

Becoming Antiracist

January 2022: Martin Luther King Jr.

“Yes, it is love that will save our world and our civilization, love even for enemies.” – Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Scripture: James 1: 22-25 You must be doers of the word and not only hearers who mislead themselves. Those who hear but don't do the word are like those who look at their faces in a mirror. They look at themselves, walk away, and immediately forget what they were like. But there are those who study the perfect law, the law of freedom, and continue to do it. They don't listen and then forget, but they put it into practice in their lives. They will be blessed in what they do.

History: In August 1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till's mutilated body was found in the river after a white man thought he may have flirted with his wife in a grocery store. A few months later, with Emmett Till's lynching on her mind, Rosa Parks refused to move her seat for a white person on a bus. Parks's actions helped spark a boycott that would catapult a young minister named Martin Luther King Jr. to national renown. Just 26 years old at the time, King had been recommended as an able young preacher who could mobilize the Black middle class and church community. King said, "Well, if you think I can render some service, I will." This started the public career of one of America's most well-known activists. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" has since proven to be one of the greatest works of Christian political theology ever produced by an American. King recognized the need for Christians to be allies, working together in the Black freedom struggle, while acknowledging that most of the white church had chosen the path of complicity over advocacy. from *The Color of Compromise* by Dr. Jemar Tisby, 2019

For further reading: "On August 28, 1963, famed civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. shared his dream of a better world on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. His renowned "I Have a Dream" speech is only one among many places he laid out the philosophy of justice and nonviolence that changed the world forever. Fifty years after his death, King's writings remain the best articulation of our best collective hope for a more just, compassionate, and peaceful world. Here, in the only major one-volume collection of his writings, speeches, interviews, and autobiographical reflections, is Martin Luther King Jr. on non-violence, social piety, integration, black nationalism, and the ethics of love and hope. In the years after his death, the Nobel laureate's writings have only grown in significance and in their prophetic power to challenge and guide us onto a better future." from *A Testament of Hope, The Essential Writings and Speeches, Martin Luther King Jr.* edited by James M. Washington, 1986

Video link: Martin Luther King speech "*The Other America*" - [MLK: The Other America - YouTube](#)

"The Higher Principle of Love" Prayer

God grant that the resources that you have will be used to do that, the great resources of education, the resources of wealth, and that we will be able to move into this new world... A world in which [all] will live together as [family]; a world in which [all] will no longer take necessities from the masses to give luxuries to the classes. A world in which [all] will throw down the sword and live by the higher principle of love. The time when we shall be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of [our] inhumanity and into the bright and glittering daylight of freedom and justice. That there will be the time we will be able to stand before the universe and say with joy—The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and our Christ! And he shall reign forever and ever! Hal-lelujah! - Martin Luther King Jr. "Thou Dear God" (King Legacy) Beacon Press, as printed in JustFaith Ministries, 2020-2021

