

Accepting Brothers and Sisters in Christ

*Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East
Diocese of Western California*

*Mar Yosip Parish Youth Ministry
Weekly Bible Study*

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9.30.2008*

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Agenda

- Goal of the Church
- Forgiveness
- Acceptance
- Wrap up

Goal of the Church in Our Lives

- Inclusive
 - Within Church
- Exclusive
 - Reach out
- Church Mission
 - Internal
 - Love: I Cor 13: 4,5,6,7,13
 - Bond of Unity: Eph 4:16
 - Preach faith and Service faithful
 - External
 - God's purpose: "All men to be saved."
 - Preach faith and invite others towards Christ



Forgiveness

- Why forgive? Am I forgiven?
- Pre-requisite of being forgiven!
 - *“Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”*

Mathew 6: 12-13

- Examples of Love and Forgiveness

- Jesus Christ

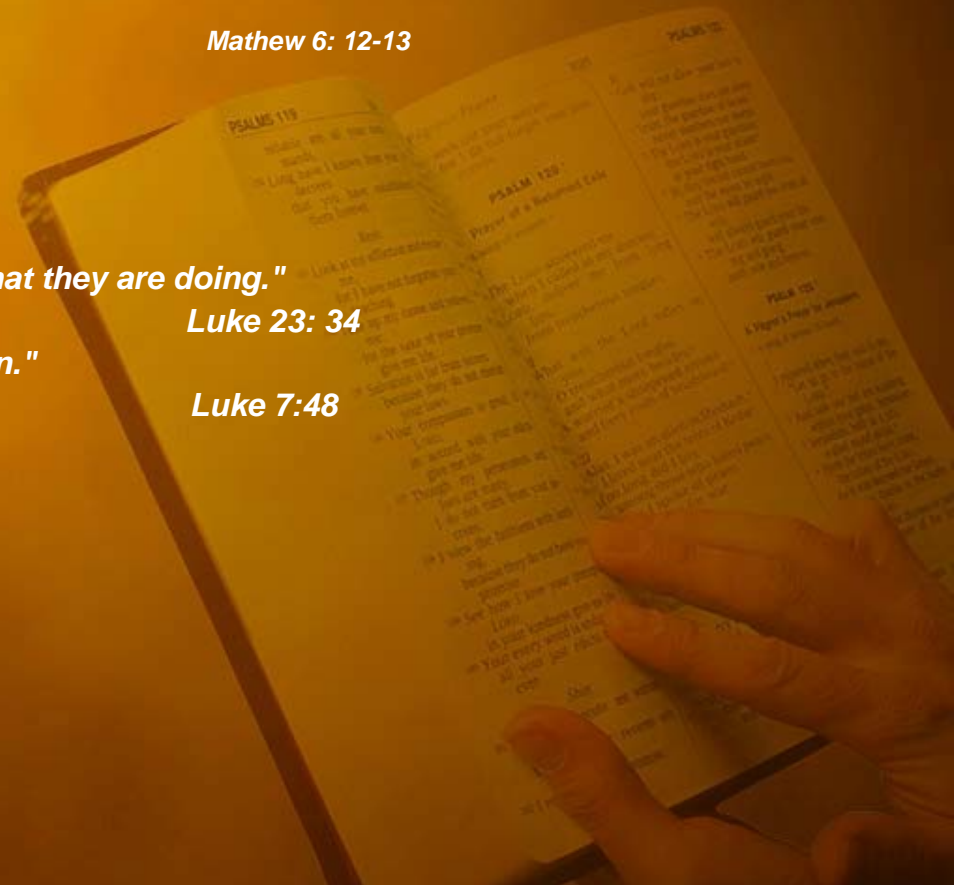
- *“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”*
- *Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”*

Luke 23: 34

Luke 7:48

- St. Paul

- Persecutor of Christians
- Persecuted for Christ



Forgiveness

- Forgiveness as a Result of Love

- *“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. “*

Galatians 6: 1-3

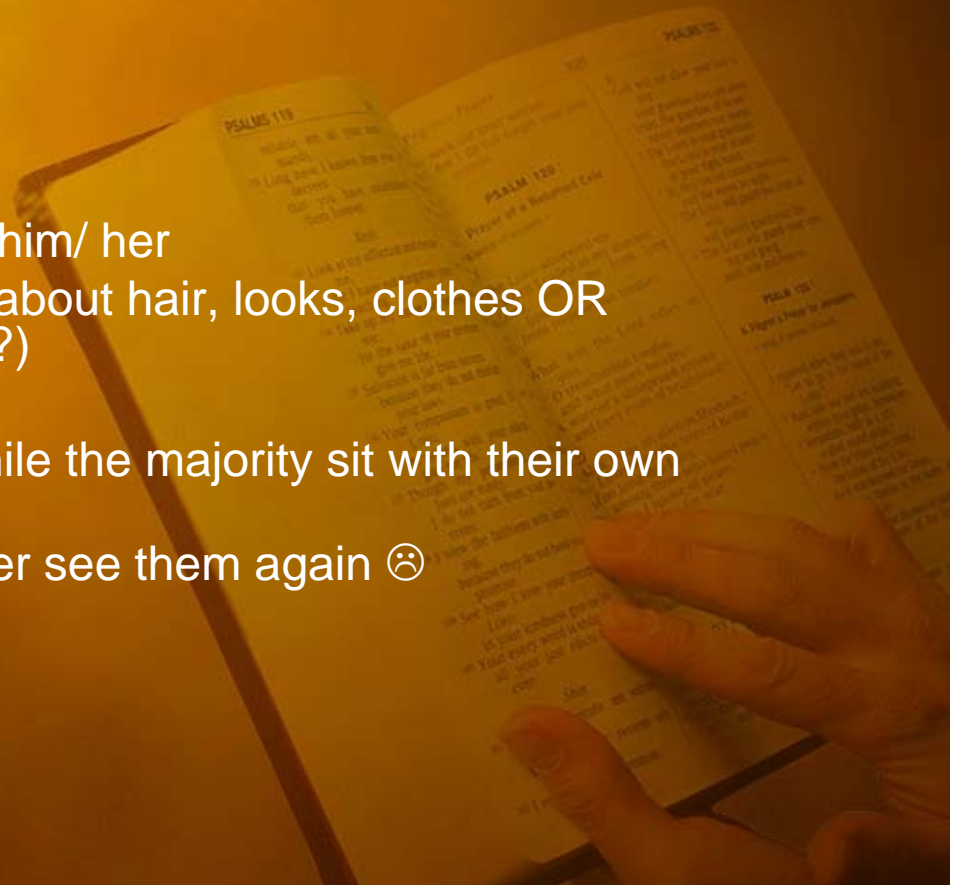
- *But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

Mathew 6: 15



Acceptance Case Study

- Case (New Member/ former Youth returning to the mother Church)
 - Imagine a Tuesday night bible Study!
 - Two Scenarios
- 1. New Person Walks in
 - 1st reaction: Heads turn towards him/ her
 - Slow conversations (Comments about hair, looks, clothes OR WHY IS THIS PERSON HERE??)
 - After Bible Study we go to hall
 - Few say hi to the new person while the majority sit with their own tribes
 - They go home, and we may never see them again ☹️



Acceptance Case Study

2. A Youth returns to Mar Yosip Parish

- First Reaction: Heads Still turn in church
- Slow Conversations continue, but different subject from last case
- In the hall: not only we ignore, but we may say a few nice things to them too.
- The person leaves and we may not see them again! ☹️

Let's re-examine the situation



Acceptance

- Accept Your Brothers and Sisters

- Love to be loved; forgive to be forgiven
- Invite and Encourage. Do not Block
 - *Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

Mathew 19: 14

- Do not push away; but pull towards Christ
- Do not discourage; Encourage
- Do not hate, but love

Key Takeaways

- Our Ultimate Goal: To be Christ like
 - Adopt Christ's mentality: Love, forgive, Accept
 - Accept and welcome with open heart
 - Work in the church without reward
 - Invite friends to the house of the Lord
 - Mother Church: The Assyrian Church of the East
 - Sacred Orthodox (True) Theology

BUT

"Be wise as the serpent but
harmless as the dove."

Matthew 10:16