



Module 3, Unit 2, Lesson 2:

Multiculturalism (Diversity) in the "World House"

Directions:

Read the Lesson Content Overview.

Then, working in small groups, answer the following questions:

1. According to Dr. King, why must every nation now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole?
2. Circle the correct answer(s):
Hope Peaceful revolution of values Love Justice
_____ is the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality.
3. "We still have a choice today : nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation . This may well be mankind's last chance to choose between chaos and community." How is this statement by Dr. King relevant to you and life today?
4. Name one thing that Dr. King calls us to do in the chapter "World House."

Lesson Content Overview:

In his book, *Where Do We Go From Here - Chaos or Community?* Martin Luther King, Jr. chose to title the last chapter, "The World House." "The World House" is an essay based on his 1964 Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech delivered at the University of Oslo on December 11, 1964. It has been suggested that this almost unknown work is one of the best summaries of Dr. King's beliefs. Parts of this same essay were included in Dr. King's famous address, "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence," delivered to the Clergy and Laity Concerned About Vietnam, on April 4, 1967, one year to the day before he was killed.

In "The World House," Dr. King calls us to:

1. Transcend tribe, race, class, nation, and religion to embrace the vision of a global inheritance.
2. Eradicate at home and globally the Triple Evils of racism, poverty, and militarism.
3. Curb excessive materialism and shift from a "thing" oriented society to a "people"-oriented society.
4. Resist social injustice and resolve conflicts in the spirit of love embodied in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence.

He advocates a Marshall Plan-like economic assistance program to eradicate global poverty and guarantee a living wage and a minimum annual income for every American family. He urges the United Nations to experiment with nonviolent direct action in international conflicts. The final paragraph warns of the "fierce urgency of now" and cautions that this may be the last chance to choose between chaos and community. "The World House" is perhaps the best summation of Dr. King's teachings. He writes:

These are revolutionary times. All over the globe men are revolting against old systems of exploitation and oppression, and out of the wombs of a frail world new systems of justice and equality are being born. The shirtless and barefoot people of the earth are rising up as never before. "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light ." We in the West must support these revolutions. It is a sad fact that, because of comfort, complacency, a morbid fear of Communism and our proneness to adjust to injustice, the Western nations that initiated so much of the revolutionary spirit of the modern world have now become the arch anti-revolutionaries.

This has driven many to feel that only Marxism has the revolutionary spirit. Communism is a judgment on our failure to make democracy real and to follow through on the revolutions that we initiated. Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal opposition to poverty, racism and militarism. With this powerful commitment we shall boldly challenge the status quo and unjust mores and thereby speed the day when "every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain.

A genuine revolution of values means in the final analysis that our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Every nation must now develop an

overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies.

This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men. This often misunderstood and misinterpreted concept has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love, I am speaking of that force which all the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life. Love is the key that unlocks the door which leads to ultimate reality. This Hindu-Moslem-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about ultimate reality is beautifully summed up in the First Epistle of Saint John:

*Let us love one another: for love is of God: and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love .
...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.*

Let us hope that this spirit will become the order of the day. We can no longer afford to worship the God of hate or bow before the altar of retaliation. The oceans of history are made turbulent by the ever-rising tides of hate. History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations and individuals who pursued this self defeating path of hate. As Arnold Toynbee once said in a speech : "Love is the ultimate force that makes for the saving choice of life and good against the damning choice of death and evil. Therefore the first hope in our inventory must be the hope that love is going to have the last word.

We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked and dejected with a lost opportunity . The "tide in the affairs of men " does not remain at the flood; it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residues of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words: "Too late. " There is an invisible book of life that faithfully records our vigilance or our neglect. "The moving finger writes, and having writ moves on..." We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation . This may well be mankind 's last chance to choose between chaos and community.