

1. Nicaea, 325 AD

a. The political setting and the location

b. The problem:

--Teachings of Arius, et al, to the effect that Christ was a created being and that there was a time when he was not. After being created he is promoted, so to speak, to a Divine status so that he can be called "god" but is of a different essence or substance than the Father. (The teaching is almost identical to that of the Watchtower Society today)

c. The conflict:

--Athanasius, et al, took strong exception to the views of Arius and the eastern part of the church was badly divided. It was not much of a problem in the western church.

d. The meeting:

--Attended by 314 (?) bishops and leaders representing both sides. Arius had a strong helper in Eusebius of Nicomedia while the Athanasian side had the support of Alexander and Anthony, among others. Eusebius of Caesarea (the historian) was secretary (close to that) and attempted a moderate position but eventually was with Athanasius.

The matter was debated through the summer on the lines of what the Bible taught and what the church had believed.

The critical terms (I will scribble them on the blackboard) are of interest to us and the way usage was given to some of them is a great study in subterfuge and academic deception.

e. The decision:

Arius was refuted, his followers and he were told to get in line or else, the creed was promulgated and the Athanasian theology given as the correct teaching.