



Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 15, AD 2023

The finest birthday present that could be given to Martin Luther King, Jr. today, on the 94th anniversary of his birth, would be to restore the central and essential place of nonviolence in his life and ministry. Better yet, the best present to bestow on him on this birthday would be to mend the historical damage done to his person and the public memory of his life by emphasizing to the extent he himself emphasized the depth of moral conviction he possessed and proclaimed regarding the truth of Jesus' teaching of Nonviolent Love of friends and enemies being the will of the "*Father of all*" and the only means of an authentic human revolution.

Tragically, the gatekeepers of his historical memory decided long ago to deemphasize, or better to expurgate all, except for the most superficial references, what he bet his soul, his life, his entire ministry, and his desire to truly help all people on, i.e., Nonviolent Love towards all people. It was this Nonviolent *Agape*-Love that he taught, lived and died for. It was this love, which he believed contained the power of God, that would free all human beings from the chains of the perennial and universal evils of violence and enmity and from those spirits and structures that create, sustain and support them.

Gatekeepers of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s earthly legacy, including corporate media, by muting and dumbing down the historical truth of Nonviolent Love of friend and enemies, which is an inextricable part of Martin's history, you are depriving humanity of a truth that God, before Martin was in his mother's womb, had ordained that he should be the chosen messenger of in the mid-Twentieth century—and well beyond.

Beginning today, January 15, 2023, give him the birthday present he deserved—which is not a stone monument or a superficial puff piece editorial. Give him, indeed give all humanity, his authentic historical life back.

-Emmanuel Charles McCarthy

Six Pertinent Martin Luther King, Jr. Beliefs and Quotations

- i. *In recent months several people have said to me: Since violence is the new cry, isn't there a danger you will lose touch with the people and be out of step with the times if you don't change your views on nonviolence? My answer is always the same. Occasionally in life one develops a conviction so precious and meaningful that he will stand on it till the end. That is what I have found in nonviolence. I have decided I am going to do battle for my philosophy. You ought to believe something in life, believe that thing so fervently that you will stand up with it until the end of your days*
- ii. *I'm committed to nonviolence absolutely. I am just not going to kill anybody, whether it's in Vietnam or here. If nonviolent protest fails this summer, I will continue to preach and teach it. I plan to stand by nonviolence...(because) only a refusal to hate or kill can put an end to the chain of violence in the world and lead toward community where people live together without fear.*

"Violence does not build up the kingdom of God, the kingdom of humanity. On the contrary it is the favourite instrument of the Antichrist, however idealistic its religious motivation may be" 1

- Pope Benedict XVI [Page 15 of *Jesus of Nazareth: Part II* (2011)]



- iii. *Both violence and nonviolence agree that suffering can be a very powerful social force. But there is a difference. Violence says suffering can be a powerful social force by inflicting it on somebody else, so this is what we do in war. The nonviolent say that suffering becomes a powerful social force when you willingly accept the violence on yourself, so that self-suffering stands at the center of the nonviolent movement. There is no easy way to create a world where people can live together. But if such a world is to be created, it will be accomplished by persons who have the language to put an end to suffering by willingly suffering themselves rather than inflict suffering on others. Unearned suffering is redemptive.*
- iv. *We have power, a power that cannot be found in bullets and guns, but we have power. It is a power as old as the insight of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Mahatma Gandhi. The Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence is one of the most potent weapons available. Evil may so shape events that Caesar may occupy a palace and Christ a cross, but one day that same Christ will rise up and split history into A.D. and B.C. so that even the life of Caesar must be dated by His name.*
- v. *In Christ there is neither Jew nor gentile. In Christ there is neither communist nor capitalist. In Christ there is neither bound nor free. We are all one in Christ. And when we truly believe in the sacredness of the human personality, we won't exploit people, we won't trample over people with the iron feet of oppression, we won't kill anyone.*
- vi. *There are three words for love in the Greek New Testament: one is the word "eros," Eros is sort of an aesthetic, romantic love. Plato talks about it a great deal in his dialogues. Then the Greek language talks about "philia." Philia is a kind of intimate love between friends. The kind of love you have for people you get along with well and those whom you like because you are loved. Then the Greek Language has another word for love and that is "agape." It is more than friendship. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive good will toward all people. Agape is overflowing love that seeks nothing in return. Theologians would say it is the love of God operating in the human heart. When you rise to love on this level you love all people not because you like them, not because their ways appeal to you, but you love them because God loves them. This is what Jesus meant when He said, 'Love your enemies.'*

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