

"Then my living will not be in vain"

Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator — that something we call death.

We all think about it, and every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think about it in a morbid sense. And every now and then I ask myself what it is that I would want said and I leave the word to you this morning.

If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral.

And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell him not to talk too long.

And every now and then I wonder what I want him to say.

Tell him not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize. That isn't so important.

Tell him not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards — that's not important. Tell him not to mention where I went to school.

I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others.

I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to love somebody.

I want you to say that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try



to feed the hungry. I want you to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked.

I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. And I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

Yes, if you want to, say that I was a drum major. Say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness.

And all of the other shallow things will not matter.

I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.

And that is all I want to say. If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a song, if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain.

If I can do my duty as a Christian ought.

If I can bring salvation to a world once wrought.

If I can spread the messages as the master taught.

Then my living will not be in vain.

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Ebenezer Baptist Church
Atlanta, Georgia

In Memory of the Late
IRA D. MUMFORD



Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing

Lift ev'ry voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring.
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty:
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let is resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod.
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might
Led us into the light.
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand.
True to our God
True to our native land.

Words by JAMES WELDON JOHNSON
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