



January 22, 2020

feeding...gathering...carrying...leading. (Isiah 40:11)

Dear Church Family,

We too often forget what many view as the more substantive portions of Dr. Martin Luther King's iconic, "I Have A Dream" speech. These often obscure sections hold the real substance of the speech. Here are portions of the speech which are worth revisiting and investigating.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check — a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now.

In Luke 19:1-8 is the story of Zacchaeus, the vertically challenged rich tax collector who wanted to see Jesus but, "Could not for the crowd," ran ahead of the crowd and climbed into a Sycamore. Jesus ends up going home with him.

It is at Zacchaeus' home, during the conviction of the moment that he makes a declaration about restitution which speaks so poignantly to the matter Dr. King addressed in his speech. That is, the debt which America owes to the descendants of African Slaves who built this country with their involuntary free labor.

Zacchaeus says to the Lord in Luke 19:8, "[Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.](#)"

There are three principles America can learn from the voluntary actions of this rich new convert and follower of Christ.

1. His repentance initiated him volunteering to make restitution. In his mind, repentance required restitution.
2. His actions are proof of his contrition.
3. His restitution included interest on the unpaid balance interest, "[Four times the amount I've cheated someone out of.](#)"

Just as, "Faith without works is dead," likewise lament and repentance without restitution is dead. Restitution for the horrors of slavery should be considered a demand upon those who

took advantage of slaves but rather a voluntary act of contrition evidenced in an act of goodwill. This is the lesson Zacchaeus has inadvertently and unintentionally taught those of us who read the Scriptures and profess to abide by the principles it teaches.

This is a clear Biblical reference to the challenge Dr. MLK advanced over 50 years. He prophesied he would not see the fulfillment of the entirety of his dream. He was not able to SEE what he SAW.

Here is an important fact concerning our Dreams. Many times our dreams do not come to realization during our lifetime.

Dr. King had a dream. Do you have a dream? Do you dream? What do you imagine?

1. **Everything starts with a dream.**

- * The wonderful revitalization of Washington D C all begins with a Dream
- * Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad
- * Historically Black Colleges and Universities

- * Dr. MLK imagined what it would be like if...black and white, Egyptians and Africans, Koreans, Ecuadorians, Ethiopians, Romanians
 - Paul & Val
 - Ben & Abbey were adopt Duncan and Faith
 - The Fords adopt Adam and Audrey
 - Sarah and Manny adopt Moises
 - Pastor Stuart would adopt Pastor TL or visa versa

2. **God is waiting on you to dream a dream He can buy into**

God is like an investment broker, He's always looking for somewhere to invest His resources.

3. **Your Dreams Might Outlive You**

If Dr. MLK could see me now! I'm living out, at least a part of his dream!

There's another man that gave a speech on the Sabbath.

["The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom...recovery of sight..."](#) (Luke 4)

Let's dream the dreams that Jesus dreams!

Pastor TL