

Monday, January 19, 2025

This week's devotions are written by Rev. James Lee. Born in Orange County, raised in the San Gabriel Valley, James desperately holds onto his SoCal roots while currently serving on the opposite coast as the lead pastor of Christ Community CRC on Long Island (about 60 miles east of NYC). He has also had the privilege to serve in various capacities for the Christian Reformed Church denomination. James is married to his better half Jin-Young and together, they have three beautiful children.

John 13:34-35

*34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

Today is a day where most remember Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr's legacy and advocacy of peaceful protest and nonviolence against injustice. Dr. Rev. King dreamed of a world of equality and inclusion. He hoped for a world where everyone would be united and treat one another as one would love oneself. However, though some may argue that we've come a long way as a society, hatred still exists. We are still fighting for what is righteous in our own eyes, instead of reflecting on our own sins and wrongdoings.

In today's passage, in the Gospel of John, Jesus shares one of his most famous teachings: "Love one another as I have loved you (v. 34)." Jesus said this as he washed his disciples' feet and predicted Judas' betrayal. Jesus may have felt various emotions during this moment. Humanly speaking, especially knowing what was to come, Jesus had every right to express his disappointment and concern. Yet, instead, Jesus set a holy standard to not only be kind, but also to love patiently, sacrificially, and generously.

As the saying goes, actions speak louder than words. Jesus taught us that people would recognize His followers by this kind of patient, sacrificial, and generous love. Dr. Rev. King preached of non-violence in the spirit of not fighting violence with violence but with peace. In moments when we face spiritual battles in our homes and workplaces, how can the love of Christ reflect in our words and actions? How are we to treat one another as Jesus taught us to do? How can the love of Christ transform us and others who we don't see eye-to-eye with? How can the love of Christ be what marks us as disciples of Jesus?

Dr. Rev. King fought for racial equality, nonviolence, and justice. What is the purpose of our daily battles?