

Peace; a United Dream

“Peace is not something you wish for; it’s something you make, something you do, something you are, and something you give away.” –Robert Fulgum

The world Dr. Martin Luther King lived in has since evolved to the world we live in today. There are no forces of racial injustice that must be battled with. There is no longer a need for nonviolent protests and marches. Rallies are seldom against unjust causes. These things have faded away and have been cemented in our great nation’s history. What has remained the same from Dr. King’s time to the present is the yearning for peace. Peace in our lives, our homes, our jobs, and overall peace in the world. We have foolishly tried to satisfy our hunger for peace, with violence. In the words of Dr. King, “...violence never brings permanent peace.” A single act of violence sparks a hatred that has the potential to last generations. It is at times hard for me to act on the peace that must be used to save our nation, to save our world. At a certain point and time in my life, a choice was presented to me; that of peace or that of violence.

As I rushed to my next class I bumped into a girl, I stopped to say sorry. Before the words could escape my mouth, she turned so quickly that it made me jump. “What’s your problem?” she spat. “I’m sorry.” I replied. She walked up to my face as I began to back away. Pushing my arm she said; “Watch yourself.” At this point my options were clear; to fight back and temporarily gain freedom, to use the peaceful method of the mouth or, to cower away and be defeated by my opponent. I simply responded; “I didn’t mean to bump into you, if I hurt you, I’m sorry, it wasn’t intended.” She backed away allowing me to pass to my class. The point of my story is that no war can be waged with one party. In Dr. King’s lecture, “*The Quest for Peace and Justice*” he states “Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love.” When there is no hatred, there is no violence; a fight was avoided because there was peace, love, and kindness in place of hatred.

Rivalries are started because of a hate seed that had been planted in our heart. At times the parties involved do not even know why they hate each other, their hate has been planted by previous generations. If we as a country continue to take this path of destruction we will no longer be able to stand strong. The violence within us will start eating away at our values and morals, and soon the reason we live will no longer be known. We often think that there are steps to peace, but peace is not an easy 5-step plan. “There is no way to peace, peace is the way.” –A.J. Muste. All there is left for us to do now is find that path and travel it. Though this path is a path of peace, there are bound to be trials and tribulations that we must face and conquer, but we must not be afraid. We must endure the load on our backs to attain this peace. We can start by coming to an agreement between rivalries. Gangs across the world must meet and come to a conclusion

about the problem, before coming to a compromise to solve the problem. To an extent everyone's needs cannot be satisfied, so compromising on the needs that are most reoccurring will get us closer to our goal of peace. Acts of violence corrupt our society; "It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible." There cannot be peace and violence in the same place; one must reside over the other. If violence dwells in the streets, gunfights and knifings will be a danger that only nonviolence can overtake. Nonviolence is the only thing "...which cuts without wounding."

I believe that my generation can be the refreshing oasis Dr. King talks about in his lecture. ("Their courageous and disciplined activities have come as a refreshing oasis in a desert sweltering with the heat of injustice.") With love we can solve the problems of this world, and we may be the generation to steer this world to the path of peace. We have the potential to give insight and advice to others so that they too may keep the peace. "[We] are awake and moving toward [our] goal like a tidal wave." At every corner you can hear our shouting voices, being carried by the wind, saying; Peace! Peace! We must keep the peace! "You can hear them rumbling in every village street, on the docks, in the houses, among the students, in the churches, and at political meetings." We have to protect the peace we have. Though war can disrupt some forms of peace, it is necessary, in some respects, to wage war if the peace of a society has been threatened. Our country, for instance, had its peace disturbed 10 years ago on September 11th. Men and women are risking their lives to restore and maintain peace in our nation.

In conclusion, "We will not build a peaceful world by following a negative path." Love and nonviolence are the only way to get us off the negative path and on to the peace path. We must not doubt our resources, but instead avoid distractions and pursue our ultimate goal of peace. A peace so precious, that it must be preserved, and worth waging war to sustain. We have to look at, not only the negatives that come with war, but also the reward that comes after war, the reward of peace. "We must see that peace represents a sweeter music, a cosmic melody that is far superior to the discords of war." There are two songs constantly playing in our ears. The song full of crooked voices trying to harmonize a melodic tune, or the song of heavenly angelic voices singing tunes ever-so-sweet. We hunger for the angelic voices, but the croaks of the crooked overpower that sweet song. We have tune out those croaks and follow the angelic voices of Orpheus to the path of peace.