

Wisdom from Martin Luther King Jr.

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

King, of course, was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the civil rights movement that successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. As we celebrate today, we recall his dream for a just America. Here are a few of King's pearls of wisdom to remind us of the power of a vision:

- "Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase."
- "Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."
- "If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, brethren! Be careful, teachers!"
- "Science investigates; religion interprets. Science gives man knowledge, which is power; religion gives man wisdom, which is control. Science deals mainly with facts; religion deals mainly with values. The two are not rivals."
- "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."
- "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."
- "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."
- "I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant."
- "The time is always right to do what is right."
- "Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be a sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are."
- "For when people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory."
- "Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to 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."

These are values we can – and should – live by.

This day reminds us to be grateful for the life and leadership of Martin Luther King Jr.

– Beecher Hunter