

Reflection of a letter from birmingham jail by martin luther king jr.

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For our honors portfolio this quarter we were required to read three documents. We, then, were quizzed over each of the readings. First, we read " Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King, Jr. , then, we read the transcript of President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, and last but not least, we read " Millennial Makeover" by Morley Winograd and Michael Hais. Furthermore, we had to read and analyze the documents because the quizzes required us to think deeper than the written words on the paper. I believe these documents are critical because they have shaped the government and our society today.

My favorite of these three documents, if I had to pick, would be " Letter from a Birmingham Jail", not only because I admire Martin Luther King Jr. , but also because this letter is a very powerful and inspiring piece of work. Luther wrote while being confined in a jail in Birmingham, Alabama, for participating in civil rights demonstrations. His letter states that he will continue resisting nonviolently against racial discrimination and pleads the readers to see segregation from a different point of view. Moreover, I noticed that he quoted many people including Apostle Paul, St. Augustine, Reinhold Niebuhr and many others.

This made me realize that he most likely had the quotations memorized since he didn't have access to those sources while imprisoned. He mentions that " injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" and that " an unjust law is no law at all" (Luther). This means that an unjust law causes harm; for example, if it is lawful to torture a certain group of people, then that is not a law whatsoever. This idea of injustice affects many directly, but

also affects everyone else indirectly in the fact that prejudice is occurring around them.

Furthermore, his words describe in detail what segregation was like and what people like him had to go through. This impacted me because now, the idea of racial discrimination is completely frowned upon, while in the 1900's it was something that seemed right and normal. It took years of hard work, bloody massacres, and non-stop action to obtain equality and I hate to see that a little bit of racism still exists today. The idea that immigrants are taking away jobs and opportunities that should be for U. S. citizens, surprises me because this country was founded and created by immigrants.

Instead of seeing different countries and different people in one world, we should see the whole world as one, because every human being, no matter what race, has his/her own rights and should have the same opportunities that his neighbor does. Luther is one of the most charismatic and persuasive people in history and has not only inspired many, but also revolutionized a country's view. He wrote this letter hoping to stir up some emotion and I think he got his point across in a very non-violent and mature kind of way that was unexpected and at the same time, admirable.

His stance of a nonviolent action and the desperate cry for an end to social discrimination is as powerful now as it was 50 years ago. We now stand by these liberal values and believe the God has made us all equal and has given us certain rights that no law can take away. Although this was not an easy project, I certainly did learn something from it and it inspired me to stand up

for my beliefs, but also, in a way, allowed me to see that anything is possible through hard work.