Epilogue

Council of Gangra (c. AD 340)

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Epilogue

These things we write, not to cut off those who wish to lead in the Church of God an ascetic life, according to the Scriptures; but those who carry the pretence of asceticism to superciliousness; both exalting themselves above those who live more simply, and introducing novelties contrary to the Scriptures and the ecclesiastical Canons. We do, assuredly, admire virginity accompanied by humility; and we have regard for continence, accompanied by godliness and gravity; and we praise the leaving of worldly occupations, [when it is made] with lowliness of mind; [but at the same time] we honour the holy companionship of marriage, and we do not contemn wealth enjoyed with uprightness and beneficence; and we commend plainness and frugality in apparel, [which is worn] only from attention, [and that] not over-fastidious, to the body; but dissolute and effeminate excess in dress we eschew; and we reverence the houses of God and embrace the assemblies held therein as holy and helpful, not confining religion within the houses, but reverencing every place built in the name of God; and we approve of gathering together in the Church itself for the common profit; and we bless the exceeding charities done by the brethren to the poor, according to the traditions of the Church; and, to sum up in a word, we wish that all things which have been delivered by the Holy Scriptures and the Apostolical traditions, may be observed in the Church.

Notes.
This is lacking in the ancient epitome; and while it occurs after Canon XX. in the versions of Dionysius Exiguus and of Isidore Mercator, it is not numbered as a canon. Moreover in John of Antioch's Collection and in Photius's Nomocanon, the number of canons is said to be 20. Only the Greek Scholiasts number it as Canon XXI., but its genuineness is unquestioned. It is curiously enough found in the Corpus Juris Canonici, divided into two canons! Gratian's Decretum, Pars I., Dist. XXX., c. xvj., and Dist. xli., c. v. Van Espen. The Fathers of Gangra recognize not only the Holy Scriptures, but also the Apostolical traditions for the rule of morals. From this [canon] it is by no means doubtful that the fathers of this Synod considered that the Eustathians had violated some already existing ecclesiastical canons. Beveridge is of opinion that these are those commonly called the Canons of the Apostles (Synod. I. 5). Nor is this unlikely to be true, for there can be no doubt that the doctrines of the Eustathians condemned by this synod are directly opposed to those very "Canons of the Apostles"; and no small argument is drawn for the authority and antiquity of the Canons of

the Apostles from the large number of Eustathian teachings found to be therein condemned, as Beveridge has pointed out and as can easily be seen by comparing the two.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.