

Martin Luther King Jr Quotes to Inspire Courage, Peace, and Equality

1. **“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”**
2. **“When people are voiceless, they will have temper tantrums like a child who has not been paid attention to. And riots are massive temper tantrums from a neglected and voiceless people.” The Autobiography of MLK (page 293)**
3. **“We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right.”**
4. **“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education”**
5. **“An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.”**
6. **“The quality, not the longevity, of one’s life is what is important”**
7. **“The past is prophetic in that it asserts loudly that wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows”**
8. **“Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend”**
9. **“He was an eloquent spokesman for his point of view and no one can honestly doubt that Malcolm had a great concern for the problems that we face as a race. While we did not always see eye to eye on methods to solve the race problems, I always had a deep affection for Malcolm and felt that he had the great ability to put his finger on the existence and root of the problem.” Martin Luther King Jr on Malcolm X**
10. **“I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant.”**
11. **“We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.”**
12. **“It is not enough to say we must not wage war. It is necessary to love peace and sacrifice for it.”**
13. **“Nonviolence is absolute commitment to the way of love. Love is not emotional bash; it is not empty sentimentalism. It is the active outpouring of one’s whole being into the being of another.”**
14. **“If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.”**
15. **“Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.”**
16. **“No one really knows why they are alive until they know what they’d die for.”**

17. **“Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”**
18. “And I’m simply saying this morning, that you should resolve that you will never become so secure in your thinking or your living that you forget the least of these...In some sense, all of us are the least of these, but there are some who are least than the least of these.

I try to get it over to my children early, morning after morning devotions, I couldn’t pray my prayer without saying, ‘God, help us, as we sit at this table to realize that there are those who are less fortunate than we are.’

And I said to my little children, ‘I’m going to work and do everything that I can do to see that you get a good education. I don’t ever want you to forget that there are millions of God’s children who will not and cannot get a good education, and I don’t want you feeling that you are better than they are. For you will never be what you ought to be until they are what they ought to be.’” Resolutions: From a sermon on January 7, 1968
19. “A man who won’t die for something is not fit to live.”
20. **“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”**
21. “Those who are not looking for happiness are the most likely to find it, because those who are searching forget that the surest way to be happy is to seek happiness for others.”
22. “Whatever your life’s work is, do it well. A man should do his job so well that the living, the dead, and the unborn could do it no better.”
23. **“The art of acceptance is the art of making someone who has just done you a small favor wish that he might have done you a greater one.”**
24. “We must concentrate not merely on the negative expulsion of war but the positive affirmation of peace.”
25. “Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”
26. “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”
27. “Forgiveness is not an occasional act; it is a constant attitude.”
28. **“If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.”**
29. **“We are prone to judge success by the index of our salaries or the size of our automobiles rather than by the quality of our service and relationship to mankind.”**
30. **“Not everybody can be famous. But everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service... You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.”**
31. “People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don’t know each other; they don’t know each other because they have not communicated with each other.”
32. “Courage is an inner resolution to go forward despite obstacles; Cowardice is submissive surrender to circumstances. Courage breeds creativity; Cowardice represses fear and is

mastered by it. Cowardice asks the question, is it safe? Expediency asks the question, is it politic?

33. Vanity asks the question, is it popular? But conscience ask the question, is it right? And there comes a time when we must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because it is right.”
34. **“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”**
35. “Now there is a final reason I think that Jesus says, ‘Love your enemies.’ It is this: that love has within it a redemptive power. And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals. Just keep being friendly to that person. Just keep loving them, and they can’t stand it too long.

Oh, they react in many ways in the beginning. They react with guilt feelings, and sometimes they’ll hate you a little more at that transition period, but just keep loving them. And by the power of your love they will break down under the load.

That’s love, you see. It is redemptive, and this is why Jesus says love. There’s something about love that builds up and is creative. There is something about hate that tears down and is destructive. So love your enemies.”
36. **“World peace through non-violent means is neither absurd nor unattainable. All other methods have failed. Thus we must begin anew. Nonviolence is a good starting point. Those of us who believe in this method can be voices of reason, sanity, and understanding amid the voices of violence, hatred, and emotion. We can very well set a mood of peace out of which a system of peace can be built.”**
37. “Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. **Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.** Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction.”
38. **“The soft-minded man always fears change. He feels security in the status quo, and he has an almost morbid fear of the new. For him, the greatest pain is the pain of a new idea.”**
39. “Almost always, the creative dedicated minority has made the world better.”
40. “He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.”
41. **“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.”**
42. “I came to the conclusion that there is an existential moment in your life when you must decide to speak for yourself; nobody else can speak for you.”
43. “When you are right you cannot be too radical; when you are wrong, you cannot be too conservative.”
44. **“That old law about ‘an eye for an eye’ leaves everybody blind. The time is always right to do the right thing.”**

45. "Never, never be afraid to do what's right, especially if the well-being of a person or animal is at stake. Society's punishments are small compared to the wounds we inflict on our soul when we look the other way."
46. "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"
47. "Never succumb to the temptation of bitterness."
48. **"Rarely do we find men who willingly engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers and half-baked solutions. Nothing pains some people more than having to think."**