but eventually the totality of the Nicene Creed would be upheld and the reality of the Trinity and the Person of Christ as the eternal Son of God would be maintained.

D. Particular Questions of the Divine Make-up

This is one of the more vexing theological issues and it is good for a return battle about every fifty years or so. To those who say they only say what the Scripture says...we answer ironically that the Scripture is plain until someone says what it says...then we lose the fabric of truth.

1. The Apollinarian Dispute

a. Background

Following the Council of Nicaea, as noted above, there were forty five years of confusion in the east. The various Nicene parties all sub-divided and arguments abounded. It is worth noting the disputants and what they taught although I do not think the student should be accountable for every name...I do not think even the teacher should have that level of accountability.