

Many of those present may have said, "Oh, this is only an argument about words, let's get on with the gospel work and not have this argument about these matters nobody understands anyway." Once they heard it stated, they said "we can't go along with that" and they voted it down overwhelmingly. Well you might say the work is done. Arianism is definitely ruled out of the church but Athanasius and Marcellus noted that the Arians were very busy spreading their views and had been for the previous six or seven years. They had a tremendous zeal and ~~which~~ they were convinced that these views were views ~~that~~ carried out logically-cut at the very foundations of the faith. In the end it came down to a difference of two words in which there was a difference of one letter. I have mentioned to you already how _____ ¹⁴ used to ridicule the Christian church - the idea of fighting over one letter. But later on as he studied the matter and all its implications, he said that if the Arians had won, it would have meant that Christianity ^{wouldn't} ~~might~~ have lasted many centuries. He realized that it cut at the very center of Christian teaching. Very few people realized that at the beginning of the meetings. But Athanasius ~~said~~ ^{did} and Marcellus did and Marcellus was a bishop and a man well thought of, a man who had a right to speak but actually many history books hardly mention Marcellus but all have a great deal to say about Athanasius. The fact of the matter was that while Marcellus had much more standing, Athanasius ~~was~~ was a far clearer speaker than Marcellus. Marcellus saw the evil of Arianism so clearly and so fully and was so revolted against it that in his attacks upon it, he used language at times which seemed to go to the other extreme of Sabellianism. Now whether Marcellus ever was a Sabellian or not would be difficult to prove but at least there were things that he wrote that his enemies were able to build up statements he made and say "Look this man is a Sabellian" and throughout the empire the Christians were very much afraid of Sabellianism because they realized that it was Sabellianism that loses the very personality of Christ which has no distinction in the Godhead except the distinction of mode of Revelation - that this is very far from Christianity. So that Marcellus, on account of his lack of thinking so clearly and so sharply that in attacking that he would go over to this