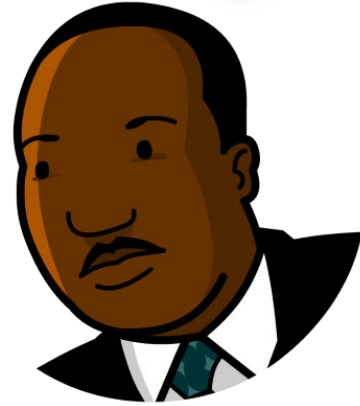


# Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, America was a very different place. In many parts of the country, African Americans were not permitted to eat at the same restaurants, go to the same schools, or even drink from the same water fountains as other Americans. This unfair practice of separation due to skin color was called **segregation**. It is very **disheartening** to know that segregation was legal at that time.



Fortunately, a man by the name of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. decided to speak up. Dr. King was a pastor and a leader in his community. He grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, but later moved to Alabama. His main goal was to use non-violent methods to bring about change in civil rights.

For many years, Dr. King led peaceful protests and marches across the United States. One of the most well-known protests led by Dr. King occurred in Washington D.C. in front of the Lincoln Memorial. There he gave his famous *I Have a Dream* speech in front of over 250,000 people.

In his speech he said, “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be **judged** by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

This speech raised **awareness** and boosted public support for the civil rights cause. In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act, which **outlawed** segregation in publicly-owned facilities.

By 1966 many other laws at that time that had violated civil rights were overturned. Dr. King’s peaceful protests had worked. But unfortunately, a few years later in 1968, his life was taken from him. Dr. King was only 39 when he died. He helped to bring about change in America in ways that nobody else could. Dr. King also received a Nobel Prize for Peace.

While it is true that we still struggle a bit with **equality** today, Dr. King would be very proud of the nation we have become.