

Bible Byte 2

You willingly forgive, and your love is always there for those who pray to you. Psalm 86:5

The Psalm 86:5 Theatre Company

The Psalm 86:5 Theatre Company features all of the stereotypical dynamics you would expect of a theatrical troupe. The over-wrought director, suffering for his art; the vain leading man and the self obsessed leading lady; and the much neglected and abused chorus, who get it wrong, but are in their own way trying to make their artistic mark.

Characters:

Director: Flamboyant, pretentious, large oversized actions

Horatio: Heroic, vain; carries a helmet and sword

Cordelia: Lovely, sickly sweet, overly feminine; wears a blonde wig and carries a bouquet

Chorus: Two wooden 'unnatural' and awkward extras, dressed as peasant choristers



Enter a director from one side, dressed all in black, complete with beret. He leafs through several pages of a script, scribbles violently on several of the pages, tears out a couple of pages, tossing them dismissively over shoulder. After a dramatic sigh, claps hands and calls off stage...

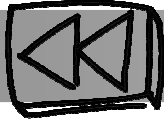
Director: Rehearsal!!!!

Four actors in Shakespearean costumes enter laughing, gesturing flamboyantly, preening themselves. They each greet the director with affected air-kisses.

Director: Now, we are up to page 86, scene 5 and we're going to take it from the parapet and dungeon scene. What I am looking for here, people, is some really strong characterisation. Horatio, remember, you willingly, (*over-emphasising the emotion*) willingly, (completely over the top) will- ing-ly forgive. And Cordelia, your love, your love, your love, your love - is always there. Any questions?

Horatio: Do I handsomely forgive?

Director: Horatio, you willingly forgive – you can do it handsomely if you want, but you willingly forgive!



Bible Byte 2

Chorus 1: *(timidly)* Excuse me, who are we?

Director: Well! You are the...the...(searching through the script)...the chorus of...of... farmhands, no villagers, no fair maidens...chickens...no, no, that's in Richard the Third. Ah here! Those who pray!

Chorus: Those who pray?

Director: Those who pray. Give it your best shot.

Cordelia: *(coughing sweetly, but obviously falsely to attract attention)* So...my love is always there? But where, where would that be exactly?

Director: Cordelia, my darling – why, right here! In the spotlight, centre stage. Your love is always there!

Cordelia giggles, blows a kiss to the director and moves centre stage.

Director: Right, do you think we could have some lines now? And... curtain up!

Horatio climbs up onto a chair or a step ladder

Cordelia: *(dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* and your love is always there

Cordelia: *(dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* and your love is always there

Cordelia: *(dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* and your love is always there

...awkward silence; clearly someone has missed a line

Horatio: *(loud stage whisper)* Is it your line?

Cordelia: *(loud stage whisper)* No, isn't it yours?

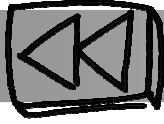
Director thumbs through the script...

Director: No, no, no, it's...those who pray

Chorus: Those who pray? That's us.

Director: Yes, but look! You've messed up the scene! A disaster, a tragedy, a travesty of the performing arts...

Chorus: Lucky you willingly forgive...



Bible Byte 2

Cordelia: Oh, that's my cue - and your love is always there for those who pray to you.

Chorus: But that's our line – we're those who pray

Director storms across the stage, bangs head dramatically against a wall. And collapses into a chair - sobbing.

Horatio: I'm sure he'll recover. Let's try again...

Cordelia: *(Dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* And your love is always there

Cordelia: *(Dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* And your love is always there

Cordelia: *(Dramatically towards Horatio)* You willingly forgive

Horatio: *(Reaching towards Cordelia)* And your love is always there

Chorus: *(Woodenly)* For those who pray to you

Director jumps up, furious at the terrible performance.

Director: Psalm 86 vs 5 theatre company! That was appalling, that was some of the worst acting I've seen in the 86 shows I've directed on 5 continents! You are all hopeless, none of you can act, none of you can move artfully, none of you can speak properly – you all sound like, like, like Australians! Dreadful! What am I going to do?

Horatio: Well for starters you can find yourself a new Horatio, if you can't willingly forgive a few first time nerves. I won't be spoken to like that.

(Horatio takes off his helmet and sword and throws them down as he storms off)

Cordelia: And I'm sorry, but I quit too. You'll have to find another love who is always there.

(Cordelia takes off her wig and throws it and her bouquet at the director as she exits)

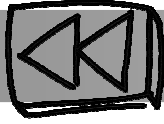
The chorus follow her off stage.

Director: Oh dear! *(innocently)* Did I say something wrong? Actors – they are so temperamental. They can't take the slightest bit of input. Never mind.

(pacing up and down the stage)

But where am I going to find new actors? I need a new Horatio who willing forgives, a new Cordelia whose love is always there, and a new chorus of those who pray?

(Several leaders in the audience put up their hands, and encourage other audience members to volunteer.)



Bible Byte 2

Ahh – of course – look at all this fresh talent – so much x-factor.

(Director chooses a new Horatio, and Cordelia and several chorus members. They take on the props that were left behind.)

Director: Fantastic, now I have a grand new epic vision for this production – *polyvocality!* I know you’ve never heard of it, but that’s because I just made it up then from my pure genius mind. Instead of having only one Horatio, I want all of the boys to say Horatio’s line – amplifying the sound, “You willingly forgive”. Let’s try it.

Boys & Horatio: You willingly forgive

Director: And instead of just one Cordelia, all of the girls, join in saying, “And your love is always there” – hand gestures will help girls.

Girls & Cordelia: And your love is always there

Director: That’s wonderful. And finally – the chorus – the chorus – everyone joins in the chorus: “For those who pray to you”. Let’s all practise....

All: For those who pray to you.

Director: Oh this is exciting, it’s ground-breaking, it’s brilliant, you are all amazing. One more time from the top, let me introduce you.

(Takes a deep dramatic breath) Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you Psalm 86 vs 5

(applause)

Boys &
Horatio: You willingly forgive

Girls &
Cordelia: And your love is always there

All: For those who pray to you.

Director walks on to stage and takes a bow, encourages everyone to take a bow... old actors re enter applauding and bowing and calling “bravo!” to the new actors.