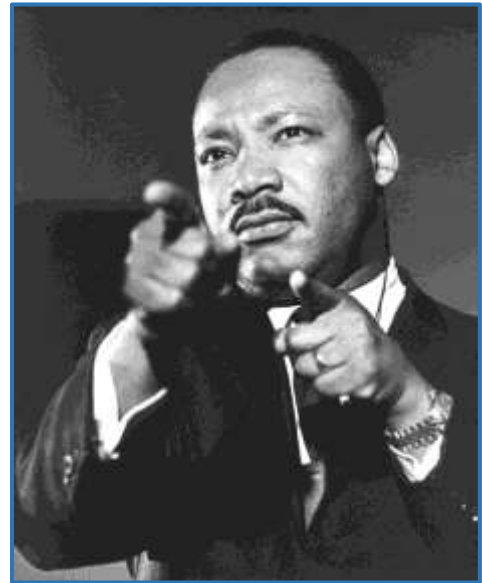


The Wisdom of a Martyr

Today is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a federal holiday held on the third Monday of January each year, which is around King's birthday, Jan. 15.

Born on that day in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, King was a pivotal advocate for African-Americans during the civil rights movement in the United States. King experienced racism from an early age, and those events stayed with and eventually brought him to a life of activism. After graduating college with a degree in theology, King became a pastor in Alabama. He began a series of peaceful protests in the South that eventually changed many laws dealing with the equality of African-Americans. He gave hundreds of speeches across the country, and in 1964 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.



On April 14, 1968, King was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee. Although his life ended that day, the work that he accomplished changed the nation. King will be remembered not only for his commitment to the cause of equality for African-Americans but also for his profound speeches that moved so many. Here are a few of his inspiring quotes:

- “Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness.”
- “We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”
- “All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”
- “He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love.”
- “If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”
- “There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor politic nor popular, but he must take it because his conscience tells him it is right.”
- “Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”
- “Those who are not looking for happiness are the most likely to find it, because those who are searching forget that the surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.”
- “Whatever your life's work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead and the unborn could do it no better.”

(more)

- “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”
- “If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.”
- “We are prone to judge success by the index of our salaries or the size of our automobiles rather than by the quality of our service and relationship to mankind.”
- “I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.”

Pondering such wisdom is an excellent way to honor his memory and, perhaps, do some reordering of our lives.

– Beecher Hunter