

Dear Anastasia,

Evlogeite!

Your have such a beautiful name, Resurrection! My daughter is named Anastasia. How wonderful to live each day in the remembrance of our Paschal joy. I thank God that you want to inquire into the matter of Name-worshiping. I am always encouraged by people, like you, who humbly seek the truth.

I want to assure you, first of all, that our holy Hierarchs have not fallen into heresy. Quite the contrary. Met Ephraim, Met Makarios and Bishop Gregory have navigated these turbulent waters in a way which demonstrates their Christian patience, love and wisdom. Who is doing all the yelling and screaming? Isn't it those who have departed the Church (or threatening to)?

As with most things in life, there is a way that is balanced, reasonable and true---and there are extremes to either side. There are two extreme views when it comes to this present controversy. They are as follows:

Name-worshippers. This view is heretical. It holds that the letters and sounds of the names of God are to be worshiped and adored as God Himself. They fail to distinguish between the Divine Essence (which no one can know) and the Divine Energies (which is God's revelation of Himself). To my knowledge, there are no actual name worshipers in existence (there may be a few random individuals, however, but who knows?).

Name-fighters. This view is held by those who fight against the heresy of Name-worshippers. The Name-fighters are the ones in the Russian synod of 1913 who falsely accused Anthony Bulatovic and the Athonite monks of being Name-worshippers. They are also the ones who, today, falsely accuse our Hierarchs of being Name-worshippers.

The correct way is the Orthodox way. It is the way of balance and truth. We may be called\*Name-glorifiers. God has given us His holy Name by which we may worship Him and praise Him. The Name is a gift and\*the Holy Church has always glorified the holy Name of God.

Orthodoxy does not worship letters,\*we do not worship the syllables or sounds of the names of God. But that does not mean that they are not sanctified by virtue of the Holy Spirit Who fills them.

King David said in Psalm 53, "O God, in Thy Name save me, and in Thy strength do Thou judge me"

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