

“We began to receive threatening telephone calls and letters in our home...”

At first I took them in stride...but as the weeks passed, I realized that many of the threats were in earnest. I felt myself faltering and growing in fear.

After a particularly strenuous day, I settled in bed at a late hour. I was about to doze off when the telephone rang. An angry voice said, ‘Listen #!@*&!, we’ve taken all we want from you. Before next week you’ll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.’ I hung up, but I could not sleep.

It seemed that all of my fears had come down on me at once. I had reached the saturation point.

I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. Finally, I went to the kitchen and heated a pot of coffee. I was ready to give up. I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing to be a coward.

In this state of exhaustion, when my courage had almost gone, I determined to take my problem to God.

My head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud. The words I spoke to God that midnight are still vivid in my memory. ‘I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership,

and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left. I’ve come to the point where I can’t face it alone.

At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never before experienced him. It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice, saying, ‘Stand up for righteousness, stand up for truth. God will be at your side forever.’

Almost at once my fears began to pass from me. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything. The outer situation remained the same, but God had given me inner calm.

Three nights later, our home was bombed. Strangely enough, I accepted the word of the bombing calmly. I knew now that God is able to give us the interior resources to face the storms and problems of life. Admitting the weighty problems and staggering disappointments, Christianity affirms that God is able to give us the power to meet them.”*

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*from *Strength to Love*; emphasis added



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Is what's going on in the world striking fear in your heart? Are there challenges in your life demanding personal courage? See the feature article "Let's Give the Dream New Life" at www.EveryStudent.com.

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