

## Testimony and Icons

“A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition you should reject him”. The word heresy in Greek means “to leave the faith and to get a different doctrine”. For example: rejecting the Divinity of Christ or the Holy Trinity or the Resurrection of the Lord from the dead. These were the heresies in the past. In the history of heresies, Arianism (coming from its establisher Arius) is one of the greatest heresies and it states that Christ is only human and not God.

The First Ecumenical Council – Known as the Nicene Council from the city of Nicaea – rejected this heresy when the meeting was held and a big part of the Faith Creed was composed (I believe in one God...). Seven Ecumenical Councils were held, and among them is the Seventh Council that we are remembering today. These Councils determined our Orthodox faith and poured it in the form of doctrines.

The dogma is the set of doctrines that were clarified in the Seven Councils or were put into words that were explained by our Holy Fathers (St. Athanasius the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, Basil the Great). These dogmas, as they were expressed, in addition to the fathers’ explanations of these dogmas are our faith. Every one of us must preserve this faith. If a person preserved this faith, we would call him an “Orthodox” person, i.e. a person with a straight doctrine; a person whose belief isn’t deviated and who glorifies God righteously in the Divine Service.

We don’t worship the piece of wood or mosaic, but we go through the mind and the heart towards Lord Jesus or the Mother of God or the Saint that is painted. We feel that these saints are present with us in the Church through their spirit and paintings. This is how the Church of earth and the Church of heaven are united. When an icon exists in a house, the person painted on the icon will be present in the house through the Holy Spirit. He overlooks us through the icon and is poured in our hearts if these hearts were obedient to Him.

Through icons, our glorified Lord, the Theotokos and saints live in our houses. Through icons, these houses become residences for the Lord and his beloved ones. The icon protects us if we believed in the person drawn on it. The house that is full of icons is a Church. Walls that carry icons are walls of a Church. The Church is spread into our houses through the saints that live with us.

The icon is a sign that heaven and earth have become united. If you filled your house with icons, you would be showing your Orthodox faith.

The Lord wants this testimony from you. We have the testimony of the word and also the testimony of signs that manifest this word such as icons.

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