

Alexander had made him a deacon - he was in his early 20's. But he had been made a deacon and was brought with Alexander to the meeting. Actually there were 2000 people who participated in the meeting although those who could vote were only about 318 bishops. We are not sure of the exact count as it varies but somebody decided there were 318 because that is the number of trained servants that Abraham took when he went out against the king in Gen. 14. So they decided that the council might be a similar number of bishops and it must have been 318. Probably it wasn't one particular section but it varies 10-15 one way or the other as the people came and went. But Athanasius was just a young fellow in the meeting, had a clear understanding of the issues and a better knowledge of what was needed than anyone else there. Alexander the Bishop, had great regard for Athanasius so the result was that Athanasius influence in the meeting came to be as great as anybody's there. Well, the Arians made a mistake great ~~statement~~ in the deliberation. They had been _____ 2 by the fact that Arius the presbyter was so highly thought of, and the fact that they had Josephus of Nicomedia in what had been the very capital of the empire under Diocletian and was still one of its most important centers as one of their men, and the fact that their poems were being recited all over the empire; they thought "we'll just settle this up quickly - we'll express our view; the council will accept it; Athanasius and Marcellus and these other soreheads will quit criticising us and things will go forward nicely!" But it didn't work that way. They wrote an Arianizing creed; expressing rather clearly what they believed ~~the Bible~~ about Christ and they presented it to the meeting for adoption.