

# Pastor's Perspective for February 2023 "Time to Dream Again"

In Recognition of February as Black History Month

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Someone once said, "There is nothing more powerful than a Truth whose time has come." August 28, 1963 was one of those powerful moments, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was its "prophet." His essential message was that the national sins of segregation and discrimination based solely upon the color of one's skin required national confession and repentance (to "repent" means to change your mind as one who turns around and goes a different direction). The "status quo" must come to an end, and if it did, we would become a better nation for it.

He was as brilliant as he was eloquent, having entered college at the age of 15, and going on to earn multiple degrees. As a Baptist minister, King could speak from a pastor's perspective. Therefore, as Dr. King spoke, he did so from a strong foundation from the Word of God, a sharp mind, and a clear understanding of the times. That day, however, his words were distinctly different from many of the so-called civil rights leaders, "reverends," and organizations today. I will explain that in a minute.

One hundred years prior to that day in 1963, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. So it was appropriate for this rally to take place on the very steps of the memorial honoring one of our greatest presidents who fought to end slavery. President Lincoln, in his own eloquent way at Gettysburg, drew from the Declaration of Independence when he declared that America was "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Similarly, Dr. King stepped up to the podium before a gathering of 250,000 people, with one out of every five being white, with this eternal truth deeply embedded in his soul: "all men are created equal." As he spoke, he lamented "the appalling condition" of "the Negro" due to the "manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination" that continued to permeate society. Looking back, it would seem that as King spoke, America took a renewed inventory of her soul and decided that his message was a Truth whose time had come.

Why did Reverend King come to that event? He said he came to "cash the check." Dr. King explained that the "magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence" were a "promissory note" to which every American, white or black, was an "heir." King rightly concluded that "yes, black men, as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

So, how were Dr. King's message and methods refreshingly different from many (not all) of today's so-called civil rights leaders? First, his was a call for genuine "equality" for people of color instead of the misleading term "equity" that we constantly hear today. "Equity" is about forcing everyone to have the same outcome (focused on the end), whereas "Equality" is about

equal opportunity to live your life and pursue your dreams regardless of skin color (focused on where one begins and leaving the outcome up to the individual).

Moreover, unlike the voices today calling for violence and riots, Dr. King called upon his fellow black Americans to “not be guilty of wrongful deeds...(and to) not satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.” He said they must conduct this fight on the “high plane of dignity and discipline...not...degenerate into physical violence.” And what’s more impressive is his demand that this effort of the “Negro community” must not “lead us to distrust all white people...(because many of them) realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.”

We sorely need to hear and heed these words again!

Furthermore, unlike the anti-America message of some activists today, Dr. King honored the words of our Nation’s founding documents and our founding fathers. He understood that as imperfect as they were, these white men had given them a form of government that equipped the people with the tools to end slavery and racial discrimination. And with those tools, he would not give up “until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.”

Most notable are the six “dreams” in Dr. King’s message, where one hears a very different and compelling message for a truly free and color-blind society that is diametrically opposed to the divisive teachings found in CRT, the 1619 Project and BLM (among others). The most memorialized “dream” was that his four children would “live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” How is it not evident that the teachings of those mentioned above have trampled upon this truth?

Martin Luther King, Jr. longed for the day when all people of all ethnicities and skin colors would sing “with new meaning: ‘My country ‘tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing...let freedom ring.’” He loved America and could see what she could become. Ours is a day yearning for similar God-fearing, honorable men and women who know their God, honor their great American history, and will work to defend that freedom for future generations.

In his new book, “No Need to Hide,” Dr. Erwin Lutzer stated, “Courage does not need a crowd, just a conviction.” Dr. King was a model of conviction-inspired courage that impacted society. He taught his generation how to stand up for freedom, and now it is time for us to do the same for this generation. They are depending upon us. Let freedom ring!

Note: All of the quotes come directly from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s famous message “I Have a Dream,” I encourage you to find the full version of it and read it for yourself.