

Martin luther king search for meaning assignment

[History](#)



King's interpretation of the scriptures was not a literal one, in *The Humanity and Divinity of Jesus*, he clearly explains how he interpreted Jesus: "the orthodox attempt to explain the divinity of Jesus in terms of an inherent metaphysical substance within him to me seems inadequate... In an attempt to expand his understanding of God, and apply it to his life, King searched for the deeper significance of the history and context of the Bible, suggesting, "we should delve into deeper meaning... And somehow strip them of their literal interpretation".

By searching for a deeper interpretation of the events of the Bible, King was able to extract a sense of meaning from Jesus' life. For King, God's giving of his only son, came to represent God's infinite love and forgiving nature toward all human beings. By believing in God's love for humans, King was able to mimic Jesus' forgiveness, by fighting for equal rights between black and white citizens, even though white citizens had abused and discriminated against him; suggesting in his speech *Strength to Love*, that "we must have compassion and understanding for those who hate us".

By spending his life advocating this message of racial equality, and continuing to believe in the innate goodness of mankind, King was able to receive meaning by living a Christ-like life, motivated by the fundamental spiritual concepts of Christianity. For King to play such a significant role in the Civil Rights Movement, he required a firm worldview to act as a reference point for his ideas and actions. King saw Christian theism as "the most valid conception of God".

King used his worldview of Christian Theism as a way to respond to the world around him, and apply his religion to his life in a way that motivated him and gave him meaning. King believed in the infinite, personal nature of God, and drew meaning from the idea that God was a constant presence in his life, "The most precious thought in Christianity is that Jesus is our daily friend, that he never did leave us comfortless or alone" King's belief in the personal nature of God is what kept him motivated in his quest for social justice, even when he lacked support.

This motivation is evident in Letter from Birmingham Jail, where he describes how his society responded to racism by insisting on "wait". He discusses how he was categorized as an extremist, but gained satisfaction from the label, because he felt that by continuing to fight for equality, even when he was criticized, his actions were embodying God's message of love and forgiveness; "Was not Jesus and extremist for love: Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you. King received meaning in his life by acting with the same extremism that Jesus did, and therefore living a Christ-like life. King displays his belief in the omniscient nature of God when he discusses the way in which humans should come to decide what is right and wrong, "Our world hinges on moral foundations. God has made it so! God has made the universe based on moral laws". This quote exemplifies King's idea that people should use God's moral framework to choose their actions. This element of King's worldview corresponded with his non-violent action approach, inspired by Gandhi.

King encouraged people to utilize free will, by using the logic and reason of God's moral law as a means of recursion, instead of forcing his beliefs on others. King explains the nature of external reality as interconnected "whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly... We are tied together in the single garment of destiny, caught in the inescapable network of mutuality", here he attributes the nature of reality to God's creation, "this is the way God's universe is made; and this is the way it is structured".

King applied this concept to his teachings by stressing the idea of brotherhood, that everyman must love his neighbor, must learn to live together as brothers or we will perish together as fools". This notion of brotherhood, combined with his non-violent approach inspired by Gandhi, was why King stressed unity and equality, instead of simply more rights for black people. King did not advocate that African Americans should have more power over their oppressors, instead he fought to end oppression and discrimination universally.

Australia is a western, multicultural nation; however injustice and discrimination still occurs. Australians hold prejudice against Aboriginal people for the same reasons that white citizens discriminated against African Americans; because it is ingrained in our cultural norm to view them as inferior, unable to handle government support, or live a 'civilized' life. Because of the similarities between the societies, Australians can gain wisdom and insight from King's religious responses to life questions.

King used his theology and Christian Theism to respond to the racism in his society. Because he interpreted the bible in a deeper, less literal way, King

was able to extract the spiritual concepts of his religion and use them to inspire a social revolution. These concepts, such as equality and love, although derived from Christianity, can be rendered to a secular society like Australia due to their spiritual nature.

When taken out of religious context, the average man can better relate to them and apply them to his own life. Although King's message of racial equality could inspire less discrimination in Australia, most people would not be able to receive the same sense meaning the King did, because he felt that by fighting for universal equality, he was embodying the teachings of his religion, and in-turn living a Christ-life like, which was undoubtedly what gave meaning to his life.