

Unidentified man: Monsignor Moore, the vicar general of the diocese of Davenport, will read the award.

Monsignor Moore: The Davenport Iowa Catholic Interracial Council, believing with the late and much loved Pope, John the XXIII, that human society is realized in freedom—that is to say, in ways and means in keeping with the dignity of its citizens who accept the responsibility of their action precisely because they are, by nature, national beings—that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity, that racial discrimination can in no way be justified, and that thus, he who possesses certain rights has likewise the duty to claim those rights as marks of his dignity, while all others have the obligation to acknowledge those rights and respect them, does hereby confer upon the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. this Pacem in Terris Peace and Freedom award, in recognition of the momentous contribution he has made and is making, especially to his non-violent protest movement toward reawakening the conscience of the nation to what still remains for the completion of democracy in America, as regards both to peace and freedom. Given at Davenport, Iowa on the 28th day of April nineteen-hundred and sixty-five. Charles A. Tony, President, Catholic Interracial Council.

[Applause]

Now, being a pastor, it sometimes happens when we have a crowd of people in church that we get a good collection. *[Laughter]* And I have a little envelope here uh, that I—I don't like to do it too quickly because I like to hold on to money—I have a little envelope here that, uh, I was instructed by the Catholic Interracial Council to give this envelope to Dr. King to further his grand work here in our country and, Dr. King, they enclosed in this envelope a check for \$1,000.

[Applause]

Dr. King: Mr. Chairman. Lieutenant Governor Fulton, Mayor O'Brien, Monsignor Moore, Mr. Tony, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I need not pause to say how very delighted and honored I am to be here tonight and to be a part of this auspicious occasion. And I certainly want to express my deep and sincere gratitude to the Catholic Interracial Council of this community for bestowing upon me such a great honor. And I can assure you that this award is of an estimable value for the continuance of my humble efforts. I want to join tonight with my fellow recipients of awards by saying that I consider this far more than an honor to me personally. I think in a real sense that in presenting this award you honor the hundreds and thousands, yea, even millions of people, who are engaged in this mighty struggle for freedom and human dignity in this country. Many of them you don't know--they are those anonymous, faceless individuals who are working tirelessly and unrelentingly to make the American dream a reality. And I'd accept this award for those people, for those heroes who will never have their names in "Who's Who" and who may never be mentioned in the newspapers, but they are the real heroes of our struggle. I think of many other things tonight, but I'd like to mention at least one that I think of in receiving this award.

Many things have happened over the past few years to make our world a better world, but I think probably the most--certainly one of the most--significant developments in the church community and Christendom, I should say, is the fact that the Christian family has been brought closer together. This is to the eternal credit of the great Pope John, who with a magnificent ecumenical spirit brought new levels of understanding between all Christians. And I can say, in a rather humorous vein, that when a Catholic group can give an award to a fellow by the name of "Martin Luther", things are getting better. *[Applause and laughter]* But in all sincerity, I think these developments are developments that we are all happy about. I think the other thing is that the Civil Rights movement has given us a great opportunity to allow the ecumenical spirit to really flow forth. It has been marvelous indeed to see Protestants, Catholics, and Jews working together in demonstrations and in communities all across the country to solve the problem of racial injustice. And I know as a result of this, we are making strides and we will continue to make strides in the future.

I would like to say, in receiving this award, a few words about the American dream, because this is what we are trying to do, this is what we are seeking to do in the Civil Rights struggle, this is what we are seeking to do in all of our efforts: to make brotherhood a reality. We are trying to make the American dream a reality. The substance of this dream is expressed in those sublime words, in the Declaration of independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Now the first thing we notice in this great dream is an amazing universalism: it does not say some men, it says all men; it does not say all white men, it says all men—which includes black men; it does not say all Gentiles, it says all men—which includes Jews; it does not say all Protestants, it says all men—which includes Catholics. Then that is something else at the very heart of that dream which is ultimately one of the basic things that distinguishes our form of government from totalitarian regimes: it says in substance that each individual has certain basic rights that are neither conferred by nor derived from the state. In order to discover where they came from, it is necessary to move back behind the dim mist of eternity—they are God-given. And barely seldom, if ever in the history of the world, has a sociopolitical document expressed in such profound eloquent and unequivocal language, the dignity and worth of human personality. This is a great dream, it reminds us that every man is an heir of a legacy of dignity and worth.

Yet ever since the founding fathers of our nation dreamed this dream, America has been something of a schizophrenic personality tragically divided against herself; on the one hand, we have proudly professed the noble principles of democracy, yet on the other hand, we have sadly practiced the very opposite of those principles. Indeed, slavery and racial segregation have been strange paradoxes in a nation founded on the principle that all men are created equal. But now, more than ever before, America is challenged to realize this dream, for the shape of the world today does not permit our nation the luxury of an anemic democracy and the price that America must pay for the continued oppression of the Negro and other minority groups is the price of its

own destruction, for the hour is late, the clock of destiny is ticking out, and we must act now before it is too late.

And so I would like to mention the night—tonight—some of the things that we as individuals, some of the things that we as Christians, some of the things that we as religious people must do in order to make the American dream a reality. I'd like to start on the world scale by saying that if the American dream is to become a reality, we must have a concern about the larger world dream for our peace and brotherhood. And so, if we are to make this dream a reality, we must have a world perspective. The world in which we live is geographically one; the great struggle taking place now is to make this world one in terms of brotherhood. Now it is true that the geographical oneness of our age has come into being to a large extent as a result of modern man's scientific ingenuity—modern man through his scientific genius has been able to dwarf distance and place, time, in chains and our jet planes have compressed into minutes distances that once took days and even months. I think that Bob Hope has adequately described this new jet age in which we live and it isn't a common thing for a Baptist preacher to quote Bob Hope but I think [*laughter*] he's adequately described this jet age in which we live. He said, "it is an age in which it is possible to take a nonstop flight from Los Angeles, California to New York City—a distance of about 3000 miles—and if on taking off in Los Angeles you develop hiccups, you will 'hic' in Los Angeles and 'cup' in New York City." [*Applause and laughter*] You know, it is possible because of the time difference to take a flight from Tokyo, Japan on Sunday morning and arrive in Seattle, Washington on the preceding Saturday night and when your friends meet you at the airport and ask when you left Tokyo, you would have to say: "I left tomorrow." [*Laughter*] Now this is a bit humorous, but I'm trying to laugh a basic fact into all of us, and it is simply this: that throughout scientific and technological genius, we have made of this world a neighborhood. And now through our moral and ethical commitment, we must make of it a brotherhood. We must all learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools. This is what we must see now. [*Applause*] No individual can live alone today, no nation can live alone, we all interdependent.

Some time ago, Mrs. King and I journeyed to that great country known as India. I never will forget the experience—it was a marvelous experience to meet and talk with the great leaders of India and to meet and talk with hundreds and thousands of people all over the cities and villages of that vast country. And these experiences will remain meaningful to me as long as the chords of memory shall lengthen. But I say to you tonight, my friends, that there were those depressing moments. How can one avoid being depressed when he sees with his own eyes evidences of millions of people going to be hungry at night? How can one avoid being depressed when he sees with his own eyes millions of people sleeping on the sidewalks at night? More than a million people sleep on the sidewalks of Bombay every night, more than 600 thousand sleep on the sidewalks of Calcutta at night—they have no houses to go in, they have no beds to sleep in. How can one avoid being depressed when he discovers that out of India's population of more than 400 million people, some 380 million make an annual income of less than ninety dollars a year? Most of these people have never seen a doctor or a dentist. As I beheld these conditions, something within me cried out: "Can we in America stand idly by and not be concerned?" An

answer came, “Oh, no,” because the destiny of the United States is tied up with the destiny of India and every other nation. Now I started thinking about the fact that we spend in our country millions of dollars a day to store surplus food and I said to myself, “I know where we can store that food free of charge--in the wrinkled stomachs of the millions of God’s children in Asia and Africa and South America and in our own country who go to bed hungry at night”. All I’m saying-- *[Applause]* All I’m saying is simply this: that all life is interrelated. And somehow we are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single formative destiny, and whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly for some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be and you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be--this is the interrelated structure of reality.

John Donne caught it some years ago and placed it in graphic terms: “No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” And then he goes on toward the end to say: “Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.” The realization of this and the living-out of this I believe will lead us on towards the realization of the American dream. Now, to put it in more specific terms, if America is to realize this great dream, we must reaffirm in no uncertain terms the essential immorality of racial segregation. It is not enough to say racial segregation is sociologically unsound, and it certainly is. It is not enough to say that it is politically untenable, and it certainly is. In the final analysis, we must get rid of racial segregation because it is morally wrong and sinful. We must reaffirm the fact that segregation--whether it is in Selma, Alabama; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; or Davenport, Iowa--is a sin in the sight of the almighty God and it must be removed from the body politic before our democratic and moral health can be realized. In all of the great religions it said this... *[Applause]*
[audio skips ahead]

I do not speak as the result of some pet convictions I have--I speak out of the inspiration that has come to me, in great minds of the past, and above all from Jesus Christ, and I speak as a result of the great insights of our Judeo-Christian heritage, and deeply rooted in that heritage is the idea that all human personality is significant. Segregation is wrong--to put it in the words of the great Jewish philosopher Martin Buber--because it “substitutes an ‘I-it’ relationship for the ‘I-thou’ relationship.” And to use the thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas, segregation is wrong because it’s based on human laws that are out of harmony with the moral, the eternal, the natural laws of the universe. Somewhere, the great theologian—Protestant theologian—Paul Tillich has said that sin is separation and what is segregation but an existential expression of man’s tragic estrangement, his terrible separation, his awful sinfulness? And so we must work passionately and unrelentingly all over this country to get rid of segregation because it’s morally wrong, and every man and every woman of good will must say in substance that we are through with racial segregation now, henceforth, and forevermore. This will make us a great nation. *[Applause]*

Now let me move on to another point because if this problem is to be solved, we must work not only in the ideational realm, but we must move out into the arena of action. It is wonderful to clarify ideas and say that segregation is wrong and that we must have a world perspective, but then we must move out into the area of social reform. If this problem is to be solved in this nation and in the world, we must develop massive action programs in order to make justice a reality. I know there are always those people who fail to see that it is necessary to act in order to

solve these problems—they have the strange illusion that you can just sit down and wait on something and problems will work themselves out, but history has a long reputation of that idea. If this problem is to be solved, we must develop massive action programs in order to do it.

Now we've got to get rid of one or two myths that are disseminated constantly in our society if we're going to have the action programs necessary to make the American dream a reality. One is what I refer to as the myth of time: you've heard this, this is the notion that only time can solve the problem and there are those who say to the Negro and his allies in the white community, "Now don't push things, uh, you oughta cool off and be nice and patient because only time can solve the problem and if you wait 100 or 200 years, time will work it out". *[Laughter]* Well I think there's an answer to this myth-- *[Applause]* I think there is an answer to this myth and it is that time is neutral, it can be used either constructively or destructively. And I say to you very honestly tonight, my friends, and I'm absolutely convinced, that the forces of ill will in our nation—the forces committed to negative ends in our nation, the extreme rightists of our nation—have often used time much more effectively than the forces of good will. And it may well be that we will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people who will bomb a church in Birmingham, Alabama, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, "Wait on time". Somewhere—*[Applause]* And somewhere we must come to see that human progress never rolls in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of dedicated individuals willing to be coworkers with God. And without this hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the primitive forces of irrational emotionalism and social stagnation. We must help time and we must realize that the time is always right to do right and this is the way we can get rid of a dangerous myth that is loose in our society.

Now the other notion that gets around is the legislation can't solve this problem, you've heard that. They've said to us that you must change the heart and legislation can't change the heart. Now, I'm certainly with anybody that talks in terms of changing the heart--I happen to be a preacher and I'm in the heart-changing business. *[Laughter]* And, uh, I believe-- *[Applause]* And I believe firmly in the need for conversion and regeneration and the new birth, and I believe that there is something--however much we hate to talk about it--called sin and original sin that pervades human nature, and so I think that we must all be concerned about changing the heart. But I would like to try to grapple with this myth because it is a dangerous myth, also: the notion that legislation has no role to play in this period of social transition because it can't change the heart. Now the answer that I would give to that is that it may be true that you can't legislate integration but you can legislate desegregation. It may be true that morality cannot be legislated, but behavior can be regulated. It may be true that the law may not change the heart, but it can restrain the heartless. It may be true that the law can't make a man love me, but it can restrain him from lynching me and I think that's pretty important also. *[Laughter and applause]* So while the law may not change the hearts of men, it does change the habits of men. And when you change the habits of men, pretty soon hearts will begin to change and attitudes will begin to change. And I say this evening, now is the time for meaningful, creative, forthright civil rights legislation to grapple with many of the problems that we still face.

I mentioned very briefly that at this present time, there is a debate going on in Congress over a bill to guarantee the right to vote. We've been engaged in a struggle in Alabama--some of you

have been there with us in that struggle, you've been on the scene, you've been there and you've walked with us and I'm sure that all of you here tonight have been with us there in spirit. And in that movement, probably more than any other movement in our country, we dramatize the indignities and the injustices which Negroes still face in many areas of the South in an attempt to register and vote. And so we know that there is a need for legislation to make it possible for Negroes to register and vote. There's a debate going on and questions are being raised and I submit that we know now enough about the fact that Negroes are denied the right to vote and we need that bill now and I don't think there needs to be a long debate in Congress--I don't think that Congress needs to get bogged down in the paralysis of analysis. We all know that the Negro is denied the right to vote in Dallas County, Alabama. We all know that the Negro is denied the right to vote in the state of Mississippi. And this legislation is absolutely necessary; we need legislation on a national scale, yet we need it on local state levels to grapple with the problem of employment discrimination, to grapple with the problem of housing segregation and discrimination. These are necessities if we are to make the American dream a reality.

Now I'd like to mention beyond this that undergirding all of our work and undergirding all of our actions must be something in-line with the spirit of this award: I am still convinced that nonviolence is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom and human dignity and I accept this award tonight, more determined than ever before, to commit myself to the fulfillment and realization of the philosophy of nonviolence and the philosophy of love. If the Negro succumbs to the temptation of using violence in his struggle, unborn generations will be the recipients of a long and desolate night of bitterness and our chief legacy to the future will be an endless reign of meaningless chaos. I still believe that violence creates many more social problems than it solves and there is still a voice crying through the vista of time saying to every potential Peter, "Put up your sword". And history is replete with the bleached bones of nations. History is cluttered with the wreckage of communities that failed to follow that command. But I can say there is another way—a way as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Mohandas K. Gandhi—there is another way, a way which says that it is possible to stand up against entrenched evil with all of your might, with all of the force of your soul, with the witness of your body, and yet not stoop to hate and violence in the process. And I say "hate" because I think it is important that we come to see all over the world now that love will have the last word. Hate is a tragic philosophy—it ends up destroying the hater as well as the hated. Psychiatrists are telling us now that many of the strange things happen in the subconscious, and many of the things that we see in terms of inner conflicts are rooted in hate. They are now saying love will perish.

It is wonderful to have a philosophy of struggle which says that it is possible to stand up against the evil system and yet not hate in the process. And so this is why in our best moments, as we've struggled, however difficult the moment has been, we-- when we were truly committed to nonviolence, were able to stand up to our most violent opponent and say in substance: "We will match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will and we will still love you. We cannot in all good conscious obey your unjust laws because non-cooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. And so bomb our homes and threaten our children—we will still love you. Throw us in jail, and as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities at the midnight hours, and drag us out onto

some wayside road, and beat us and leave us half-dead, and as difficult as it is, we will still love you. Send your propaganda agents around the country and make it appear that we are not fit morally, culturally, or otherwise for integration and we will still love you. But be assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer and one day we will win our freedom, but we will not only win freedom for ourselves—we will so appeal to your heart and your conscience that we will win you in the process and our victory will be a double victory.” This is the nonviolent message and I believe it is this message, and it is this way, that will lead us out of dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows. It will help those of us who have been on the oppressed end of the old order to go into the new order, not with any desire to retaliate, but with a determination to forgive and move on to a positive future. We will not seek to rise from a position of disadvantage to one of advantage, thereby subverting justice. We will not seek to substitute one tyranny for another. But we will know that black supremacy is as dangerous and evil as white supremacy and that God is not interested merely in the freedom of brown men and black men and yellow men, but God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race and the creation of a society where all men will live together as brothers and every man will respect the dignity and the worth of human personality.

And so, with a strong action program, but ever standing up against the system, picketing when necessary, demonstrating when necessary, marching when necessary, boycotting in love when necessary, and undergirding all of this with a philosophy of nonviolence, I believe that we can build a new America and that we can bring the American dream into full realization. This is the challenge for the future and this is a great opportunity for our nation and for all of the people who live in it. And let us all work together for this great goal and for this common cause. And let us realize that the problem is with us all over our country and no section of our nation can boast of clean hands in the area of brotherhood. We have our Alabamas and we have our Mississippis, with the glaring violence, the terrible expressions of man’s inhumanity to man. But we must come to see that it is not enough to rise up with righteous indignation when a church is bombed in Mississippi, or when a Mrs. Liuzzo or a Reverend Reeb or a James Jackson are shot down in Selma, Alabama. We must rise up with as much righteous indignation when a Negro cannot live in our neighborhood even if he has the money to buy a home there, when a Negro cannot get a job in our particular firm, when a Negro cannot join our professional, our academic societies, our fraternities, our sororities—in other words, there must be a divine discontent if this problem is to be solved.

There are certain technical words within every academic discipline that soon become stereotypes and clichés. Modern psychology has a word that is probably used more than any other word in psychology—it is the word maladjusted. Now we all want to avoid being maladjusted—we want to live the well-adjusted life in order to avoid neurotic personalities. But I must honestly say to you tonight that there are some things in our nation and in the world to which I’m proud to be maladjusted, and to which I call upon all men of good will to be maladjusted until the good society is realized. I must honestly say that I never intend to adjust myself to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to become adjusted-- *[Applause]* I never intend to become adjusted to religious bigotry. I never intend to adjust myself to economic conditions that will leave between 40 and 50 million of our brothers and sisters right here in America perishing on the lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. And I never will be content until the least of these our brethren will have the basic necessities of life. I never intend

to adjust myself to the madness of militarism and the self-defeating effects of physical violence. But in a day when sputniks and explorers are dashing through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, no nation can win a war.

It is no longer a choice between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence. And the alternative to disarmament, the alternative to a greater suspension of nuclear tests, the alternative to strengthening the United Nations and thereby disarming the whole world, may well be a civilization plunged into the abyss of annihilation. And so it may well be that our world is in dire need for a new organization: the International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment [*laughter*]*—*men and women who will be as maladjusted as the prophet Amos, who in the midst of the injustices of his day could cry out in words that echo across the centuries: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." As maladjusted as Abraham Lincoln, who had the vision to see that this nation could not survive half-slave and half-free. As maladjusted as Thomas Jefferson, who in the midst of an age amazingly adjusted to slavery, could etch across the pages of history words lifted to cosmic proportions: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." As maladjusted as our Lord in Christ who could say, "Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Pray for them that despitefully use you." And through such maladjustment, we will be able to emerge from the bleak and desolate midnight of man's inhumanity to man and to the bright and glittering daybreak of freedom and justice.

May I say to you, as I prepare to go back to the Deep South and to the dark and desolate moments of Alabama with all of its difficulties still ahead: I have faith in the future and I have faith in America. And I believe we're going to solve this problem. I believe that we're developing a coalition of conscience that will mobilize itself on a continuum basis to the point of bringing about a solution. I believe that somehow, and in some way, we shall overcome. Before the victory's won, some of us will get scarred up a little. Before the victory's won, some more will be thrown into jail. Before the victory's won, some more will be called bad names and misunderstood, some will be called 'Reds' and 'Communists' simply because they believe in the brotherhood of man. Before the victory's won, somebody else may have to face physical death. If physical death is the price that some must pay to free their children from a permanent death of the spirit, then nothing can be more redemptive.

Yes, we shall overcome, we are not afraid; the Lord will see us through. We shall overcome because the arc of the universe is long but it bends towards justice. We shall overcome because Carlyle is right: no lie can live forever. We shall overcome because William Cullen Bryant is right: truth crushed to earth will rise again. We shall overcome because James Russell Lowell is right: "Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne. Yet that scaffold sways the future. And behind the dim unknown standeth God within the shadows, keeping watch above His own." With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mounting of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to speed up that glad and bright day when all of God's children all over this nation—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics—will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty, we are free at last." Thank you.
[*Applause*] [**audio skips ahead**]

MLK (but a different speech, possibly in a church): I come this morning to try to preach and I would like for all of us, the men and women alike, to think with me from the subject “a knock at midnight”. Our text this morning is taken from one of the familiar parables of our Lord and Master, found in the eleventh chapter of the Gospel as recorded by Saint Luke. It begins at the fifth verse: “And he said unto them, ‘Which of you shall have a friend and shall go unto him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I nothing to set before him.’ And he from within shall answer and say, ‘Trouble me not; the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give thee.’ I say unto you, ‘Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give he as many as he needeth.’”

Now this is a parable dealing with the power of persistent prayer. But one of the things we always notice about the parables of Jesus is that although they were always told to get over one basic thought [?], you can usually find in every parable of Jesus great facets of thought not intended as the main point. And as I look at this parable, I see within it a basic outline and a basic guide in dealing with many of the problems that we confront in our nation and in the world today, and the role of the Church.

Now the first thing that we notice in this parable is that it is midnight. It is also midnight in our world today. We are experiencing a darkness so deep that we can hardly see which way to turn. It’s midnight. It’s midnight in the social order. Now the Middle East has had the headlines over the last few days, but it should not at all cause us to forget that there is another war—it’s a futile, bloody, costly war taking place on Asian soil. We look over to Vietnam and what do we see? We see the rice fields of a little Asian country being burned at will and trampled at whim. We see innocent peasants and little children being burned with Napalm. Then we see the fine young men of our country dying in mounting numbers. All of this is indicative of the fact that it’s midnight.

Nations of the world are engaged in a bitter and tragic contest for supremacy. And you see the real danger is that if we don’t change our course in this world, all of the modern weapons of warfare will soon conspire to bring an untimely death to the human family on this globe. Late President Kennedy was right: mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind. Not only is it midnight in man’s collective life, but it’s midnight in his individual life; it’s midnight in the psychological order.

People are more worried, more frustrated, more bewildered today than in any period of human history. So many of us find that clouds of anxiety are floating in our mental skies; the psychopathic wards of our hospitals are full today. Who are the popular psychologists today? They are the psychoanalysts who delve into the inner chambers of the subconscious. What are the popular books in psychology? They are books entitled “Man Against Himself”, “Modern Man in Search of a Soul”, “The Neurotic Personality of Our Time”. What are the popular books and bestsellers in religion today? They are books entitled “Peace of Mind”, “Peace of Soul”. And who are the popular preachers? They are so often preachers who would preach nice little soothing sermons on how to be happy, how to relax, how to keep your blood pressure down. And so, we have retranslated the Gospel to read: “Go ye into all the world, keep your blood pressure down, and, lo, I will make you a well-adjusted personality.” [*Laughter*] All of this is indicative

of the fact that it is midnight in the psychological order. Not only that, it's midnight in the moral order.

Midnight is a time when all colors lose their distinctiveness and everything becomes merely a dirty shade of gray. In the sense of the moral order, midnight is the time when all moral gladiators [?] lose their distinctiveness. So in our world today for so many people, there's nothing absolutely right, nothing absolutely wrong—just a matter of what the majority of people are doing. Over and over again, we see this; most people live by the philosophy that everybody's doing it, so it must be alright. It's midnight in the moral order and you know midnight is a time when, uh, everybody's trying to get by. And this is exactly what we have done so often: we have ended up with our ethical relativism, feeling that the only thing right is to get by and the only thing wrong is to get poor. So today we don't talk about the Darwinian survival of the fittest—that was the spirit that came along, but for us, it's the philosophy of the survival of the slickest.

Nobody's concerned about obeying the Ten Commandments in so many instances—they are not important. Everybody's busy trying to obey the Eleventh Commandment: 'Thou shall not get caught'. [*Laughter*] According to this tragic philosophy, it's alright to lie, but just lie with a bit of finesse; it's alright to exploit and rob, but be a dignified exploiter so that when you do it, it becomes embezzlement rather than just stealing; [*Laughter*] it's alright even to hate, but just show hate in the garments of love and make it appear that you are loving when you are actually hating—just get by! [?] This tragic moral accident, this tendency to be caught up in the chains of conformity is destroying the soul of our nation, the soul of the world, and so many individuals.

We find ourselves today standing in the midst of a threefold midnight: it's midnight in the social order, it's midnight in the psychological order, it's midnight in the moral order. But as in the parable, so in our world today in the deep darkness of the midnight is interrupted by a knock. The parable talked about this man seeking three loaves of bread, physical bread. In our world today, men and women are in search of three loaves of spiritual bread—they want the bread of faith. So many people have lost faith in themselves, they've lost faith in their neighbors, they've lost faith in God. And in the midst of this faithlessness, they find themselves crying out: "Lord, I believe, but helped [?] by my unbelief." They want the bread of faith.

Then there is the quest for the bread of hope. Everybody needs this bread, everybody wants it. When you stop hoping, you die. And yet so many people have lost hope today, they feel that they have nothing to look forward to. So many young people have lost hope, they have become cynical—they see all of the problems of the world. So many young men feel that there is nothing to look forward to in life but going to the battlefield, giving one's life maybe in something very futile. They look around the world and they lose hope. So many people find themselves crying out with Shakespeare's *Macbeth* that life is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing". So many find themselves crying out with the philosopher Schopenhauer that life is "an endless pain with a painful end". So many find themselves crying out with Paul Laurence Dunbar: "A crust of bread and a corner to sleep in, a minute to smile and an hour to weep in, a pint of joy to a peck of trouble, and never a laugh that the moans come double; and that is life!" In the midst of this hopelessness, men and women reach out for the bread of hope.

Then there is the quest for the bread of love. Everybody needs this bread; we need it in two ways: first we need to learn how to love. The great problem of mankind today is still that there's too much hatred around. More than anything else, we've got to learn to love. In America, the white man must love the black man and the black man must love the white man because we are all tied together in a single garment of destiny. And we can't keep having riots every summer in our cities; we can't keep having all of these problems all over our nation. Our white brothers must understand that we are too poor and the federal government has enough money to get rid of slums and poverty and get rid of these conditions that make for riots. There's no point in continuing to make up excuses. Our white brothers have got to see one thing: we are in America and we are here to stay and we've got to learn how to live together! We ain't going nowhere! *[Agreement]* That's the basic need in this country. We have twenty-two million Negroes that we have counted up—the Census figures give us that. Now they don't take under consideration the number of Negroes that ran when they saw the Census man coming, thinking it was somebody collecting bills. *[Laughter]* So when you add the numbers they didn't get us at least thirty million Negroes in America *[Laughter]* and we are here to stay. *[Agreement]* And our white brothers have got to learn to live with us.

Now you know I ain't got [?] any other [?] response to the oppression and the hatred that we face, we must not, you know, turn around and do the same thing. See, you never solve one problem of tyranny by substituting a new tyranny. A doctrine of black supremacy is as evil as a doctrine of white supremacy. God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men and brown men and yellow men, but God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race and the creation of a society where all men will live together as brothers and every man will respect the dignity and the worth of human personality. And the one way that every man will be able to do this is to remember that one word that Jesus talked about so often, and that is the word love.

So in the midnight hour, the life of our world and our nation, I see men and women by the thousands running towards the Church of God, trying to get the bread of faith, the bread of hope, and the bread of love. **[Audio skips ahead]**

Dr. King (but a different speech to a different audience): There seldom, if ever in the history of the world, has a sociopolitical document expressed in such profound, eloquent, and unequivocal language the dignity and worth of human personality. For the American dream reminds us that every man is the heir of a legacy of dignity. Yet ever since the founding fathers of our nation dreamed this dream, America has been (to use a big word that the psychologists and the psychiatrists use) a schizophrenic personality tragically divided. *[Applause]* On the one hand, she has proudly professed the noble principles of democracy, and on the other hand, she has sadly practiced the very opposite of those principles. Indeed, slavery and segregation have always been strange paradoxes in a nation founded on the principle that all men are created equal. *[Applause]*

And so often, America has trampled over the dream. So often, America has scarred this noble dream. We look and see certain states saying they will never comply with the law of the land. In doing this, America is scarring the dream. We notice people who merely want to be free being brutalized, homes being bombed, churches being bombed—this is a way of scarring the

American dream. We notice people who merely want to exercise their citizenship rights being thrown into jail—this is the way of scarring the dream. And we can hear the voice of a little Emmett Till crying from the rushing waters of the Mississippi—this is the way of scarring the dream. And so the Negro is still trampled over by the iron feet of oppression. So often he has pushed out of the glittering sunlight of last July and left standing in the piercing chill of an Alpine November—this is scarring the American dream. *[Applause]*

May I say to you as has been said so eloquently all the afternoon, this dream is being scarred not only in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana and all of the Southern states, but it is being scarred in New York and Illinois and in Pennsylvania—and I imagine even in California. *[Applause]* The fact is that the Negro all over America is still the last hired and the first fired, and he still can't live where he wants to live and where his money can get him to live. *[Applause]* Today more than ever before, America is challenged: bring this noble dream into reality or the shape of the world today does not afford us the luxury of an anemic democracy. The price that the United States must pay for the continued exploitation of the Negro and other minority groups is the price of its own destruction. *[Applause]*