

MODELS of EXCELLENCE



Martin Luther King, Jr.

We must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually, or we shall never carve them out in grand and noble lives. Let unselfishness, goodness, mercy, justice, health, holiness, love — the kingdom of heaven — reign within us, and sin, disease, and death will diminish until they finally disappear.

Let us accept Science, relinquish all theories based on sense-testimony, give up imperfect models and illusive ideals; and so let us have one God, one Mind, and that one perfect, producing His own models of excellence.

from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*,
by Mary Baker Eddy, pages 248 to 249



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia on January 15, 1929. He was raised by his parents and spent his childhood and much of his adult life in Atlanta. When he was a young he would listen to his father preach on Sundays. His father would tell the people that we are all one in Christ. Jesus loves us all and he wants us to be kind to each other no matter what they look like, or how they dress, or what color their skin is. He skipped both the ninth and twelfth grades, Dr. King entered Morehouse college at the age of fifteen. He earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University in 1955.

Martin wanted to be just like his father. He wanted to use big powerful words like his father because he spoke the truth and saw that his words gave people hope and made them happy. When he grew up he became a minister too.

Martin wasn't afraid to speak up and tell people what God put on his heart even when he knew it was dangerous. Martin spoke out against the bad laws that separated people and he showed others how to do it also. He showed people how to fight with words, the truth, and prayer. He said that "Love is the key to the problems of the world," and that "Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that . . . " He would organize marches and sit ins. When the police tried to arrest them, they didn't try to fight back. When people threw bottles at them or used fire hoses on them they didn't try to fight back, instead he told them to stop and pray. (www.daniellesplace.com)



The Birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a holiday to honor his work. It often includes a church service or civic event to remember and bring back King's call to equality, justice and brotherhood for all people. Singing played an important role during this civil right's movement. Dr. King said, "The freedom songs are playing a strong and vital role in our struggle. They give people courage and a sense of unity. I think they keep alive a faith, a radiant hope, in the future, particularly in our most trying hours." Here is a line from a hymn he loved.

Precious Lord, take my hand

Lead me on, let me stand

I'm tired, I'm weak, I'm lone

Through the storm, through the night

Lead me on to the light

Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home

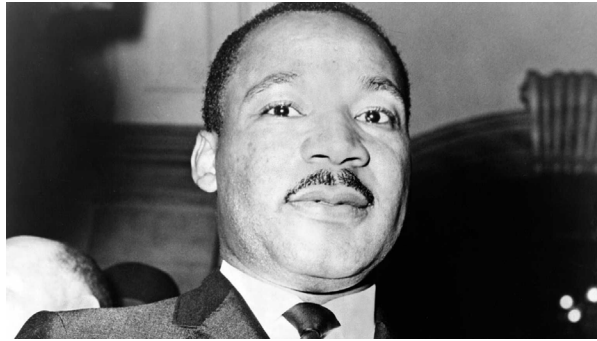
"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

by Thomas A. Dorsey

Many of his prayers are as important now as they have ever been. Here are parts of Dr. King's prayers:

"O Thou Eternal God, we humbly confess that we have not loved thee with our hearts, souls and minds, and we have not loved our neighbors as Christ loved us. Give us the courage to do your will... to love thy will. Amen."

"O God, we thank you for the lives of the prophets in the past, who have revealed to us that we can stand up amid the problems and difficulties and trials of life and confidence in nonviolence and the way of love as taught by Christ. Amen."



The Day I heard the “I Have a Dream” Speech

By Chardelle Hull

I heard Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speak on August 28th, 1963. It was a very hot day. There was a lot of excitement in the air. Buses of people came. I even remember looking over and seeing my church there. I came with my friend from camp. I was in a group. There were all kinds of people there, different ages, sizes, colors, there were even movie actors and other famous people. I thought how amazing it was how all those people stood out in the hot sun to hear him speak and show their support. Dr. King told people not to let anyone tell you that you are not good enough. He encouraged us to do the best we can. I had read a lot of stories of brave young people who went south to help with the marches and support Dr. King and what he believed. I knew it could be dangerous but also how important it was. It was a great event to be part of and to be with brave people working together for a just world.



“...we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, ‘Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!’”

“I have a dream...”



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. loved the Bible and used words from it in his speeches. He loved to read from the chapter of Amos. Here is one line he used in many of his speeches.

“Let Justice Run Down as Waters, and Righteousness as a Mighty Stream.” Amos 5: 24

“I have decided to stick to love.
Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

Dr. King told young people:

“You must have as the basic principle the determination to achieve excellence in what you will do in life — once you discover what it will be, set out to do it, and to do it well.”



“Never lose infinite hope!”

