

The Power Of Forgiveness

(by Law Wing Lun F.6A)

Last year, a fire broke out in Nam Sang Wei lasting for more than 17 hours before it was finally put out. Nam Sang Wei has been a major breeding ground for migrating birds with high ecological values. However, companies wanted to redevelop Nam Sang Wei, with a stunning view, into luxurious apartments to make money. Residents there were able to see rare birds and various vegetation. Peter, the boss of the ABC company decided to demolish Nam Sang Wei, so they could use the land to develop his project. Chris, the son of Peter, was the leader of a NGO which aimed to protect the environment.

Chris suspected that the 17-hour fire blaze at Nam Sang Wei was an arson. He called the Fire Department to complain about the slow response of the firefighters, since firefighters should have arrived at Nam Sang Wei within 15 minutes after receiving the call. After burning for 17 hours, the land of Nam Sang Wei was totally destroyed. It could not be rehabilitated and it had no ecological value. Nam Sang Wei was no longer a place for migratory birds. Organisms could not survive in here anymore.

After the destructive fire, a number of fire incidents and fallen trees were reported in Nam Sang Wei, which revealed the inadequacy of the government policies and measures on conserving land of high ecological values. Due to the lack of manpower, inspectors were over-burdened with work. Understaffing made them more difficult to work efficiently. Furthermore, they needed to work under bad weather and to encounter hostile landowners.

After knowing what his father had done in Nam Sang Wei, Peter could not forgive him. He thought that if the government could not protect the high ecological land, he should take up the duty himself. Apparently, it was against his father's will.

Several days later, Chris set up a Facebook group to raise the awareness of the public. A small number of citizens joined him to camp in Nam Sang Wei to protest against the further destruction done by the companies. When they saw suspicious people carrying a bottle of liquid and a lighter, they went to stop them.

After a few months of demonstration, Chris went to his father's company and shouted at him, 'Look at what you have done to the natural environment! You're not only destroying Nam Sang Wei, but also our relationship!' After venting all his anger, he left his dad's company. His mother also felt disappointed with his husband. They chose to leave him. They had never imagined that their beloved family member would put money before conscience.

Years later, Chris read from the newspaper that the Government would consider resuming private land which had high ecological values and offering reasonable compensation to the affected landowners. Moreover, the Government would deploy more inspectors for land conservation. The last line of the news mentioned how Chris's father persuaded different political parties to change the inadequate government measures. As a result, the government decided to attach great importance to conserving high valued ecological land.

As Nelson Mandela once said, 'Forgiveness and kindness always make people smart, not silly.' Although Chris's father had done many bad things

in the past, he became a different person now. Not only did he beg Chris to forgive him, he also used his action – lobbying the relevant departments on land conservation policies, to prove that he deserved forgiveness.

Touched by what his father did, Chris finally forgave him. His father no longer did business by exploiting natural resources and hurting the environment. Both the father and son were working together to protect the environment. As Mandela said, ‘It will be a better place, if we work together.’