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ODYSSEY



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ODYSSEY LOVE



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I LOVE

In search of a broader definition of love for Valentine's Day, something more than Cupids and Hallmark cards, Odyssey students completed paragraphs or verses starting with the two words "I love."

I love laughter. I love the way it connects people. I love the way laughter makes me feel lighter. The endorphins it releases make me feel euphoria. Laughter is medicine, a painkiller. Ever felt sad then scrolled tiktok and read the comments? Instant change! Laughter will literally lift you up. Laughter is a connection, it is love, and it brings people together. It creates friendship. Laughter is a safety net, it creates a safe place, and it creates community. Laughter is my favorite love language, my favorite way to connect, and my favorite way to start and end the day. It makes all my bonds, relationships, and friendships stronger. It's the best gift you can give. It's FREE! **(Laura Bass)**



I love my family. Although we may get on each other's nerves at times, we always stick together. Especially when times get hard, we all come together as a unit to collaborate on ways to help each other out of hardship. My family may not be big, but the love we share for each other is grand. I'm grateful for this because it's not a privilege that everyone has. **(Serene Boyd)**

I love cooking all types of delicious food. The aroma of garlic and onion fills the air. Plating the food as visual representation makes it taste better. Cooking is my love language to others, especially the ones I care about and love most! Cooking ignites all five senses: listening to bacon crackles, seeing the beginning and finished results of a chosen recipe, smelling goodness in the air, tasting vibrant flavors on your taste buds. Cooking heals the soul. You travel the world through food. **(Lisa Brown)**



I love Knowledge! I love everything about it. Correction, I love everything about her. Now a big day is coming up and there's a choice to make. Who is this day for? Knowledge! Does that mean forget the mother of Knowledge? No! That means learn what I can do to learn how to love Knowledge and her mother equally! I love that I am now the father of Knowledge, and the mother of Knowledge is my wife! [Editor's note: Richard's daughter, named Knowledge, was born on January 2, 2026.]

(Richard Butler)



I love my intensity. I am a woman who once I set my mind to something, I accomplish it. I will complain about the obstacles first, but I get it done. My all-time favorite quote that pushes my intensity says, "The fear of suffering is far worse than the suffering itself." With that I have learned to be vulnerable, kind, passionate, sensitive, and fearless. All of these are driven by intensity: when I love, I love; when I care, I care; when I hurt, I hurt. That is how I grow as a woman, through the intensity of my emotions. **(Stacy Castillo)**



I love life and the woman I'm becoming to be. "L" as in life, "O" as in optimistic, "V" as in valuable, "E" as in effort.

When people think about love they're thinking about love with others. I'm thinking about loving myself, becoming the woman that I'm loving, becoming happy within myself, becoming the woman who's known for loving myself. **(Cquemiah Clark-Richmond)**



I love you. I love you because you make me smile. I love the way you smell. I love the way you dress. I love the way you laugh and make that high-pitched noise. I love how real you are and how open you can be. I love when your nose flares out when you're mad. I love the long thick sideburns. I love how you walk and light up rooms. I love the tone in your voice when you speak about something you love. I love how curious you are and how there's no fear in your questions. I love how you get up in any situation knowing that everything is going to get better. I love when you speak to me in the mirror reminding me of things I sometimes forget. I love where you're going because I can see you're going somewhere. I love you. **(Valencia Collins)**



I love my daughter to the moon and back! She is the/a gift of my life I didn't know I needed. I love her more than the billion stars in the sky. Whenever we crawl into bed, she says, "Mommy, let's cuddle," and that's one of my favorite parts of the day. I don't really show emotion or really want to, and it shows because she can see it in me. She gives me hugs and kisses throughout the day to

remind me how much she loves and cares about me. It melts my heart, and I love her for that. I love her more than words could describe. She is my precious gift, my light, my heart, and my endless joy! Her spirit reminds me to smile and not take life too seriously! I love my little treasure so much. I love her forever and ever and ever.

(Tida Drammeh)

I love being a mom. Being a mom brings me joy. I created and am raising these little people to be a part of this world. They are my contribution to a better world. I take such pride and joy knowing I broke generational cycles. I am the parent that I needed. **(Paola Damiani)**



I love rich people!!!
The motivation of watching others be successful brings confidence in me. I love being the sole provider for my kids! They will know Mom pushed to make sure on rainy days they never feel a drop of wetness. I love that I will build generational wealth for my babies.

(Destiny Drone)

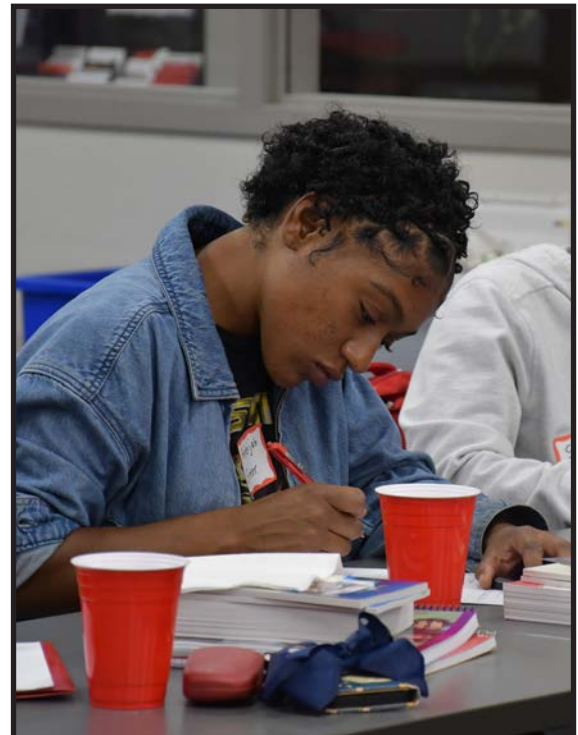


I love to wake up early for work, making my coffee, taking a shower, brushing my teeth. I love the overall feeling of getting up in the morning. **(Larry Grant)**

I love originality. Walk to the beat of your own drum. Dare to be different; dare to take risks. Do not follow the trends. No copy and paste: create your own style and stay true to that. I love those who are unapologetically themselves. I love those who let people live in their truth, love themselves through the difference. I love those who dare to be different.

I love my Odyssey family. I feel safe, comfortable, and filled with joy. That is very much needed in a world we can't trust. I feel myself closing in, but with the love from Odyssey I'm trying my best to fight through once felt fears and to push further for the better. I thank God for being by my side through my storms. AMEN!! **(Anteijah Greer)**

I love romance. I love the thoughtfulness, the taking interest in the small things we like. I love the getting dressed and the dates. I love the time spent, the way you feel secure and needed. I love the sharing meals and the important details of the day. I love knowing you have someone who encourages you to do better, and I love the thought of coming home and spending time. I love love and romance. I am a hopeless romantic. **(Tikoya Gilmer)**



I love my children. One thing about myself that I am proud of is my children, knowing that I played a part in the wonderful people that they are and will be. They are truly special. They are kind, sweet, and caring. The love I have for my children is stronger than anything I've ever felt. I want to make sure my children have everything they need to be successful, loving, caring, strong, and unafraid. My children are already God-fearing humans, and every day I am in awe of them. I thank God for who they are and that I am their mother and that He continues to guide them every step of the way. **(Shataya Hall)**



I love my children. After God, they are the most important part of my life. They make me happy, they make me sad, they make me laugh, and they make me cry. I don't know what I would do without my children. My children are the reason I get up in the morning, the reason I dream at night. My children challenge me, and they make me a better person. My children bring out the best in me. Mess with one of them and you will see the worst in me. I am a proud mother. I LOVE my children. **(Jacqueline Hawkins)**



I love that my sons are safe. I love seeing them peacefully asleep in their beds. I love that I wake up to brand new mercy. I love how I am lavished with amazing grace. I love that someone looked beyond all my faults, the faults of my sons, and saw we needed a savior. **(Angel Moore)**

I love African sunsets. I love the warmth of the midday sun as it sets on the vast savannah. I love the smell of the afternoon sun as the valleys begin to setting down. I love the sound of the African savannah as the sun fades and darkness creeps. A whole new world is awakened, and you begin to hear the sounds of the savannah as it comes back to life. As the son of the African soil, I love the smells, sounds, and animals of the savannah. **(Viwe Mpurwana)**



I love the word love. I love that nobody really knows how to love. If I'm lying, then why does everyone have their own interpretation of love? And if love is truly love, then why is the line so thin between love and hate? Or maybe love is hate and peace is love since the world is backwards. Because when you truly ascertain peace, that is when you truly know how to love yourself and others, without any ill thoughts. **(Shelton Murphy)**

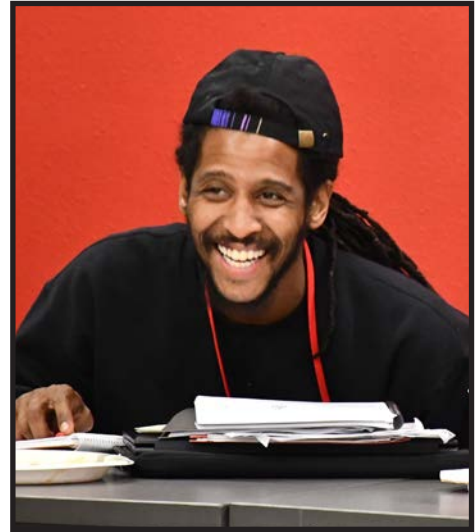


I love love. I love the acts of love. I love what love brings to relationships. I feel that powerful feelings between one another are beautiful. I love to see thriving relationships between friends, family, or spouses. I love the idea of feeling selfless for another human being. The feeling of comfort and being valued gives connection and security that I believe everyone deserves to feel. **(Roché Palmer)**

I love me! I love to read, love to write and express my emotions and thoughts. I love attending Odyssey and being a part of this village. I love that my kids are excited to be a part of this as well. They are elated every Wednesday. I love everything about growing and learning. **(Roncal Riley)**



I love reading. I love losing myself in a world that is better than the world I'm currently living in. Escaping through a book from the horrible acts and injustice being committed, I am feeling powerless and unable to change anything. I love reading because it is my temporary way of pausing life and collecting my thoughts. Since I was young, reading has been my coping mechanism and to this day it still is. I learn, live, and escape into many different worlds, and I love it. **(Lilibeth Sobrevilla)**



I love Odyssey. I love participating in Odyssey. I love putting my all into Odyssey. I love my classmates. I love all the effort all my classmates put into Odyssey. I love to watch us come out of this greater than we were before we came. I can't wait to prosper. **(George Sydnor)**

I love the attention and love my daughter Journi gives me. She tells me every day maybe 10 plus times, "I love you, Dad." When I'm not feeling well or feeling down, she does not hesitate to comfort me. That love carries me through some of my darkest moments.

Journi, you are my first born, and I am grateful to be your father. Daddy will always be there for you no matter what! **(Joseph Thigpen Jr.)**



I love my kids with a depth that words can't capture. They bring joy, teach me patience, and challenge me to be a better version of myself every day. Their laughter is the soundtrack of my happiest moments, and their growth fills me with pride and wonder. Watching them navigate the world reminds me of life's simple, beautiful lessons. Their presence is a constant source of purpose and heartfelt gratitude. **(JuJu Stallworth)**



I love the moments of peace that can be found in the chaos of the world. I love the simplistic beauty of nature when untainted. I love the light that can be found in the most unlikely places. I love the feeling that a hug from my kids brings or the joy from their smile left in my heart. I love the way my Velcro baby will cuddle with me, and it makes the stress melt off. I love that my eldest will sit and “gossip” about her day because she feels cared for, nurtured, and free to do so. Most of all, I love that I am breaking generational curses and traumas, so my daughters know most of all I love them!
(Kharmen Thomas)



I love God. I love knowing that no matter what I go through, I am never alone. When life gets loud, He is the peace that holds me together. God is my reminder that I was created for more than I've been through. I love my kids. They are my heartbeat outside of my body, the little souls that turn my tiredness into purpose and my struggle into strength. Putting “I love” into words is hard because it's not just words: it's my foundation, fight, and future. **(Shakila Woods)**



I love . . .
 Mother Nature.
 She soothes my soul.
 She makes me feel alive.
 She provides a special kind of vibe.
 Mother Nature brings me sun that shines on me like a big warm hug.
 Mother Nature brings me a breeze, as well as the trees.
 Mother Nature is a part of me, she is my therapy.
 She is stunning.
 She is under-appreciated by many, but always gives plenty.
 She is powerful and she can be frightening, especially when she strikes her lightning.
 But all and all, in the end, I have to start again where I began.
 I love nature. **(Kiana Galloway)**





I love being a mom.
 I love my children and stepchildren.
 I love nurturing!
 I love being called Mom!
 I love knowing that my children love me unconditionally.
 I love providing a life for them that I never had.
 I love that I was and am able to provide them with a better life than I had as a child.
 I love that God blessed me and trusted me enough to be a mom.
 I'm happy to be having my first son [due April 29] and I love that for me! **(Brittany Hughes)**



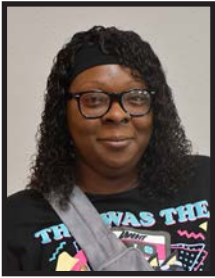
I Love Nyla

Nyla, you wake the morning light
 Your big brown eyes are so warm and so bright.
 One radiant smile, and suddenly
 The world feels so much kinder just to me.
 Each day you show me something new
 There's magic living deep within you.
 Through songs you make and problems you solve
 I'm an audience that watches your brilliance evolve.
 I love how your curiosity leads the way
 You question the why in everything, in every way
 With gentle care and sweetness too
 You teach me love by being you.
 You are resilient, brave, and wise
 You trust the truth you feel inside.
 You speak your needs, you test your ground
 You push past limits, strong and sound.
 You know yourself and you always have
 A tiny heart, that's fierce and vast.
 And through your spirit, so pure and free
 You show the best of what can be.
 You love your stories, and animals too
 Finding wonder from life's smallest view.



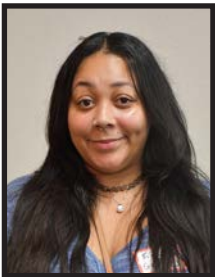
Gentle kisses, and laughter that runs,
 Reminding me every day that life should be fun.
 Your hugs are steady, loving and sure
 A kind of affection that's honest and pure.
 Each day you amaze me, just by being you
 I love who you are, and who you're growing into.
 I'll stand right beside you as you learn and always believe
 That I'm in awe of the person you're growing to be.
(Shaneece Taylor)

I HAVE A DREAM . . .



I have a dream that one day we will embrace and value difference,
That “all men created equal” will mean human existence.
I have a dream that history will be taught with truth,
That we will eradicate erasure of the proof.
I have a dream that we will find purpose beyond conquest,
That without regression we see the progress.
I have a dream that we can acknowledge without diminishing,
That the civil rights work begun we will be finishing.
I have a dream that we will reconstruct for better the “societal norm,”
That we will no longer seek to cause the harm that leaves us torn.
I have a dream that we will all gain awareness of this dystopian oligarchy,
That we will as a people transcend to a true and free democracy.
I have a dream that we will “wake up” dismantling this nightmare,
That we will comprehend the dissociative division replacing it with empathy and care.
I have a dream that we will all in the pursuit of happiness be free to chase dreams.

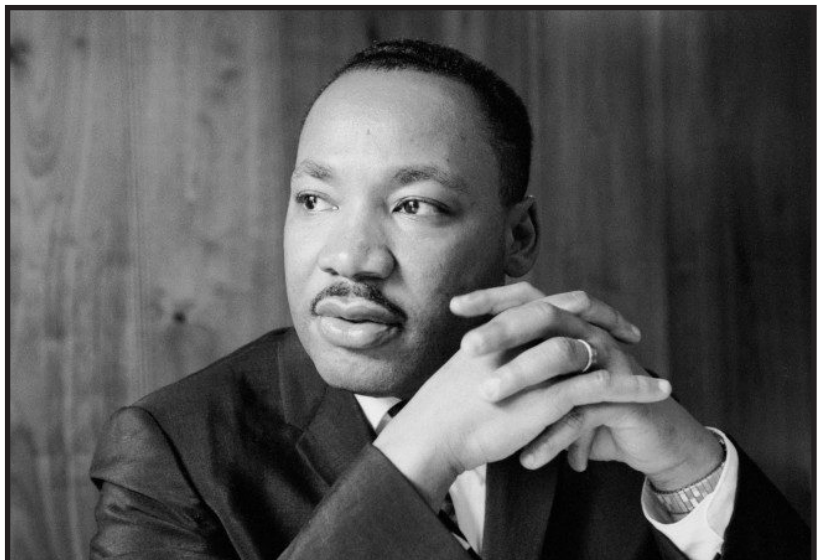
(Kharmen Thomas)



I have a dream that ...
someday America will be a better place
where we don't have problems with race,
where we aren't run with hate and an irate leader,
where everyone has a place to call home,
where we aren't afraid every day of the backlash
of some nonsense tirade from a man who doesn't value human life.

I want us to value human rights.
I don't want to see more people die.
We have lost our light.
We have lost sight of justice and
righteousness
It is now our time to fight.
Fight for our right to live peaceful lives!

(Kiana Galloway)





I have a dream that my life will turn out better than it has in my wildest dreams. If I can dream it, I can achieve it. If I can believe it, there's no doubt I can put that foot

forward to exceed it. That degree, that career, that life? It's mine! There's no doubt in my mind that dream I've dreamt will one day be mine.
(Laura Bass)



I have a dream of me graduating from the Odyssey program with all my classmates, everyone giving speeches, dreaming that we all will go on to better our families and all moving on to be better adults.**(George Sydnor)**



I have a dream that all my problems and sacrifices will mean something. When traveling through a storm, it's easy to lose sight of your purpose. Most days I walk around with a smile, but deep down I am just making it. I do believe my dream will mean

most because I will continue to put in the work and stay focused. If you are reading this, just know I am fine and this storm won't last forever. **(Joseph Thigpen Jr.)**



I have a dream that by the time I'm 50 years old I will be living in California in my home overlooking the lights of the city. My home will be filled with grandchildren and in-laws making happy memories. Each morning, I can go out and sit on my porch

with my coffee taking in accomplishments I have worked so hard for. I have a dream of my home filled with good cooking, laughter, singing and dancing, lots of love, and a safe place for the ones I love. **(Shataya Hall)**



I have a dream that people of all colors, races, and religions would join together and stand up for the injustice in

this country. I dream of change by unity as we create a system in the government that is not fueled by hate or racism. I dream of a better world for our younger generation, or making a pathway for them for their future. Here's to dreaming of a world where we wake up and see the truth about our government. It is time we dream of change and we the people make it happen.**(Lilibeth Sobrevilla)**



I have a dream that things will change and the cost of living would be affordable. I have a dream that jobs will pay more and employers will care more about their employees. I have a dream that peace would come

easily and that kindness and sympathy start to take place again. **(Tikoya Gilmer)**



I have a dream that I will no longer be in survival mode. I will accomplish all of my educational goals and become the woman I am destined to become. I will not give up; I will not rush the process and will

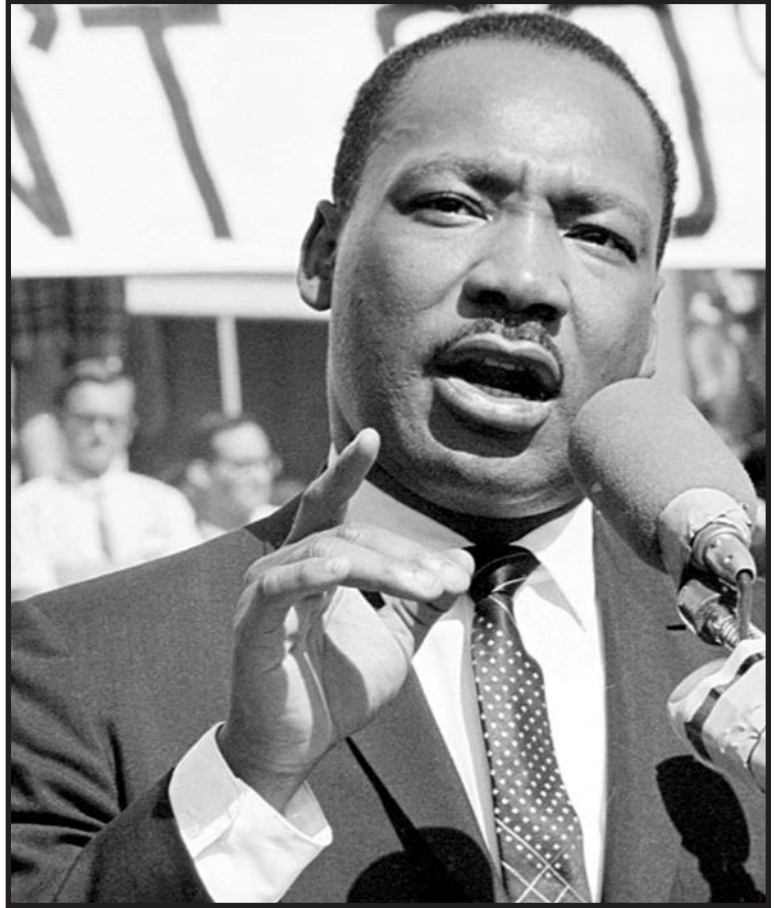
put God first with every decision. This next semester I will continue to push myself and not let anyone else's progress determine mine. I have a dream Roncal Riley will become a village for her village and apply resources that can help myself and my peers to become successful. I have a dream my vision board goals will come true. I have a dream my kids will know about the broken generational curse. **(Roncal Riley)**



I have a dream that everyone in this class passes both semesters and is ready for graduation. I wish that everyone's dream would come true and make life easy for them, maybe not easy but also not struggling as well. I have a dream that this country

would all go back living in classes where there's rich, middle class, and lower class, not the rich and everybody else is poor. I wish the country would go back to equality and end whatever it is that is going on. I have a dream that my family, friends, and neighbors will be ok no matter what's going on in this country. I wish the best for everyone! I have a dream that everyone and everything is ok!!!

(Tida Drammeh)



I have a dream to be the best mother that I can be, not only to the children I birthed but also to any child that needs me. I have a dream to change the world one child at a time by encouraging children and by letting them know that they can be anything

they want to be. I will let them know that they are our future and without them the world will be no longer. **(Jacqueline Hawkins)**



I have a dream that my people will rise like a phoenix out of the ashes. I hope our power gets activated through all of the masses. This is the age of understanding, so I hope you gained some understanding before it passes and your money

is held in trust and estates in case anyone's asking. **(Shelton Murphy)**



I have a dream that my parents see me in their reflection in the mirror and think to themselves, “it was all worth it.” The pain, loss, suffering, and struggle was all worth seeing me succeed—to have done more and better than they did, for myself and my son.

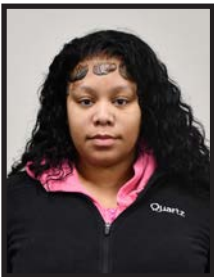
I dream of the day my parents can see that just because my story looks different from theirs, it was possible and accomplished. **(Stacy Castillo)**



I have a dream that one day I may be in a position where I could change the trajectory of the African masses. I have a dream of a united African-American community determined to change the situation of minorities and to rebuild the African

continent. I have a dream that I may finish my degree and go on to change my community. I have a dream that America will one day live up to its creed and that this country is once again the land of the free and home of the brave.

(Viwe Mpurwana)



I have a dream that one day I will be free from the heavy burden of financial stress. I dream of waking up to

mornings filled with peace, where the anxiety of unpaid bills and looming debts no longer weighs on my heart. In this dream, I walk confidently through life with the freedom to pursue passions and opportunities without hesitation. I see a future where my hard work flourishes, where security and comfort are not distant hopes but everyday realities. This is the vivid vision that guides me.

(JuJu Stalworth)



I have a dream that one day I will walk across the stage not just for me but for every late night, every tear, and every obstacle I’ve had to push through—for my kids! I have a dream I will hold my RN degree in my hands like a crown I owned with my sister’s spirit

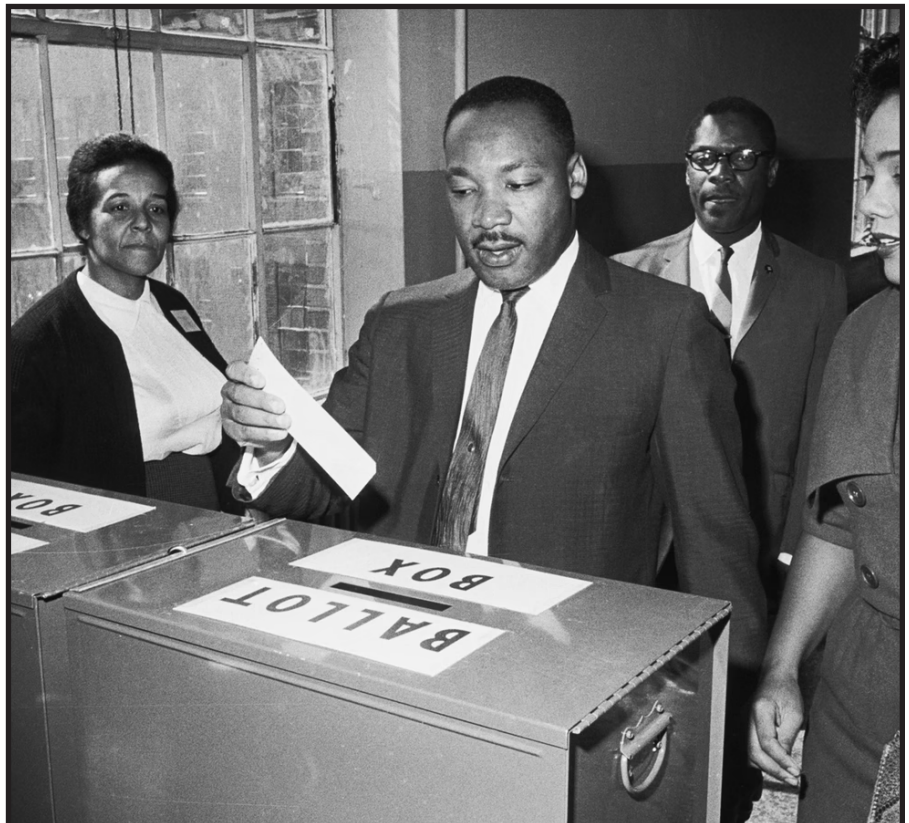
beside me because even though she is not here in the flesh, she will be there with me in victory. And I have a dream that when they call my name, I’ll smile through the emotions and whisper, “Sis, we did it” because this too was her dream. I’m not just doing it for me. I’m doing it for my kids and for her. My purpose is bigger than pain: it’s legacy!

(Shakila Woods)



I have a dream of living up to the extreme. When life has good things, being able to be me without any negative things. I have a dream back in the early days when kids would be kids with no hard days.

(Cquemiah Clark-Richmond)





I have a dream that one day life will be all that I want it to be for my son and me. We will move out

of Madison. I will be pursuing my career as an optometric sonographer. I will be more connected with myself and who I am as a person. I dream that one day I will be back in the gym and on a healthier diet. I aspire to built my relationship with God and my spiritual beliefs. I dream to wake up with a more positive mindset. I dream that eventually my dreams are no longer dreams and become my reality.

(Roché Palmer)



I have a dream that one day my Black community will wake up to what it really means to be Black in America, that one day the young people will put the guns down and stop killing each

other and use the term knowledge to educate themselves. **(Larry Grant)**



I have a dream that one day people will not see "color." Someday we will all just be human beings, not "aliens" or "illegal." My wish is for us to become one, united together to create peace, wealth, and success for ourselves and future kids.

(Paola Damiani)



I have a dream that years from now I'll be graduating college. I'll be graduating with a business degree and my degree to help me become a real estate lawyer. In this dream, life is amazing. I'm financially stable and my children are as happy as they can be. I

feel blessed and accomplished. I have reached my goals! I'm hoping to be married by then with a house on top of the hills. In this dream I am free. I can't wait until it's reality. **(Brittany Hughes)**



I have a dream that my future will hold an abundance of wealth. I dream that my kids will hold a future of wisdom and strength to thrive to become someone honorable. **(Destiny Drone)**



I have a dream of me having a dream winning! I have a dream of me losing, but within that dream I still see more options and different paths. I no longer dream because I can no longer sleep. I have a dream that my needs are no longer needs; they are wants!

And I no longer want what's not needed! **(Richard Butler)**



I have a dream that one day I can open my eyes to a world that doesn't judge our sons according to the color of their skin. I have a dream that justice is not just for the affluent but also those who lack the funds. I have a dream that our black sons would learn

to forgive easily and not be held back by the wrong choices made in life. **(Angel Moore)**



I have a dream that one day we could all get along. I have a dream that all the stigmatization goes away. I have a dream that one day these rooms won't feel divided. I have a dream that one day you get it. I have a dream that I can speak up for my people without people

getting offended. I have a dream that you'll take my experience as seriously as you take my degrees. I have a dream that you won't feel you're better than them because we look different. I have a dream that you believe what I say. I have a dream that you could feel the way I do when I'm the only one in the room. I have a dream that you could listen and think about what you say before you say it.

(Valencia Collins)



I have a dream that fear will no longer take the front seat in our country. I have a dream that fear of the unknown will not dictate your seat at the table, as we all deserve to sit down. May strength for what is right for all rise above. No more social injustice! May

truth and confidence drown out the sound of hate. All people deserve to live an honest life, without looking over their shoulder in fear. I have a dream that women should hold more leadership in both community settings and the country. I want to live where life is not dictated by greed, envy, and power but by peace, growth in foundation, and love for humanity. **(Lisa Brown)**





I have a dream that every person should be able to live a peaceful and productive life. Everyone

deserves a home, food, water, health care, safety, and personal autonomy. Everyone deserves to invest into themselves- whether that's being a baker, a musician, a professional badminton player, or a forensic psychologist. I have a dream that your basic needs being met aren't based on capitalistic productivity.

I have a dream that every child should go unharmed, and every adult who has faced or caused abuse will be accountable and make the changes necessary to find peace within and share the peace outward. No one will turn a blind eye towards oppression and injustice.

I have a dream that meaningless structures are dismantled and that everyone is seen as an individual, not simply existing to be a bolt on a machine but to be an essential component of a productive community.

I have a dream that our differences will be used to celebrate our individuality, not used as a tool to divide us. **(Shaneece Taylor)**



I have a dream that one day my son, my nephews, and all Black boys will be able to walk without fear, walk without fear of policemen stopping them for simply walking while Black, drive without the fear of being pulled over for simply driving

while Black or looking suspicious because of being



Black, that one day they will not be seen as a threat simply because they are Black.

I have a dream that one day my daughters, nieces, and all Black girls will be able to get the same medical treatment as the white women, be believed when they speak up about their bodies and pain, a dream that one day the mortality rate of Black pregnant women will not be devastatingly high, a dream that one day wearing natural curly hair is not considered unprofessional.

I have a dream that one day Black men, women, and children will not be labeled as angry when simply expressing emotion, they not be labeled as dangerous or aggressive, not be labeled as loud or ghetto, not be labeled as unprofessional or uneducated, not be labeled as difficult or emotionless. I have a dream that one day, may that be sooner than later, all Black men, women, and children will be able to walk in unison with our neighbors, be valued and heard and, last but not least, supported. **(Shataya Hall)**

MOVED BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

After reading “A Letter from Birmingham Jail,” King’s magnificent appeal for justice and change, Odyssey students wrote back to him with their responses, including their thoughts on how the ideas raised in his letter remain relevant in 2026. These are just brief excerpts from their much longer letters to Dr. King.

Dear Dr. King:

What an honor to live in a time where we continue to speak on your legacy. It was a time where unjust laws were in place, yet through tension, vulnerability, passion, and pain you sought to fight through it.

Unfortunately, today we are rewinding back to those times. Personally, I will never understand what it’s like to be a black person. But because of the oppression my people are dealing with today, I understand on a deeper level the sense of fetters you may have felt.

We continue to be “controlled” by a white man who targets my Hispanic people for the most part but is definitely coming for everyone. Because this man is reversing all of your hard work, I fear for this country.

I genuinely feel that our fight for change today is a lot harder than it was during your time. We

have great leaders of both women and men, who through sweat and tears cannot achieve the power of change you held.

So with that, I ask what more civil disobedience can we control before violence strikes our country?
(Stacy Castillo)

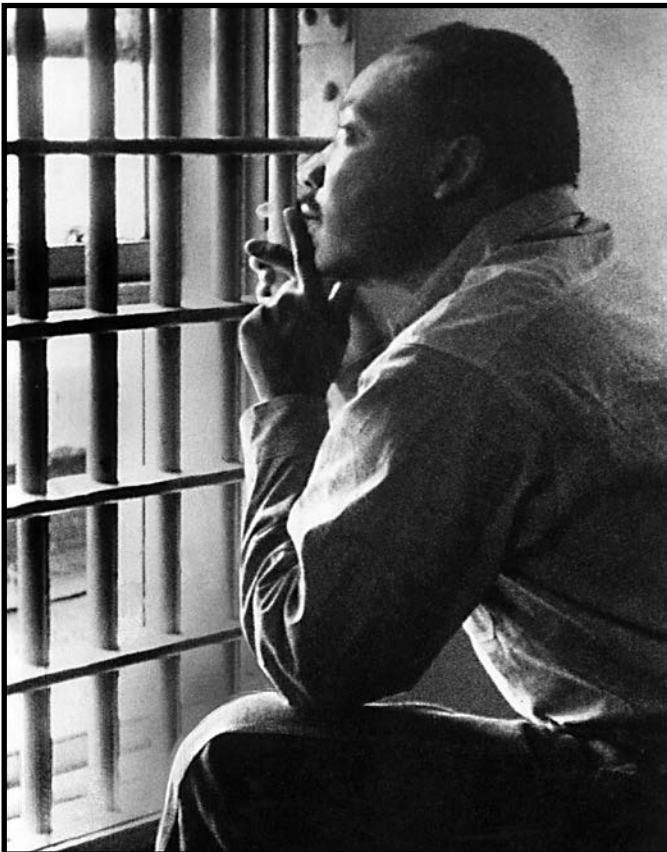
Your “Letter from Birmingham Jail” deeply moved me with its clarity and conviction. Your advocacy for nonviolent resistance and the saying that “justice too long delayed is justice denied” remains relevant today. You challenge us not to wait for a “more convenient season” to oppose injustice, and you highlight our shared responsibility in the fight for equality. Your patience, moral firmness, and compassion in response to criticism demonstrates how love and truth can drive change. Thank you for providing a blueprint for moral courage, inspiring us to act with urgency and grace. **(Tida Drammeh)**



First, I would like to thank you for the sacrifices you made to step outside of your comfort zone and stand up for what you believed was right. The world changed when you took that risk no one else was willing to take. Without your leadership and guidance, communities all over the world would not have fully understood what it means to be united and stand together no matter the ethnicity.

In “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” you explained why injustice cannot be ignored by saying, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” This statement was powerful and helped me realize that when people stay quiet or choose to ignore situations, injustice never stops. You stood tall and stayed grounded when it came to people doubting you and diminishing your name. My generation is grateful for you taking leadership of the ongoing issues the legal officials tried to hold over us.

In your letter you also talked about how struggling is often necessary for change. My take away from this was feeling uncomfortable does not mean we are failing; it can mean that we are growing and



pushing toward something better. In your situation, most people would feel drained, discouraged, and ready to give up. I appreciate you for using that moment to speak out about justice and equality.

One quote that has stayed with me since I was young is when you said, “If you can’t run, walk. If you can’t walk, crawl. And if you can’t crawl, just keep moving forward.” This message stuck with me and taught me that it is okay to slow down when life gets hard as long as I do not give up. There are times when obstacles make us feel less confident and unsure of ourselves. In those moments, it can feel like we are not capable anymore, but your words reminded me that progress still matters, no matter how small it seems.

Overall, “Letter from Birmingham Jail” taught me the importance of standing up for what is right, even when it is difficult. It helped me understand that everyone has a role in creating change, no matter how small their actions were. As long as we keep moving forward, we are honoring the lessons and sacrifices that helped shape a more connected community. **(Joseph Thigpen Jr.)**

After reading “Letter from Birmingham Jail” I understand why your words are still so powerful today. What stood out to me the most was your explanation of the difference between Just and unjust laws.

Your criticism of people who supported equality but were unwilling to take action also stuck with me. The idea that waiting for a “better time” only allows injustice to continue feels very relevant in 2026, when many people say they care but remain silent or inactive. Your message made me reflect on how easy it is to choose comfort over change.

I also noticed how you used metaphors and repetition to strengthen your argument and make the pain of injustice impossible to ignore. Your writing shows that real Justice requires courage. Overall, your letter challenged me to think about my own responsibility and reminded me that change only happens when people are willing to act. **(Brittany Hughes)**

... Your letter was a powerful piece that was not only engaging but it really spoke to your motto of “nonviolent direct action.” It’s only been 60 years and unfortunately not much has changed. No, we are no longer segregated, but racism still lives on. It lives on systemically in a way the white man can still control us. It lives on in healthcare, schools, and government. We are still oppressed, and we are still looked at as less.

History has a way of repeating itself. You’d be saddened to see how we are continually moving backwards and not forwards. The United States has a way of not learning from past mistakes, so there’s a cycle of repeating those mistakes. Like how what Adolf Hitler did was legal – We have some of that same stuff going on in 2026 with ICE and immigrants. Evil and immoral things are being done to human beings, but it’s being desensitized; since it’s legal it’s not getting the attention it deserves because it’s clear that history is beginning to repeat itself once again.

... I know it’s not right but it angers me that people act like all that happened to my ancestors was so long ago and that it doesn’t even deserve to be taught correctly. Honestly, it’s because I know they know it was wrong and they’re trying to hide that part of history. But you and I both know that history has always been violent and it will continue to be. That’s all white men

know how to do! Historically they have always been the violent ones—the savages—yet they put that label on us.

... We can talk of injustices until we are blue in the face. You cannot make anybody comprehend; you cannot change people that don’t want to be changed. If someone sees no wrong in what they are doing, they will never understand where you are coming from. ... I feel as a collective we need to come together and figure out, even 60 years after you wrote this, how to change. **(Laura Bass)**

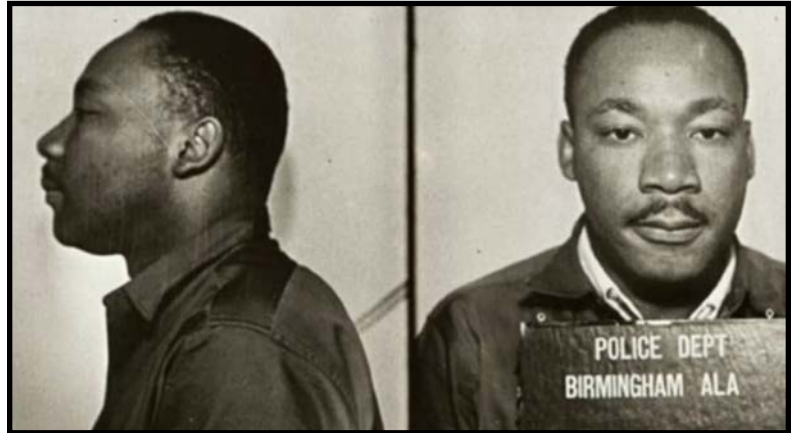


You inspired me in every speech you ever spoke. Your “I have a dream” speech helped Black and white people learn to be equal, to love one another as equals and help teach each other. Racism I didn’t experience much of growing up, but I will say I’ve seen racism destroy people. When I was in a relationship with my children’s mother, who is white, we lived in Minnesota for three years and experienced racism there all the time. It taught me to be humble when around others and to learn that everyone in the world can love and be equal no matter the race. **(George Sydnor)**

We are still waiting, still fighting. I want you to know how thankful I am for you, for risking everything to speak truth for us colored people when so many wanted us to stay silent. It is really sickening how this system is so rigid and unfair, all because some people feel we don’t deserve a fair shot or a chance at life. Haven’t we already been through enough? Why do we still have to prove ourselves worthy of a seat at the table, when in fact we are that and more?

When listening to the stories, we know through painful experiences that freedom is never voluntarily given to the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. It’s like the “wait” has always meant “never,” as you said: “justice too long delayed is justice denied.” I am writing to you as a mother who is tired of standing by while injustice continues. When I read your “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” I realized that the kind of patience you described did not end with your generation; it just changed clothes. I have longed for safety, fairness, and accountability, and like you said, silence is never truly neutral. It teaches us who matters and who is expected to be quiet. Your words reminded me that toleration alone isn’t enough; sometimes action is the only path to justice. . . .

You showed me how dangerous the moderates can be, the ones who say “I agree with you, but not now” or “let’s wait for the right time.” When you wrote about how segregation can make a child



“begin to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness towards white people,” I felt that deeply. Injustice isn’t nonrealistic, it shapes lives, hearts, and minds. Your words “we have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God given rights,” remind me how long the struggle has been, and that acceptance alone isn’t enough without courage and action. What resonated with me the most was how you described explaining injustice to the next generation. As a mother, I get it. If I don’t stand against what’s wrong, what am I teaching my children? That silence is safety? That suffering is normal? Your bravery shows me that standing up for what is right, even when it shakes people’s comfort, is the truest way to lead, to love, and protect the future.

I also felt hope reading your words, how you trust that “the dark clouds of racial prejudice will soon pass away and the deep fog of misunderstanding will be lifted from our fearful communities.” Even today, those clouds haven’t fully disappeared; they’ve just been disguised behind new systems, words, and barriers. . . . Thank you for showing us that speaking out against injustice, even when uncomfortable, is the way to protect not only our rights but also the hearts and minds of the next generation. . . . Silence alone has never been enough. Because of your words, I will not stay silent.

Dr. King, if you were here today, would you still tell us to be patient, or would you tell us it’s time to be louder, bolder, and more unafraid than ever? **(Roncal Riley)**

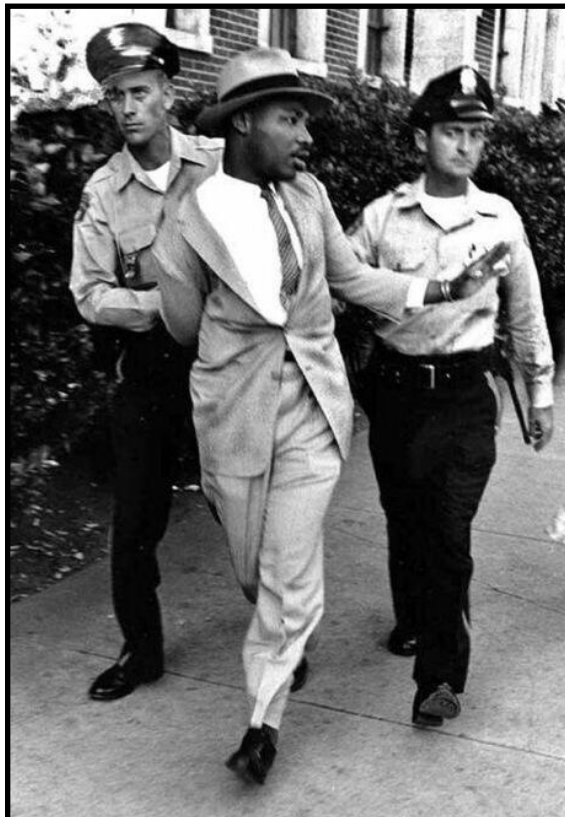
The right for equality (equal rights) is still a fight that we are fighting as black in America. Yes, in some ways things have become better, but deep down it is still an underlining problem.

We as “black” still get called “n****r” and “colored.” We still face discrimination and unequal justice.

A lot of our black men are still being accused of crimes without any evidence. Don’t let it be a white man or women lying to prove a point. Being slapped with 10+ years in jail, our black women still being kept away from opportunities that will help or get them ahead. We had our first black woman run for president. She was well educated and in a position to make things better for us in the United States, but the opportunity was snatched from under her due to racial discrimination.

We are still not allowed in areas. We still have sundown towns where blacks are not welcomed and could possibly lose their lives. I feel like now the difference is that we really don’t know who is for us and who is pretending. We walk around, work, go to school with those whites that still carry a lot of this in their blood and minds, but because it is “wrong” they hide their true emotions. The doctors treat and minimize our pain, and we do not get proper care. All these years later, we as blacks and also Mexicans are still fighting and marching! . . . **(Tikoya Gilmer)**

I have just got done reading your letter, and I must say this letter has opened the eyes of the nation including the Negroes. I say nation because no human is exempt from knowing the truth. You talked about how the oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever.



You said that if one recognizes this vital urge that has engulfed the Negro community, one should readily understand why public demonstrations are taking place.

You were called an extremist. I can say I honor your extremism for the fight against injustice. We still may face somewhat similar difficulties to this day. We can’t help but to recognize the injustice with Wisconsin having the highest rate of Black and Brown men incarcerated. Back then, the South had its vicious segregation and racial prejudice. . . I believe that if my Black and Brown Brothers and Sisters could just truly understand the difference that they can make, that together as Dr. King did we could stand up for one and another. **(Larry Grant)**

Your powerful words in “Letter from Birmingham jail” resonate deeply. I am fascinated by your commitment to justice, your eagerness for a nonviolent protest, and your patience in the face of injustice.

Your words “fierce urgency of now” have instilled in me that waiting for the right time for justice often means waiting forever. You showed that non-violent direct action isn’t just a strategy; it’s morally imperative. It is a call to wake up the conscience of those indifferent to oppression. Your humanity shows with every word spoken and written. You’re not just a leader but a man longing for a future where dignity and equality are not just privileges but rights. Thank you, Dr. King, for your courage, your enduring voice. Your legacy continues to inspire all to be courageous, brave, and never silent when faced with injustice.

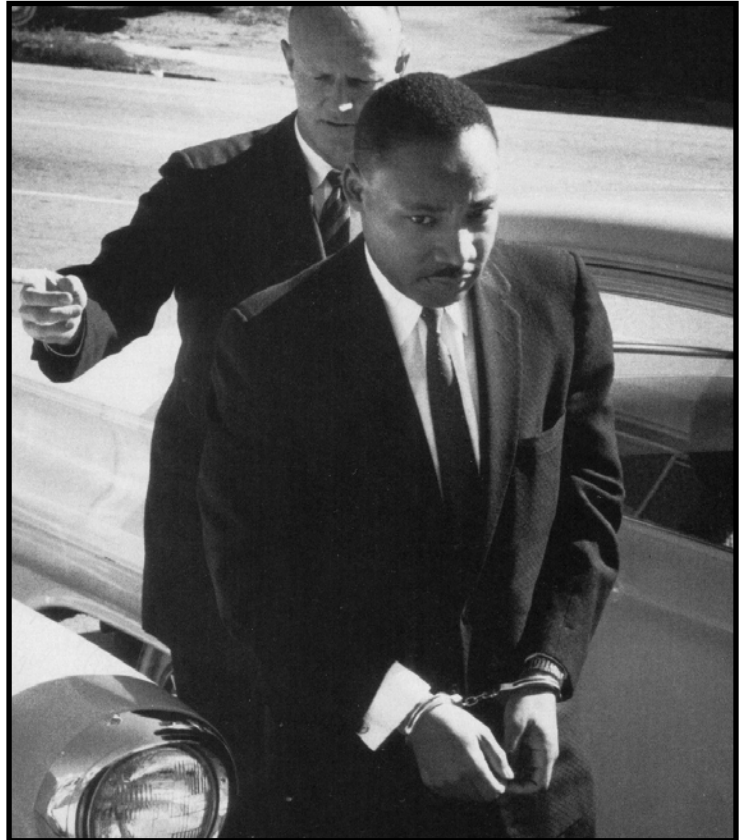
I am an admiring fan and fellow future activist.
(JuJu Stallworth)

I admire your ability to write a letter in such an assertive yet passionate and respectful way, despite the anger you may have felt while sitting in a jail cell and being mistreated by the Birmingham Police Department. After failed attempts of negotiations and Birmingham being the most segregated city in the U.S., I agree that it was right to take the next step without hesitation rather than to wait on the right time because if not then, then when? As you mentioned, we've waited for more than 340 years for our Constitutional and God-given rights. And you're right. There does come a time when the cup of endurance runs over, especially when you're forced to obey unjust laws. I appreciated you defining the difference between "just" and "unjust" laws. Living in 2026, it feels like there are a lot of unjust laws being thrown around by our current president.

There were many valid points in your letter that also stuck out to me. For instance, you explained the opposing forces of the African American community that consisted of the blacks who had been oppressed for so long they lacked self-respect and identity. Then there were the middle-class blacks that somewhat benefitted from segregation due to their higher education and economic status. Lastly, there was the force that formed hatred and bitterness causing some blacks to advocate violence. Your stance was the middle-man between it all, and to me that truly showed you genuinely wanted equality overall. **(Serene Boyd)**

I am truly honored to write to you this letter. I write to you as a Black woman who is done with restraint, done with patience, and done with being told that dignity must wait for a more convenient time. Your "Letter from Birmingham Jail" does not ask America to reflect. It exposes America, and that is why it unsettles those who benefit from our silence. I am so disgusted with how you've been treated poorly and unfairly while doing a non-violent protest. It has brought me anger and hurt.

You were arrested, jailed, and criticized not because you were doing something wrong but because you were demanding equality and dignity for our



people. While you stood for justice, the system responded with punishment, violence, and silence. We have gone through all the steps in Birmingham, and injustice still exists.

Our people have been strong and patient for generations. Waiting has brought us lynching and bombing without consequence, schools where there is discrimination and segregation, jobs without opportunities, and laws that don't protect us. A law that denies opportunity is unfair, no matter how calmly it is demanded. A law that damages human personality is not worthy of obedience. A law that restricts education, employment, and movement for one group while empowering another is not a law at all. It is controlled. Their calls for patience allow segregated schools to remain open, discriminatory hiring to continue, and unjust laws to survive unchallenged. . . .

Being patient and still not receiving what we were promised is a sort of negligence. I thank you for standing up for our people. You've been strong and have been committing your time into our protest and our freedom. **(Cquemiah Clark-Richmond)**

This is the first time I am reading this later, and I now realize why they (our government and the education system) did not teach us this. By the end of your letter I knew I could do something for the people—our people—who are still being oppressed because as you said, “freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; It must be demanded!” This letter reminded me that we have a right to fight against the unjust laws and racism we face. We can make change happen if and only if we unite and take strong, persistent, and determined action. I believe that those in power were/are afraid of how your words inspire the oppressed to fight back. Thanks to you, Dr. King, they should be afraid because I and many others will not wait in silence but will fight for justice and our constitutional rights.

Your way of responding to the clergymen was humble yet fierce with love. The questions you asked and the way you answered left no room for ambiguity. . . . The details and description of what you experienced as well as your brothers, sisters, and children experienced was heartbreaking. I was filled with anger and sorrow knowing that these painful experiences plagued the minority community, yet people still turned a blind eye and did nothing. You did something, Dr. King: you are a hero and I hope you know that.

In 2026 we are facing injustice and racism by our very own elected officials including our president.



Dr. King, I have been asking myself, “Would your way of doing things work with the current administration?” Our own President has broken laws and allows people with his agenda to do the same. The president has made a joke out of our democracy and promotes hate towards people who oppose his beliefs! We the people are now the seekers of justice who demand the laws be followed—the very laws that are being broken by our government who took an oath and swore to obey these laws! Do we continue with protest as more of our rights are violated? How can we turn hate into love? Can we continue to be peaceful as their methods become more violent? The more I re-read your letter, I realize you answer my questions! However, your strength in patience and peace is something I find hard to attain. The atrocious acts committed daily make it hard to remain peaceful and patient. I would ask, “How much more can the people take!” but I know your answer will be what we can do. . . .

I’ve always given this world the benefit of the doubt and hoped that with time racism would be a thing of the past. However, I will take accountability and say I was wrong. My silence was wrong. I was against the racism and injustice, but that did not help nor change anything. “More and more I feel that people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will.” This statement has proved to be correct with the current administration in government. History is only repeating itself, and

we should know what not to do. . . . The world is once again divided by racism as if color changes a human into some “thing” that deserves less. . . . “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere”: this is something people must understand. I feel we are not safe until we are all safe.
(Lilibeth Sobrevilla)

I write to you as someone who grew up surrounded by adversity and shaped by a world that still feels divided by the same lines you fought against. Me being a mixed child with a Black father and White mother, I've often felt like I wasn't Black enough for my cousins on my dad's side and not White enough for my grandfather, my mom's dad. Yet I am fully aware that society will always see me as Black first. Reading your "Letter from Birmingham Jail" brought tears to my eyes seeing even more how deeply injustice is rooted in America. When you wrote that "justice too long delayed is justice denied," it hit hard in my community; we are still waiting. We are waiting for fair chances and fair treatment. You spoke of unjust laws, those that degrade people. I see that today in mass incarceration, poverty, and the way drugs were allowed to flood our neighborhoods. It is modern day slavery, chains replaced by systems to keep us stuck.

Today many things you warned about still are relevant; White America still holds most of the power and wealth, built from the suffering of Black people. Opportunities are still unequal. Our communities are still struggling to breathe under the system that was made long ago. But your words gave me strength. You reminded me that struggle has purpose and that only silence protects injustice.

Dr. King, your fight was not in vain, but it isn't finished. **(Valencia Collins)**

Your "Letter from Birmingham Jail" speaks powerfully to the world even in 2026! Though decades have passed, your words remain necessary.

One sentence that stood out to me was, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." This line is relevant today as society faces racial injustice and discrimination that many try to ignore because it does not affect them personally. You used parallelism in that sentence; it reminds us that silence in the face of injustice is never **neutral**.

Another powerful message in your letter is when you describe how waiting for justice

felt like "waiting for a cup of coffee that has grown cold." This metaphor tells the frustration of being told to "wait" for basic rights. Now in 2026, we are still being told to be patient while suffering continues.

You also wrote, "Like a boil that can never be cured so long as it is covered up, but must be opened with all its pus flowing ugliness," using similes to explain why something must be exposed rather than ignored. That message also speaks for today's time in 2026; society still struggles with confronting uncomfortable truths about racism and inequality instead of addressing them honestly.

Dr. King, your letter reminds us that progress does not come from comfort, silence, or waiting but from courage and action. I admire your justice and commit to actively pursuing it. **(Destiny Drone)**

I would like to start by complimenting you on how wise and knowledgeable you are. I admire how you value peace and are speaking in a way that makes people hear you. The changes you have made allowed it so people like me could live in peace. I think you would be proud to see how far we have come. That being said, you would still be saddened with how far we have fallen backwards, due to the current leadership. The United States has been lacking a leader for a very long time now.



I would like to thank you for all of your efforts and words of wisdom. I see why you were loved by so many people. Your speeches continue to inspire open minds. I have been learning about Socrates in school, and I loved how you referenced him when you said, "Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half-truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood." I agree that the Allegory of the Cave is relevant to racism because racism stems from ignorance and close-minded thinking. While we have come a long way from how things were in the 1950s, racism is still very alive and it is hurting our country.

The people in charge do not value human rights. I have even heard talk of allowing segregation again. It stuck out to me when you said "we know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed" because right now in 2026 we are still fighting for freedom. We are still fighting for humanity. To see that is disheartening. . .

I find your use of analogies innovative. Two of my favorites were "an unjust law is no law at all" and "An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony

with the moral law." I deeply long for people to understand those two quotes. At this time in the United States, families are being deported and ripped apart, and government force and brutality is at an all-time high. People are being taken by agents against their will; agents are coming into homes, schools and places of employment. Human rights have gone out of the window. More than anything humanity is what is needed.

. . . Another quote that stays true to this day is when you said, "We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people." While there have been a lot of people fighting for humanity, there have been a lot of Americans silent as well. This disturbs me because it is a reminder how people are willing to sit by and watch injustice unfold and look the other way because they do not think this directly affects them. In conclusion, we still have a lot of work to do, and I hope your speeches can continue to inspire minds all around the world. **(Kiana Galloway)**

I just finished reading your "Letter from Birmingham Jail" today, January 21, 2026, and it stirred my heart deeply. In my many years I've seen a lot, but your words feel fresh and needed now more than ever. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere": oh, how that rings true in our still divided world today!

That plea to "wait" troubled me so much. Wait? Wait for what? You showed how it really means "never" from folks who see themselves as better, richer, smarter. I feel that same weariness today, Lord knows I do, 'cause we are still waiting!

You question what kind of extremists we will be. . . . After all I've known and seen of what we've endured as a people, it still humbles me. Have I been extreme enough for love and justice, not hate? That's a calling I pray we all hear.

"Before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, we were here. Before the pen of Jefferson etched the majestic words of the Declaration...." Those lines



brought tears. They honor a presence and dignity long overlooked. . . .

Dr. King, your writing moved me like a hymn sung by Mahalia or Aretha. . . . You made allusions to Paul, Amos, Jesus; Scripture breathes through it all. Irony is sharp as a sermon, turning “patience” into its opposite. You used a simile of tension that must be, like a burning house no one ignores. And that aching parallelism in the “When you have seen” lines builds like waves of grief or marching feet, making the pain feel endless and pulling us right into it. Even today, I watch the same struggles play out on our streets and screens.

In conclusion, your words, Dr. King, at the end touched me most tenderly: “Never before have I written so long a letter. . . . but what else can one do when he is alone in a narrow jail cell, other than write long letters, think long thoughts and pray long prayers?” What a picture of your spirit alone yet pouring out truth, turning confinement into revelation. It makes me cherish every word, knowing it came from such deep prayer and longing. **(Angel Moore)**

In the last few months, I have witnessed what one could call an assault on the very foundations of the civil rights movements.

Some may argue that the movement itself is in peril, and I felt it was quite telling that your words, which you have written so long ago, still have great relevance today. The recent demonstrations in Minnesota made your words that “injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere” ring true. I am certain that those brave and courageous souls braving the brutal Minnesota cold to protest and stand up for their neighbors were inspired by your words. Dr. King, I write to you as an “outsider,” a foreign national not of this land; my opinions too have often been

dismissed not on their merit but rather on the fact that I was not born in this country. These are treacherous times for immigrants; not only have our ideas been dismissed and undermined but our very existence is threatened, and some may argue under assault. . . . It is because of your example that we see Americans stand up for their community members against what they deem to be an injustice taking place sanctioned by unjust laws.

. . . We now have a president that wants white people from my country and not black, and he says it with impunity; it seems that society has failed to recognize the inherent racism in that. Dr. King, I agree with you that the greatest threat to the movement are moderates. Moderates have infiltrated the only party which still claims to care about the civil rights movement, the Democratic party. Just as they did during your time, advocating for slow and measured change, they continue to this very day. They have hindered every legislative attempt to make bold and effective change by labelling it as extreme, and the result today has been a huge step backwards. The sad reality today, Dr. King, is that nothing has changed in the South; the only difference is that racist placards have been replaced with gentrification.



Your justified admonishment of the “White Church” remains a major issue today. Time and time again the “White Church” has repeatedly been on the wrong side of history when it comes to human rights. Today, nothing has changed, and it seems that the church is often used to justify the draconian and sometimes unjust laws of those who seek to obfuscate the many issues facing America today by blaming immigrants, LGBTIQ, and other marginalized groups. . . .The struggle continues today, **(Viwe Mpurwana)**

I write to you across time, after carefully reading every page of “Letter from Birmingham Jail” and sitting with it longer than I expected. Your words do not feel trapped in 1963. They feel alive. I read your letter thinking I would learn about history; instead, I learned an argument—exact, high-minded, and constant —that still demands a response in 2026.

One of the strongest lessons I learned from your letter is the difference you draw between just and unjust laws. Your statement that “an unjust law is no law at all” struck me not as civil disobedience but as responsibility. You do not disobey the law itself; you challenge laws that do play human personality. That distinction feels especially relevant today, when people often confuse obedience with what is really right. Your explanation was clear, logical, and rooted in natural law, forcing the reader to ask not “Is this legal?” but “Is this right?”

Your use of imagery stayed with me. When you described injustice anywhere as a threat to justice everywhere, the metaphor of a “single garment of destiny” stood out. It made injustice feel physical, digging deep, impossible to isolate. Similarly, your comparison of waiting for freedom (“almost always” meaning “never”) carried emotional weight because it was grounded in lived experience of bombings, police brutality, and the exhaustion of

explaining your humanity to your own child. The image of your daughter asking why she cannot go to an amusement park is especially haunting. It transformed civil rights from a difficult cause into a personal wound.

... Your allusions to the Bible, Socrates, St. Thomas Aquinas, and even American founding documents were not decorative. They were well thought out. You placed the civil rights movement inside the moral and intellectual tradition your critics claimed to defend, exposing their humbug without ever going to bitterness.

Still, I want to challenge you, gently. You place deep faith in nonviolent acts as a necessary tool for growth. While I look up to your courage, I wonder how much patience that demand requires from those who are most harmed. In 2026, many people ask whether constant control places an unfair burden on the abused while allowing injustice to evolve rather than disappear. . . .

Dr. King, your letter taught me that justice is not passive, that tension can be creative, and that silence is never neutral. You did not write really to defend yourself—you wrote to awaken your reader. Decades later, that awakening is still unfinished.

(Roche Palmer)



SHOWING BIRTHDAY LOVE

The Class of 2026 presented Emily with a group-written and recited Happy Birthday poem printed on parchment like the Declaration of Independence, along with balloons, cakes, cards, and gifts.

Today is a special day

Today is your day

A day we celebrate you

Where we can cheer in appreciation

Where we can admire your dedication

A day we celebrate you

To thank you for giving us an opportunity and community

To thank you for a safe place to use our voice and write our words

A day we celebrate you



For believing when we didn't believe

For your patience and understanding

A day we celebrate you

The sacrifices you make

The endless papers you grade

A day we celebrate you

Your beautiful soul and kind heart

Your strength and support

A day we celebrate you

Because you always showed up

Because you always cared

A day we celebrate you

Inside the classroom and in our futures

Inside our hearts and forever in our memories

A day we celebrate you

Where we see all that you do

Where we respect you

A day we celebrate you

To thank you for your desire to teach

To thank you for your willingness to LISTEN

A day we celebrate you
For sharing your truth and the truth of so many
For this platform we know as the odyssey
A day we celebrate you
The determination to see each and every one of us succeed and grow.
The friendly push to challenge our way of thinking, understanding and writing.
A day we celebrate you
Your unwavering dream
You magnificent mind
A day we celebrate you
Because you have been a pillar for all
Because you simply deserve to be celebrated
A day we celebrate you, Emily
You possess a heart that pumps service,
A voice for many and a heart for all,
When it comes to those underserved you go over
and beyond to answer the call!

Happy Birthday, Emily

Thank you for your sacrifice, your love, your guidance. You will forever remain imprinted in our hearts.

The Odyssey Class of 2026



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. ON LOVE

“Love is the most durable power in the world.”

“I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

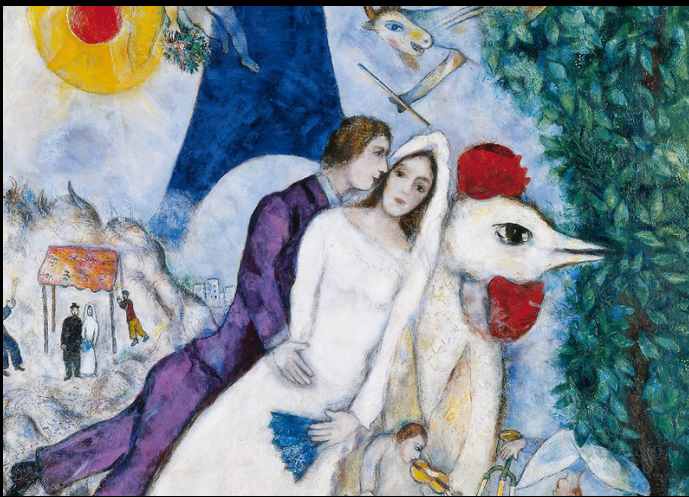
“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

“At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love.”

“Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.”



"Love is supreme and unconditional; like is nice but limited." —Duke Ellington



**"In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love."
—Marc Chagall**



"There is always something left to love. And if you ain't learned that, you ain't learned nothing."—Mama in Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*



**"We're not savage, we're not animals, we're not aliens. We are humans, and we are Americans. ICE out. The only thing that is more powerful than hate is love."
—Bad Bunny, Grammy's 2026.**



"Love is that condition in the healing spirit so profound that it allows us to forgive. . . . Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope. . . . Love liberates. It doesn't just hold—that's ego. Love liberates. It doesn't bind."—Maya Angelou