

# The Harvester



*Preparing Souls  
To Serve The Lord!*



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## Basic Truths about Forgiveness

By Brian R. Kenyon

Some people wrongly equate “forgiveness” with “not holding a grudge.” Thus, they reason: Since Christians are “not to hold a grudge,” they must “forgive” others (no matter what). If they do not “forgive” others (no matter what), then they sin because that is “holding a grudge.” However, all “forgiveness” involves “not holding a grudge,” but not all “not holding a grudge” involves “forgiveness.” Christians are never to hold grudges against anyone. Although the English word “grudge” is not found in most English Bibles (ex-

cept the KJV in Jas. 5:9, which is better translated “grumble,” NKJ, or “complain,” NAS), the idea certainly is found in Scripture. First, Jesus’ statement about anyone being “angry with his brother without a cause” teaches that Christians are not to hold grudges against others (Mt. 5:22). Second, the Lord’s desire that Christians avoid “malice,” which refers to hateful feelings toward others, teaches against holding grudges (Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; Titus 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:1).

### “Forgiveness” Defined

Concerning its vocabulary, “forgiveness” can be studied in the New Testament primarily from two verbs and a noun. First, *aphiemi* (ἀφίημι) means to send forth; send away; to let go; permit; forgive. This letting go can refer to debts (Mt. 6:12; 18:27, 32) or to sins (Mt. 9:2, 5-6; 12:31-32; Lk. 23:34; Acts 8:22; Rom. 4:7; Jas. 5:15; 1 Jn. 1:9; 2:12). On the conditional nature of this forgiveness, Vine notes: “Human ‘forgiveness’ is to be strictly analogous to divine ‘forgiveness’ ... If certain conditions are fulfilled, there is no limitations to Christ’s



On September 18, 2018, surrounded by her family, **Joyce Hixon Kidwell Stearsman** passed from this life into Abraham’s bosom. Services were held September 21 in Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee. In 1999, Joyce became part of the Florida School of Preaching family when she married Jackie Stearsman (who served as director 1992-2009).

Joyce was a very elegant Christian woman, full of hospitality. She loved her Lord and her family. She was a frequent speaker at ladies days. She also taught ladies classes for the Florida School of Preaching for many years. The curriculum for part of those classes was her own book, *Polishing Rubies*. She also wrote and taught a series of lessons, titled “Wisdom for Living,” which encouraged wives to plan ahead for themselves and their families in the event they become widowed as she was in 1996, at the death of her husband, Paul T. Kidwell, Sr. Widowhood is a topic some avoid, but Joyce plainly and lovingly taught ladies the importance of being prepared for such an event. She also wrote chapters for the school’s annual lectureship book. Joyce contributed greatly to the school’s program in encouraging Christian women in general and preacher students’ wives in particular. We appreciate her influence on the school. “Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised” (Pr. 31:30).

law of 'forgiveness' ... The conditions are repentance and confession, Matt. 18:15-17; Luke 17:3" (251).

Second, *charizomai* (χαρίζομαι) is a verb form of "grace" that fittingly means "to be shown a favor unconditionally" (Vine 251). This definition would apply to Jesus' healing (Lk. 7:21) and delivering from a storm (Acts 27:24). The word is also used for forgiveness (Eph. 4:32; Col. 2:13; 3:13). However, it must be noted that the very concept of forgiveness is a gracious act of God (cf. Eph. 2:8-9), though God's actual forgiving of sins is conditional (cf. Col. 2:13).

Third, "forgiveness" as a noun (*aphesis*, ἄφεσις) denotes "'a dismissal, release' ... it is used of remission of sins, and translated 'forgiveness' in Mark 3:29; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14, and in KJV of Acts 5:31; 13:38; 26:18" (Vine 251). Guy N. Woods notes that forgiveness is the acceptance of a relationship that existed before the sin occurred (cf. Lk. 13:3, 5; Acts 2:38), which would imply that both parties must willingly be involved in forgiveness (41).

## "Forgiveness" Conditions

There are unmistakable conditions that are connected with receiving God's forgiveness. First, repentance and baptism are required. When those on Pentecost were convicted of their sins and asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?," God answered, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized ... for the remission [forgiveness, KJV] of sins" (Acts 2:36-28). Someone might respond by citing passages where Jesus seemingly attached no conditions, like

when He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). However, Jesus could not do anything against the Father's will, including forgiving sins (cf. Mt. 20:23; Jn. 5:19, 30; 6:38). The conditions God the Father set were conditions by which Jesus was bound to forgive!

Second, forgiving others is a condition for being forgiven (cf. Mt. 6:14-15). Forgiveness is reciprocal! Again, forgiveness is not the same as "not holding a grudge," but it is conditional (Lk. 17:3-4). Jesus' point was that if we do not forgive after people have repented, we will not be forgiven (cf. 2 Cor. 2:5-11).

## Conclusion

If God's forgiveness of sins were unconditional, then either everyone would be saved or God would have to show partiality. The relationship of God's forgiveness of sins and Christians' forgiveness of one another is summed up by Paul, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:32). The way God forgave His people is how they are to forgive others. Did God forgive His people unconditionally? Then how can they forgive others unconditionally. Again, this does not justify holding grudges because forgiveness is not the same as "not holding a grudge." May God's people be ever vigilant to repent when they sin against God and one another (cf. Mt. 5:23-24; 18:15-17; Lk. 17:3-4).

## The Harvester

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\*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month's financial statement.



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## Do You Understand the Christian's Relationship to the Civil State?

44th Annual Lectureship

**January 21-24, 2019**

Brian R. Kenyon, Director

### Monday

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 9:00 Purpose and Function of Civil Government | Stephen Atnip   |
| 9:40 Evil Influences and the State            | Jeff Miller     |
| 10:20 BREAK                                   |                 |
| 10:50 "Separation of Church and State"        | David W. Hester |
| 11:30 LUNCH                                   |                 |

### Forum: Civil States of Mind

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 1:30 Learning to Respect Authority                            | Hiram Kemp         |
| 2:00 The Right Time to Rebel                                  | Forest Antemasaris |
| 2:30 Counter-Culture Character                                | Caleb Glenn Coley  |
| 3:30 <b>Ladies Class:</b> Christian Involvement with Politics | Sheila Butt        |
| 3:30 Questions And Answers On Forum Topic                     |                    |
| 4:30 DINNER   |                    |
| 6:30 Congregational Singing                                   |                    |
| 7:00 God's People in High Places: Joseph                      | Dylan Johns        |
| 7:45 Resisting Radicalization                                 | Sidney Moore       |

### Tuesday

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 9:00 Civil Leaders Who Disobeyed God           | Jason Jackson   |
| 9:40 The Christian and Voting                  | David W. Hester |
| 10:20 BREAK                                    |                 |
| 10:50 Civil State Challenges in Revelation 2-3 | Dewayne Bryant  |
| 11:30 LUNCH                                    |                 |

### Forum: Christians and Culture

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 1:30 Holidays: Secular or Sacred?         | Bruce Daugherty    |
| 2:00 Gender Roles in Religion             | Emmanuel Daugherty |
| 2:30 Civil Law and Marriage               | Vince Daugherty    |
| 3:00 BREAK                                |                    |
| 3:30 Questions And Answers On Forum Topic |                    |
| 4:30 DINNER                               |                    |
| 6:30 Congregational Singing               |                    |
| 7:00 God's People in High Places: Daniel  | Andrae L. Smith    |
| 7:45 Submitting to Jesus as King          | Jimmy Clark        |

### Wednesday

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 9:00 When Civil Disobedience Is Scriptural              | Jason Jackson |
| 9:40 How Should "Society" Respond to Homosexuality (1)? | G. Beals      |
| 10:20 BREAK   |               |
| 10:50 "Render to Caesar"                                | Jimmy Clark   |
| 11:30 LUNCH   |               |

### Forum: Civil Questions of Life and Death

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1:30 Is Abortion a Right to Choose?        | Melvin Sapp    |
| 2:00 Is Capital Punishment Scriptural?     | William Howard |
| 2:30 Can a Christian "Bear the Sword"?     | Jake Sutton    |
| 3:00 BREAK                                 |                |
| 3:30 Questions And Answers On Forum Topic  |                |
| 4:30 DINNER                                |                |
| 6:30 Congregational Singing                |                |
| 7:00 God's People in High Places: Nehemiah | Will Vann      |
| 7:45 Christianity and Patriotism           | Bill Davis     |

### Thursday

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
| 9:00 Evangelism and Civil Government                    | Shane Fisher   |
| 9:40 How Should "Society" Respond to Homosexuality (2)? | G. Beals       |
| 10:20 BREAK   |                |
| 10:50 The Bible and "Social Issues"                     | Melvin L. Otey |
| 11:30 LUNCH   |                |

### Forum: Controversial Civil Circumstances

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1:30 Preaching That Disturbs the Status Quo             | Niipaak Laar    |
| 2:00 Christians Taking Christians to Court              | David Stearsman |
| 2:30 When Involvement with "Social Issues" Goes Too Far | S. Moore        |
| 3:00 BREAK  |                 |
| 3:30 Questions And Answers On Forum Topic               |                 |
| 4:30 DINNER   |                 |
| 6:30 Congregational Singing                             |                 |
| 7:00 God's People in High Places: Mordecai and Esther   | H. Kemp         |
| 7:45 Harmonizing Our Dual Citizenship                   | Melvin L. Otey  |



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Vince Daugherty



Bill Davis



Shane Fisher



David Hester

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**The Harvester**

**October 2018**

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## The Importance of Our Annual Lectureship

Since 1976, with the theme “Meeting the Challenge,” the Florida School of Preaching has hosted our annual lectureship. It always starts the third Monday in January. Although it was going on long before Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day became a national holiday, that is a good way to remember its annual starting day. The lectureship began as an extension of the school primarily for the students. It gave them opportunity to focus on a Biblical theme and to hear sound Gospel preachers from different parts of the country with whom they may not have been familiar. This would help students hear and appreciate different styles of preaching as well as help them network with faithful brethren and congregations (in a day before social media). Of course now, the lectureship is more of a national event and our students are



FSOP students and staff at the 1973 Freed-Hardeman lectureship. Before ours began in 1975, FSOP took “field-trips” there annually.

very busy during its course, working behind the scenes. The lectureship is more than sermons. We live-stream and electronically archive the lessons to potential millions. We produce a book and provide several electronic methods of getting the lessons, in print and electronic, to those interested. We have never charged a registration fee. However, like any work of the Lord, it costs money to make it happen. If you would like to help us defray the expenses, it is not too early to send us a contribution, ear-marked for the lectureship. **THANKS FOR YOUR HELP!**