

and the Nicene Creed enacted. All bishops present were required to sign. Arius refused and was banished--sent into exile. Most of his supporters did sign, albeit with considerable tongue in cheek or mental reservation, as the case may have been. The Emperor did not understand the theological implications but received the finished creed and announced it to be the standard for the empire. So it would have stood unquestioned had not some conniving Arians changed his mind in the insidious fashion already mentioned with Eusebius of Nicomedia.

Other Nicene Decisions

Following are some other matters on which decisions were rendered at Nicaea:

--The date of Easter was established following the western tradition.

--Canonical laws were determined for receiving heretics, etc., back into the fold. More canons were enacted regarding the authority of bishops and the integrity of sees.

--The call from the western bishops (but there were only 6 of them at the council) for a celibate clergy was refused although it was admitted those who were celibate enjoyed more freedom in the service of God.

--And twenty two canons were produced for the better regulating of the life of the church...many of them related to moral purity and standards of spiritual life for both clergy and laity.

Aftermath:

In spite of the work of the council the Arian issue was not over. Many who signed the Creed were still hostile and remained Arians at heart. With the vacillation of Constantine from the official position it became possible for these men to think that the Creed could be overthrown and their own positions made the correct ones. Thus there was a great undercurrent of movements and meetings to defeat the Nicene declaration. Some of the particular events are found on the chart (109). The solution will come when the hard line Arian party headed by Aetius will become polarized and isolated. Then