**Pondering “The Dream” for today**

Today is August 28th. Unless you are a student of history or you have Bing as your search engine of choice you probably did not recognize that today is the anniversary of the 1963 march for freedom. Many recall the rousing encouragement at which Dr. King’s address. In its words he expressed a goal - “I have a dream.”

It wasn’t just poetry, but he used the imagery of the innocence of our children to point us forward and invite us into this single dream.

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream . . . one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today . . . This will be the day when all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning. “My country, ’tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim’s pride, from every mountain side, let freedom ring.”

For the majority of all who listened live and those who read the speech and watch the new reels of the event today can recall singing that song as children. The dream became personal and full of patriotic hope. Dr. King drew us all together into a united people. He continued:

“And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi, from every mountain side. Let freedom ring.”

He brought us to imaging our heritage a Americans by highlighting homes and geographic realities of our lives. Dr. King brought us into the dream – a dream that is as real as the mountains and hills of the land in which we live.

Oh, we do like to recall these words and feel the positive hope they express. But in todays social upheaval there is another section of this speech which we MUST remember young and old. The midway point of the address must be taken reclaimed, reminded, and reestablished in our hearts, for they are just as important and should be recited boldly.

In them Dr. King said:

 “We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protests to degenerate into physical violence. . . . must not lead us to distrust all white people, 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.

I say to you today, my friends, though, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

Sadly, many of today’s civil rights leadership has seemingly forgotten this section of Dr. Kings address that day. They have turned their backs to the resulting violence and closed their eyes to their actions and stopped their ears to the cry of the innocent suffering at the hands of those who think that they are furthering Dr. King’s dream by attacking business, intimidating peaceful people on the street or in restaurants, all the while holding phones to video their victims in an effort to antagonize, provoke, and entice them.

Yes, today is a day we must all seek to reestablish the dream in our hearts. But in doing so it is also a day when we much embrace Dr. Kings ENTIRE message. By first, reminding and holding ALL our political leaders to a higher standard of conduct and never ever settle for less by those who condone violent behavior; silently or verbally. Secondly, we must realign our values, and live by the truth of the ideals this country was founded upon. That means reestablishing the standard that all humans are *created* equal. Over time we have forgotten this and replaced humanity with ideas. Ideas are not equal and have consequences. Any idea that hurts the innocent must be called out as incongruent with the dream of Dr. King and any God-fearing society.

Race relations will not be perfect this side of heaven, but we can immediately further the message of that day on the Washington DC Mall by recalling and rededicating ourselves to his WHOLE message.

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