

I Have a Dream

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Civil Rights speech was given during the March on Washington on August 28, 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. His "I Have a Dream" speech was one of the main keys that lead to unlocking the gate of oppression and segregation of African Americans. This speech was intended for all Americans to hear, so they might do something about the inequality that was pressing on our nation. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the voice of all African American people and that voice was heard; "Let Freedom Ring."

Even though the Emancipation Proclamation was set into action a hundred years earlier by President Lincoln, African Americans still did not have the same rights as other Americans. They were subject to police brutality, a poor educational system and the inability to vote in most states, just to name a few. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call-to-write was the need to correct the injustice that African Americans suffered from, and in 1963 he became one of the biggest advocates of the Civil Rights movement.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15, 1929, when the rights of African Americans were nowhere near those of their white brothers. He attended segregated public school and witnessed racial injustice all his life. King's approach to the Civil Rights movement was a peaceful one. In 1955 he was the leader of the first African American nonviolent demonstration - The Montgomery Bus Boycott, which lasted 382 days. The boycott was a success and the Supreme Court ruled segregation on buses unconstitutional. In the days of the boycott King's home was bombed and he was arrested and abused, yet he still never broke his vow to be a nonviolent Civil Rights leader.

In 1964 Martin Luther King, Jr. was the youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. All of the prize money he earned, he turned over to the Civil Rights movement to further its success. King devoted his life to the well being of the people around him. He was a Baptist pastor for much of his life and taught his followers to love one another, as if they lived in a color blind society.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech changed the way people thought. It pulled the heart strings of anyone listening and made people want to go out and help their African American brethren achieve the rights they sorely deserved. He says "for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom." We're all children of the same earth and we need to work together to make our planet flourish.

In present day, every American citizen knows who Martin Luther King, Jr. is and what he gave up to better the lives of African Americans. All American citizens now have the same legal rights and racial discrimination is not as apparent as it used to be. One day I hope all people will see with "color blinders" in order to end racial discrimination forever. King not only sparked interest in the rights of African Americans, but also the rights of women in America.

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" was just his dream before he stood in front of hundreds of thousands of people and recited it on that pivotal day in America's history. Because of his dedication and perseverance it became the dream of so many Americans and eventually a reality.