

## **Are You Satisfied?**

Are you satisfied? “No, no, we are not satisfied, and will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a stream.” Martin Luther King Jr.

This statement was made by Martin Luther King Jr. during his speech “I Have a Dream”. The quote only consists of two dozen words, but I feel that it accurately portrays the true meaning of Martin Luther King Jr.’s message. In this statement, he tells the world that we will not continue to stand for the crimes of injustice; that we can not and will not be happy until justice and righteousness are equally distributed to all people.

I was born in the early 1990s to an interracial family. My dad is black and my mom is white. Living in Detroit, my parents tried their hardest to make sure that my sister and I had the best of both worlds. Due to their efforts, I did not fully understand the meaning of the word racism. This all changed one day when a neighborhood kid who lived a few houses down got into a disagreement with my sister and replied to her in a bitter tone “you’re just a white kid”. Never before had it occurred to me that we were different from anyone else. It broke my heart when I realized that we were nothing to this girl but white kids, despite the fact that our dad is black. At what point do we stop and realize that a person is a person no matter what the color of their skin? At what point do we stop refusing to acknowledge our own people because they are a mixed with another race? These questions haunted me for a very long time.

When I was older, I started studying Black history in the United States. It was then that I learned about Martin Luther King Jr. and his fight for freedom. In the name of justice, he fought the social norms and political strife of our society so that one day the right of equality and freedom might be granted to every human being. The more I learned about him and what he stood for, the more I realized that his message reaches far beyond the color of one's skin.

“We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.” From the horrible extremism of murder and theft, to the outrageous arrogance towards the homeless and hungry, I have come to realize that we are still fighting that very same war. The message of Martin Luther King Jr. did not end with the acceptance of equality between races; no, it had only just begun.

This new understanding of our world and of Martin Luther King Jr.'s message truly hit home. I realized that like so many others, I often would pass by those in need without a second glance. The impact of this realization nearly brought me to tears. I felt as if Martin Luther King Jr. was standing right beside me saying, “I fought for your right to live a life equal to your brethren. Will you not do the same for your brother?” As a result of this realization, I decided that I would do my best to help others and fight for their rights, just as Martin Luther King Jr. fought for the rights of my entire family. I am not only fighting for their right to equality based on the color of their skin. No! I fight for their right to have a roof over their head. I fight for their right to live.

“We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing pill of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy.” (Martin Luther King Jr.)

Upon reading this section of “I Have a Dream,” I feel that we as a nation have once again reneged on our promises of democracy. We have become so wrapped up in our own world, and trying to make ends meeting that we often take for granted the basic necessities of our everyday lives; the necessities that so many people in our world go without. How is this fair? How are we as a nation, showing principals of social equality and respect to our fellow neighbor, if we can not be bothered to realize the needs and struggles of others? I suppose that the truest answer is that it is not fair and we have all but failed to keep our promises. However, it is not too late! If I have learned nothing else from Martin Luther King Jr., I have learned that it is never too late. For this reason, I have made it a personal promise to volunteer with groups that are dedicated to helping feed and/or find homes for families in need. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, Rebuilding Together, Gleaners, Forgotten Harvest and the Warming Centers work endless hours to battle homelessness and hunger and it’s time for us to do our part.

The knowledge and understanding of our failure as a supposedly “indivisible” nation saddens me. We have become divisible because we have allowed our country to split into two different classes of people; the regular Joe versus the homeless and hungry. The message of Martin Luther King Jr. inspires me though. Not only does it give me the

insight to see our mistakes, but it also gives me the gumption and enthusiasm to try and make a difference.

As one nation under God, we need to reach out and together fight for the rights of our people, and once this war is won, we can truly start to understand the meaning of freedom. “My country, ‘tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!”

I might only be one person and I might not seem like much, but Martin Luther King Jr. is the perfect example that it only takes one person to make a difference. As a citizen of this great nation, it is my right; it is my duty to fight for rights of our people. Thomas Jefferson put it best, “We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” I am ready to fight this war. Will you fight with me?