



FORGIVE? FORGET IT!

How often Jesus exhorted us to forgive, even saying that unless we forgive others, we cannot be forgiven by God! Strong stuff! And obviously important enough for Jesus to speak the way he did about it. Yet do we take it as seriously as He did? We can see when others need to forgive, on an individual or even a national scale, but do WE forgive those who have wronged us, or do we consider it unimportant or even unnecessary?

CAST: Agnes, Harold, Vicar

An old couple are sitting well-wrapped up, in the grounds of a rest-home.

A sign proclaims: **Fallen Leaves Establishment for Geriatric Military Personnel (F.L.E.G.M.)**

Agnes: Tell you what, Harold there's a nip in the air!

Harold: Well you ought to tell Matron about it. They're very catching you know. When I was in the trenches, everybody had 'em. Nits in the 'air!

Agnes: (loudly) I didn't say NITS, I said NIP... in the air!

Harold: (starting to rise) Where's my rifle? I'll get him! Call HQ! Invasion! NIPS! Nips!

Agnes: (pulling him down) I think it's time for your green pills, Harold-here- (she gets the pills from her apron pocket) you mustn't get excited, there, there, now. The war's been over for sixty years, you must learn to forgive!

Harold: To err is to be human, to forgive... what is it, Agnes?

Agnes: Divine, love. Oh, talking about divine, here comes the vicar, (enter vicar, looking around for the couple)

Harold: I didn't know the vicar was in Burma! Why has he come in a Japanese car? (he creaks to his feet, brandishing his stick) He's a traitor, a spy! An infiltrator!

Agnes: No, love, he's learned to forgive and forget. You remember, he lost his older brother in Singapore. Hello, vicar, come and sit here, next to my old man. You'll have to forgive him, he rambles in the afternoon.

Harold: He's not an old man, Agnes!

Agnes: Tut! Harold! I was saying, Vicar, that Harold ought to learn to forgive and forget. The war, you know. He doesn't have any problem forgetting anything else. Now I'll just go and put the kettle on, while you boys have a nice little chat! (exit)

Harold: Lost your brother, did you?

Vicar: Yes, Prison camp is Singapore. He was shot, trying to escape.

Harold: How can you forgive the Japanese for that?

Vicar: Well, I was bitter at first, but eventually, God showed me that I must forgive, if I expected to be forgiven myself. It took time, and a lot of prayer, it wasn't easy, but as I learned to forgive them, I felt God forgiving me for the bitterness and hatred that I'd allowed to build up.

Harold: I lost all my friends in Burma – Jack... Bert... Ted. No! I can't forgive what they did!

Vicar: Harold, as long as I've known you, you've carried this hatred around with you! Can't you see it's destroying you and all those around you?

Harold: It's too late for me, I can't change now!

Vicar: It's never too late – remember the thief on the cross? He found forgiveness when he was dying, and you can't get much later than that!

(enter Agnes, looking meaningfully at the vicar)

Agnes: Did you have a nice chat, then? Milk and sugar?

Vicar: Yes, thank you, Agnes. Mmmm, nice cup of tea.

Harold: Nice cup of tea, she were!

Agnes: Who?

Harold: Daisy. You remember Daisy, Vicar? One of the land-girls on Dad's farm.

Agnes: Her! I'll not have her name mentioned around here, thank you very much!

Harold: (sings vacantly) Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer, do.

Agnes: Brazen little troll...

Vicar: Agnes! Aren't we forgetting something? 'But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in Heaven forgive your sins'.

Agnes: But Vicar, when that floozy came to our village, no man was safe! She even tried to take my Harold away from me, and we'd just got engaged! She was all dyed blonde hair and long scarlet fingernails! Flighty little madam, she was always after the chaps!

Harold: After the Japs, was she? And I never knew Daisy was in Burma!