

~~tolerant~~

tolerant; he knew how to conciliate people but he was inflexible and adamant on this point and he understood it so well that he never could be accused of heresy as for instance Marcellus was because Marcellus in opposing the Arianism would make statements which would sound very much like the Sabellianism in the opposite direction and in fact he made sufficient of it that it was possible to sometimes get a council to determine that he had espoused Sabellian heresy. But while Athanasias might be criticized by his enemies, never could accuse him of heresy. He had a clear understanding of Christian doctrines and was absolutely forthright and uncompromising on it. He was a man of great versatility and variety of abilities and as the 45 years went by, he came to be more and more recognized for his ability. I think we can safely say that Athanasias did more to win the victory for the Nicean creed than anyone else. There were some men who did a tremendous amount toward the end of the century but their period of working was much shorter than his. By 373 when he died, you might say the victory had been won but it was not yet realized. Things happened very rapidly during the following 8 years.

question 8

There is a statement which was often repeated, Athanasias against the world, and they said "the whole world is against you Athanasias". At times it looked as if he was against the world because at times he seemed to be standing all alone. I merely mention that at this point his becoming bishop, his then having the function of sending letters out to the whole Christian world to tell them when Easter was. So, while that function had been given to the Bishop of Alexandria it gave him a marvelous opportunity in these letters to stand for the truth in various ways. Of course in addition to that he was directing the Christian activity of a very large area of the empire but was in constant conflict with the leaders in the other parts of the empire. We will have much more to say about Athanasias but at present we go on to b. which we call the Political Maneuvers of the Arians.