

Constantine to the Council of Tyre

<i>Reference:</i>	Mel. 26, FNS 68
<i>Incipit:</i>	Ἦν μὲν ἴσως ἀκόλουθον
<i>Date:</i>	335
<i>Greek Text:</i>	Eusebius, <i>Vita Const.</i> 4.42
<i>Other Ancient Source:</i>	Theodoret <i>HE</i> 1.29.1-6
<i>English Translation:</i>	NPNF ² 3.27:61-62, adapted for FCC by SMT, JTS, and GLT

This is the official summons to the Council of Tyre of 335. Constantine clearly desires peace and unity within the church. This council is meant to rectify that, and Constantine wishes all of the charges against Athanasius to be resolved as quickly as possible. In fact, he even attaches banishment to those who would ignore the summons to this Council.

The Greek text below is that of F. Winkelmann, GCS (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1975) ss.3-151. The English translation has been adapted from B. Jackson, NPNF² 3.27:61-62 by SMT and GLT for FCC. It has been further adapted by JTS to account for differences between Theodoret and Eusebius.

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Νικητῆς Κωνσταντίνος Μέγιστος Σεβαστὸς τῇ ἁγίᾳ συνόδῳ τῇ κατὰ Τύρον.	Conqueror Constantine, Maximus, Augustus to the holy council assembled in Tyre.
Ἦν μὲν ἴσως ἀκόλουθον καὶ τῇ τῶν καιρῶν εὐκαιρίᾳ μάλιστα πρέπον ἀστασίαστον εἶναι τὴν καθολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ πάσης λοιδορίας τοῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ νῦν ἀπηλλάχθαι θεράποντας. ἐπεὶ δ' οὐχ ὑγιοῦς φιλονεικίας οἷστρον τινὲς ἐλαυνόμενοι (οὐ γὰρ ἂν εἴποιμι βιοῦντες ἑαυτῶν ἀξίως ¹), τὰ πάντα συγχέειν ἐπιχειροῦσιν, ὅπερ πάσης συμφορᾶς ἐπέκεινα κεχωρηκέναι μοι δοκεῖ, τούτου χάριν θέοντας ὑμᾶς, τὸ τοῦ λόγου, προτρέπομαι χωρὶς τινος ὑπερθέσεως εἰς ταὐτὸ συνδραμεῖν, πληρῶσαι τὴν σύνοδον, ἐπαμῦναι τοῖς χρήζουσιν ἐπικουρίας, τοὺς ἀδελφούς ἰάσασθαι ² κινδυνεύοντας, εἰς ὁμόνοιαν ἐπαναγαγεῖν τὰ διεστῶτα τῶν μελῶν, διορθώσασθαι τὰ πλημμελούμενα, ἕως καιρὸς ἐπιτρέπει, ἵνα ταῖς τοσαύταις ἐπαρχίαις τὴν πρέπουσαν ἀποδώσῃτε συμφωνίαν, ἣν, φεῦ τῆς ἀτοπίας, ἐλαχίστων ἀνθρώπων ἀπώλεσεν ὑπεροψία.	In the general prosperity which distinguishes the present time, it seems right that the catholic church should likewise be exempt from trouble, and that the servants of Christ should be freed from every reproach. But certain individuals, instigated by the mad desire of contention (I might say they are not living a life worthy of their profession), are endeavoring to throw everything into disorder. This appears to me to be the greatest of all possible calamities. I beseech you, therefore, in post haste, as the phrase goes, to assemble together, without any delay, in a formal council. In this way you may support those who require your assistance, heal the brethren who are in danger, restore unanimity to the divided members, and rectify the disorders of the church while time permits—and thus restore to those great provinces the harmony which, alas, the arrogance of a few men has destroyed.

¹ Theodoret ἀναξίως

² Theodoret ἰατρεῦσαι

ὅτι δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τῷ δεσπότῃ τῶν ὅλων θεῷ ἐστὶν ἄρεστον καὶ ἡμῖν πάσης εὐχῆς ὑπέρτερον καὶ ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς, ἐάν γε τὴν εἰρήνην ἀνακαλέσῃσθε, οὐ τῆς τυχοῦσης αἵτιον ³ εὐδοξίας, πάντας ἀνθρώπους συνομολογεῖν ἡγοῦμαι.	I believe everyone would admit that you could not perform anything so pleasing in the sight of God, so surpassing all my prayers as well as your own, or so conducive to your own reputation, as to restore peace.
μὴ τοίνυν μέλλετε λοιπόν, ἀλλ' ἐπιτείναντες ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη τὰ τῆς προθυμίας, τοῖς προκειμένοις ὅρον ἐπιτείνειν σπουδάσατε τὸν προσήκοντα, μετὰ πάσης εἰλικρινείας δηλαδὴ καὶ πίστεως συνελθόντες, <ῆν> ἑκασταχοῦ μόνον οὐχὶ φωνὴν ἀφιεῖς ὁ σωτὴρ ἐκεῖνος ᾧ λατρεύομεν ἀπαιτεῖ μάλιστα παρ' ὑμῶν. οὐδὲν δὲ τῶν εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν εὐλάβειαν ἡκόντων ὑμῖν ἐνδεήσει. πάντα μοι πέπρακται ὅσα γράφοντες ἐδηλώσατε.	Therefore do not delay, but when you have come together will all that sincerity and fidelity which our Savior demands of all His servants, almost in words that we can hear, endeavor with redoubled eagerness to put a fitting end to these dissensions. Nothing shall be omitted on my part to further the interest of our religion. I have done all that you recommended in your letters.
ἐπέστειλα πρὸς οὓς ἐβουλήθητε τῶν ἐπισκόπων, ἵνα παραγενόμενοι κοινωνήσωσιν ὑμῖν τῶν φροντισμάτων, ἀπέστειλα Διονύσιον τὸν ἀπὸ ὑπατικῶν, ὃς καὶ τοὺς ὀφείλοντας εἰς τὴν σύνοδον ἀφικέσθαι μεθ' ὑμῶν ὑπομνήσει, καὶ τῶν πραττομένων ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τῆς εὐταξίας κατὰσκοπος παρέσται.	I have sent to those bishops whom you specified, directing them to report to the council for the purpose of deliberating with you upon ecclesiastical matters. I have also sent Dionysius, a man of consular rank, to counsel those who are to sit in synod with you, and to be himself an eye witness of your proceedings, and particularly of the order and regularity that is maintained.
ἐάν γάρ τις, ὡς ἐγὼ οὐκ οἶμαι, τὴν ἡμετέραν κέλευσιν καὶ νῦν διακρούσασθαι πειρώμενος μὴ βουληθῇ παραγενέσθαι, ἐντεῦθεν παρ' ἡμῶν ἀποσταλήσεται, ὃς ἐκ βασιλικοῦ προστάγματος αὐτὸν ἐκβαλὼν ὡς οὐ προσῆκεν ὅροις αὐτοκράτορος ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐξενεχθεῖσιν ἀντιτείνειν διδάξει.	If anyone should dare on the present occasion also to disobey our command, and refuse to come to the council, which, however, I do not anticipate, an officer will be dispatched immediately to send him into banishment by imperial order, that he may learn not to oppose the decrees enacted by the emperor for the support of truth.
λοιπὸν ἔσται τῆς ὑμετέρας ὁσιότητος ἔργον ὁμογνώμονι κρίσει, μήτε πρὸς ἀπέχθειαν μήτε πρὸς χάριν, ἀκολούθως δὲ τῷ ἐκκλησιαστικῷ καὶ ἀποστολικῷ κανόνι, τοῖς πλημμεληθεῖσιν εἴτ' οὖν κατὰ σφάλμα συμβεβηκόσι τὴν ἀρμόττουσαν θεραπείαν ἐπινοῆσαι, ἵνα καὶ πάσης βλασφημίας ἐλευθερώσῃτε τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὰς ἐμὰς ἐπικουφίσῃτε φροντίδας καὶ τὴν τῆς εἰρήνης χάριν τοῖς νῦν στασιαζομένοις ἀποδόντες μεγίστην εὐκλειαν ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς προξενήσῃτε.	All that now devolves upon your holinesses is to decide with unanimous judgment, without partiality or prejudice, in accordance with the ecclesiastical and apostolical rule, and to devise suitable remedies for the offenses which may have resulted from error, so that the Church may be freed from all reproach, my anxiety may be diminished, peace may be restored to those now at variance, and your renown may be increased.
ὁ θεὸς ὑμᾶς διαφυλάττοι, ἀδελφοὶ ἀγαπητοί.	May God preserve you, beloved brethren.

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³ Theodoret ἄξιον