

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

My name is Andrew King, and I bring you greetings first from DREAAM House where I serve as Program Manager of DREAAM BIG Learning Centers, and from my church home; Grove Street COGIC, where our Pastor is Bishop Robert Perry. I count it a blessing and honor that Pastor Matt and Tracy Dace, Director & Founder of DREAAM has allowed for me to share with all of you in celebrating the legacy of Dr. MLK Jr.

Please join me in the reading of the Word of God.

1 John 3:11-24

11 For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous.

13 Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you.

14 We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death.

15 Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.

16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. **17** If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

18 Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

19 This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:

20 If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

21 Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God

22 and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.

23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

24 The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

LET US PRAY...

One of our DREAMERS asked me a very humbling question. Why does Dr. King have his own holiday?

As I thought of american history, I mentally began to summarize an age appropriate answer.

The truth is Dr. MLK's legacy sets him apart from other world history makers because he believed LOVE was the antidote to change. I dare not honor Dr. MLK and not his wife who also has created a legacy built on love and justice.

Martin Luther King Jr. spoke eloquently and compellingly about equality, freedom, social justice, courage, family, friendship, and

forgiveness, but his most powerful messages of all were about love.

Take a listen to these heart piercing quotes by Dr. MLK.

- **"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."**
- **"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into friend."**
- **"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."**

As we look to honor the legacy of Dr. MLK it's important to point that as a Preacher and Pastor Dr. MLK would often use the bible as the foundation for his speeches and beliefs. As a man of faith he was a mouthpiece for justice for the world.

Moments ago I read 1 John 3:11-24.

This letter is written to members of the churches in Asia Minor by John. The epistle

serves as a reminder to the children of God to love one another.

There are 5 key points that John points out in these verses

1. John restates that Jesus laid the foundation on how we should treat one another.
2. Jesus' death validated that love is more than mere words; it must be followed by actions.
3. When we say we love someone, our actions should prove our declaration.
4. Displaying love for another is evidence that we belong to God.
5. To show indifference to the need of others is in complete contradiction to the teachings of Christ.

Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta Scott King believed 1 John 3, not only as a Sunday way of life, but they believed that the true answer to the evils of the

world can be solved through the action and deeds of love.

Even when faced with death threats and hate speech, The King family showed us that Real love is an attribute of God, seen magnificently in the life of Christ. The Holy Spirit is a filtering system that checks the contents of our hearts and purifies us through the Word of God. When we lay down our lives for someone else, it means we serve expecting God to reward us.

The Word of God and the life and legacy of Dr. King points out that Love is an action, not just words. Those of us who can give generously whether that with our time, talents or treasures ought to do so with an honest heart, not grudgingly or expecting favors in return. Our actions indicate our connection and affiliation to Christ. When our actions are motivated by love, we can approach God in boldness and confidence. When genuine love occupies our hearts and minds the world sees the light of God in us. Matthew 5:16 is clear.... let your light shine before others,

that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

My prayer and challenge to you is that you too will be a light in a room full of darkness. My prayer for the church is that we will stand on love when we are surrounded by hate. My challenge is to follow the words in 1 John That we should love one another.

Now I am not ignorant to the reality that we are faced with many trials and tribulations that would often try to block us from showing biblical love. I am not ignorant to the fact that sometimes it can be hard to love.

But that's what makes Love, Biblical Love.

Throughout the life of Dr. King we see what it looks like to love biblically, even when the person you're trying to love rejects you, and in return gives you the opposite of love.

Even when faced with mobs, hate, Dr. King echoed the same love that is spoken about in 1 John.

I am humbled by verse 18...

Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

Here John is addressing his readers as children not only suggests that John was advanced in years, but also shows the family atmosphere he was trying to create among his readers. There is no better institution that reflects the kind of sacrificial love John is writing about than family.

Including himself in the admonition, he says, “let us not love in word, neither in tongue.” The construction suggests like a father giving advice, John was asking them to stop merely talking about love, but show it in deed and truth.

Christian love is more than a feeling: it involves the essential ingredient of giving. Many times when people say they love another, their only real action is from their mouth. An expression of love that is backed up by only the tongue is not true love like Christ self-sacrificing love.

True love images in actions centered on others. The world is tired of passive love; only active love

will attract outsiders and make them want to join the family of God.

I am also humbled by verse 23

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

In this verse, John provides the crux of his epistle. When Christians act in obedient, self-sacrificing love, we gain confidence toward God. Faith in Christ and love for another bring us into a new relationship with God where we become His children. Believing on the name of Jesus Christ includes accepting the fact that he is the Son of God who gave his life to pay the penalty for our sins, reconciling us back to God.

The second part of the commandment is to love one another. The sequence is important. The command is that we have both FAITH in Christ and also LOVE one another. Faith in Jesus Christ is the basis of our new relationship with God, and love for one another is the expression of saving faith in us.

I'll close with this.

Tragedy dominates media attention. The more horrific the crime, the more news coverage it receives. With this kind of media frenzy, wickedness appears to have taken an exalted position in our society, leaving many to question the true value of love. It is no wonder so many of us feel love is trivial and irrelevant. Yet, this letter tells us no matter what goes on in the world, we are commanded to love one another.

The life and legacy of Dr. MLK echoes 1 John Chapter 3.

Dr. King understood John's message about loving one another; Dr. King understood that John's letter indicates that the measure of people's lives calculated by their faith in Christ and their love for one another will lead to equality, freedom, social justice, courage, family, friendship, and forgiveness. I am challenged by the action of Dr. King. I am challenged to love not only with my words, but with my deeds.

May the words and deeds of Dr. MLK pierce our hearts to move into action.

As we honor the words of 1 John 3, my challenge for you as you look at ways to honor the legacy of Dr. MLK, let's remember 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

Love is a basic human desire and the evidence that we belong to the Body of Christ. Love is more

than a word, it is a repeated commandment from the Creator of Creations: LOVE one another.

As I look at the legacy of Dr. King, I am thankful for his commitment to LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Lets pray.....Amen and God Bless You.