



Black protests against segregation, which had been voiced for centuries, were finally being heard in the mid-1950s.

King Learns From Discrimination Early In Life

Martin Luther King Jr., was born on Jan. 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Ga., and learned about racial discrimination at an early age. When he was five years old, his most frequent playmate was a white boy whose father owned a neighborhood grocery store. One day, out of the blue, the boy's parents told Martin to go away and not play with their son any longer. Bewildered, Martin asked why, "Because we are white and you are colored," they said.

At home, Martin cried to his mother, "Why don't white people like us?"

She dropped everything and for several hours explained the nature of race relations in America, the tragedy of slavery and of segregation. She told him to hold his head high and not let what whites said and did affect him.

"You must never feel that you are less than anybody else," she said. "You must always feel that you are somebody."



King (bottom, right) at the age of six, attending a birthday party with fellow first graders in his Atlanta neighborhood. "Love was central and...lovely relationships were ever present," he later said of his childhood years.

"The belief that god will do everything for man is as untenable as the belief that man can do everything for himself. It, too, is based on a lack of faith. We must learn that to expect God to do everything while we do nothing is not faith but superstition."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

"Justice for black people will not flow into society merely from court decisions nor from fountains of political oratory. Nor will a few token changes quell all the tempestuous yearnings of millions of disadvantaged black people. White America must recognize that justice for black people cannot be achieved without radical changes in the structure of our society. The comfortable, the entrenched, the privileged cannot continue to tremble at the prospect of change in the status quo."

- Martin Luther King Jr.

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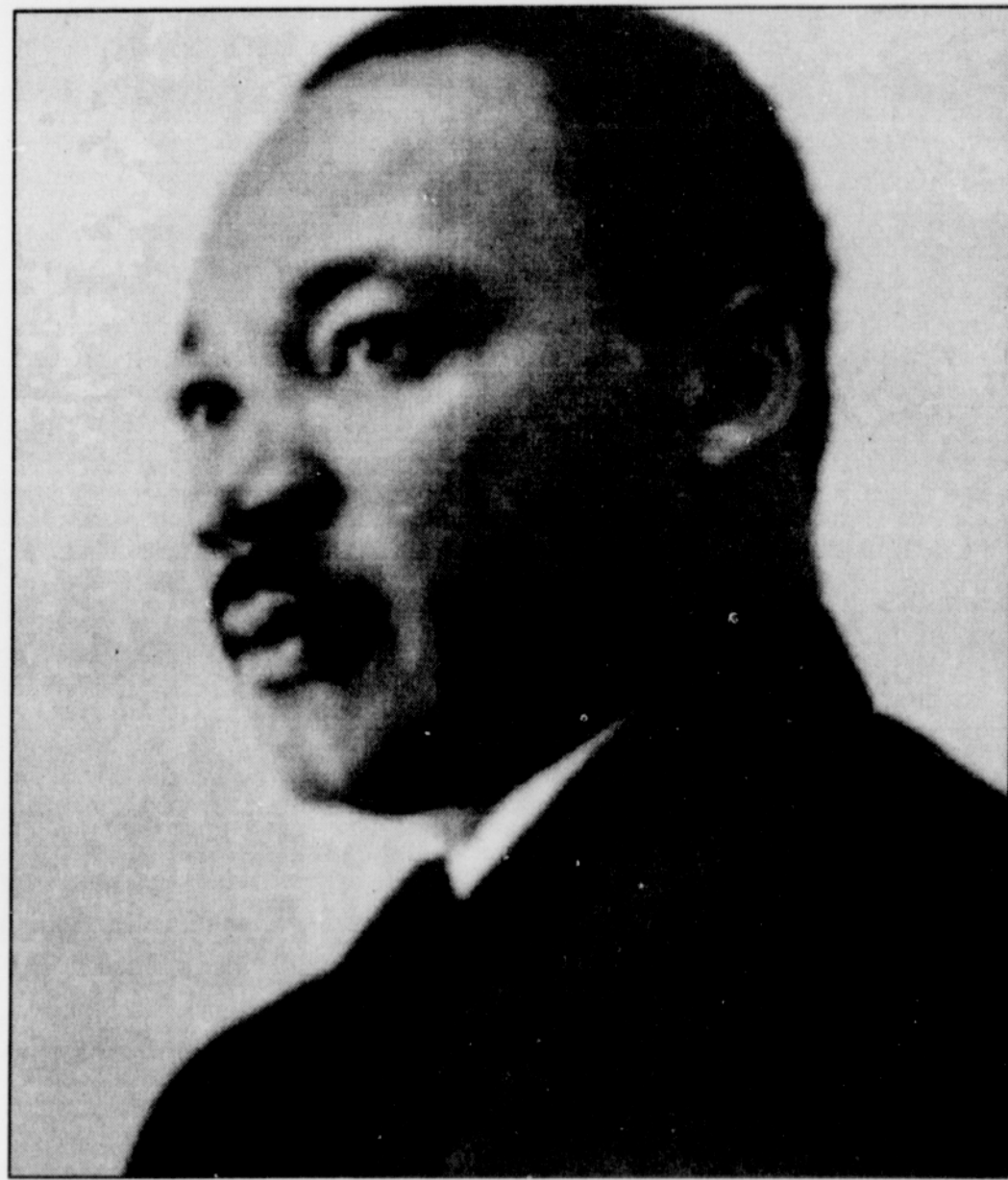
Martin Luther King, Jr.

Today we remember Martin Luther King, Jr. for his powerful words and actions.

To his strength, pride and leadership, we salute Dr. King and his ability to energize thought. Even enlighten the future.

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438 NE Killingsworth St.
Portland, OR. 97211
(503) 287-7655