

Remarkable Forgiveness

On the evening of April 25, 1958, a young Korean exchange student, a leader in student Christian affairs in the University of Pennsylvania, left his apartment and went to the corner to send a letter to his parents in Pusan.

Turning from the mailbox, he stepped into the path of 11 leather-jacketed teenage boys. Without a word, they attacked him, beating him with a blackjack, a lead pipe and with their shoes and fists. All of Philadelphia cried out for vengeance. The district attorney secured legal authority to try the boys as adults so that those found guilty could be given the death penalty.

Suddenly, a letter arrived from Korea that made everyone stop and think. It was signed by the parents and by 20 other relatives of the murdered boy. Here is what it read, in part:

Our family has met together and we have decided to petition that the most generous treatment possible within the laws of your government be given to those who have committed this criminal action ... In order to give evidence of our sincere hope contained in this petition, we have decided to save money to start a fund to be used for the religious, educational, vocational, and social guidance of the boys when they are released ... We have dared to express our hope with a spirit received from the gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, who died for our sins."

What a remarkable spirit of love and forgiveness! The world cannot understand that kind of compassion, and it comes from the Holy Spirit living within.

After all, Jesus Christ took our sins to the cross, spilling His blood so that we might have pardon for our transgressions. He freely offers His grace and mercy to those who confess their sins and invite Him to be the Lord of their lives.

For those of us who are forgiven of much, we, too, should extend forgiveness to others.

– Beecher Hunter