



Spiritual Habits

FOR ORDINARY PEOPLE

Forgiveness

The deadliest emotion:

The deadliest emotion:
Chronic anger

Extroverted anger

Extroverted anger

Introverted anger

“What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?

You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.” (*James 4:1,2*)

Often the root of anger is
the core conviction:

“I am owed...”

Ephesians 4

“In your anger do not sin...”
(Ephesians 4:26a)

“Righteous” anger

“Righteous” anger

Problem: When I am in
the heat of anger,

“Righteous” anger

Problem: When I am in
the heat of anger,
I **always** think my anger
is **righteous**!

1. Refuse to bear grudges

“In your anger do not sin...
Do not let the sun go down while
you are still angry,”
(*Ephesians 4:26*)

Don't let yesterday's anger
leak into today.

“In your anger do not sin...
Do not let the sun go down while
you are still angry,
and do not give the devil a
foothold.”

(Ephesians 4:26,27)

When you carry anger
from **one season of life**

When you carry anger
from **one season** of life
into the **next season**

When you carry anger
from **one season** of life
into the **next season**
you open a door to **evil**.

It becomes very easy to
lose sight of the original
source of your hurt.

It becomes very easy to
lose sight of the original
source of your hurt.

You brought old anger
into new relationships.

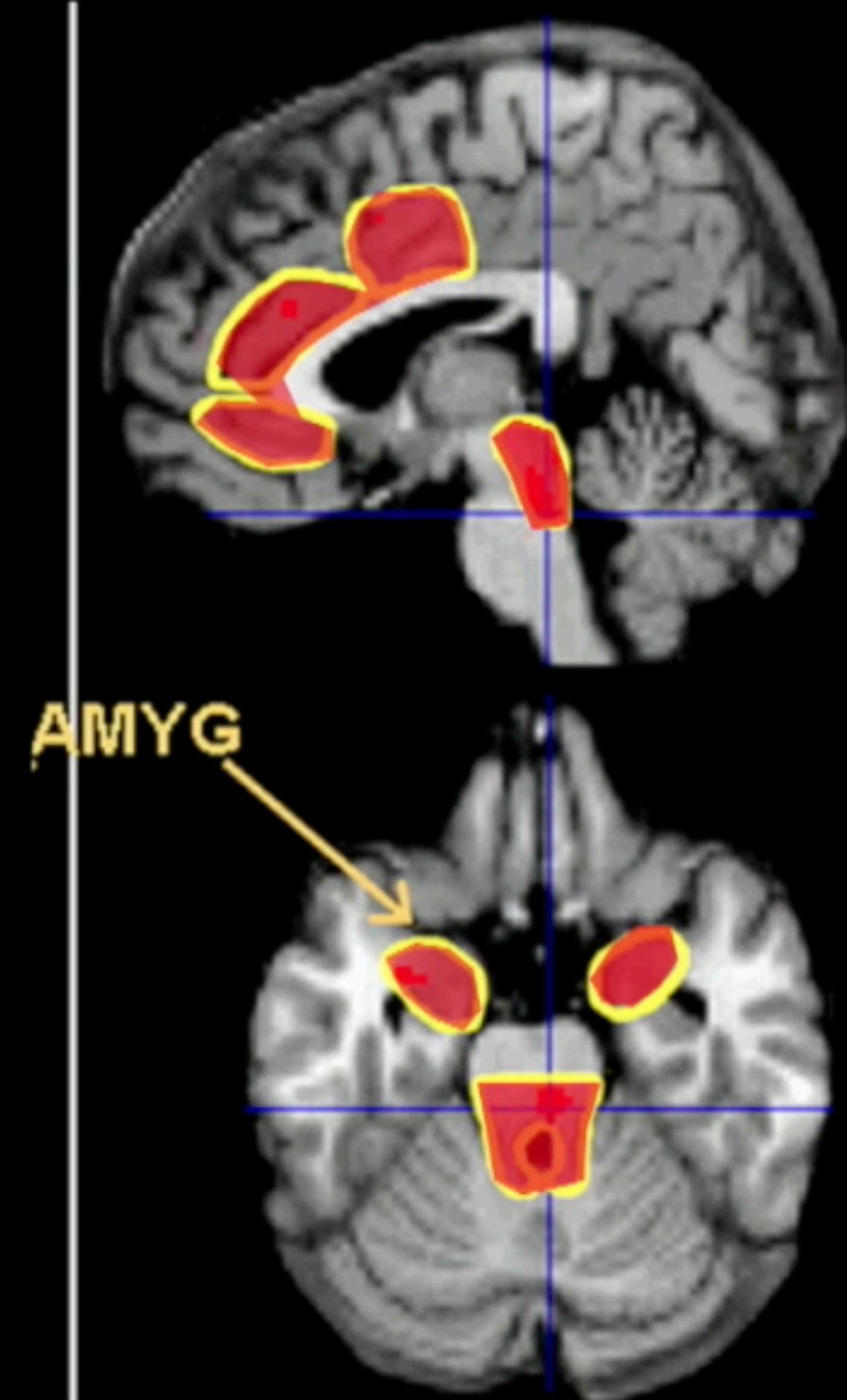
2. Restrain your temper

“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.”

(Ephesians 4:31)

Stop when “flooded”

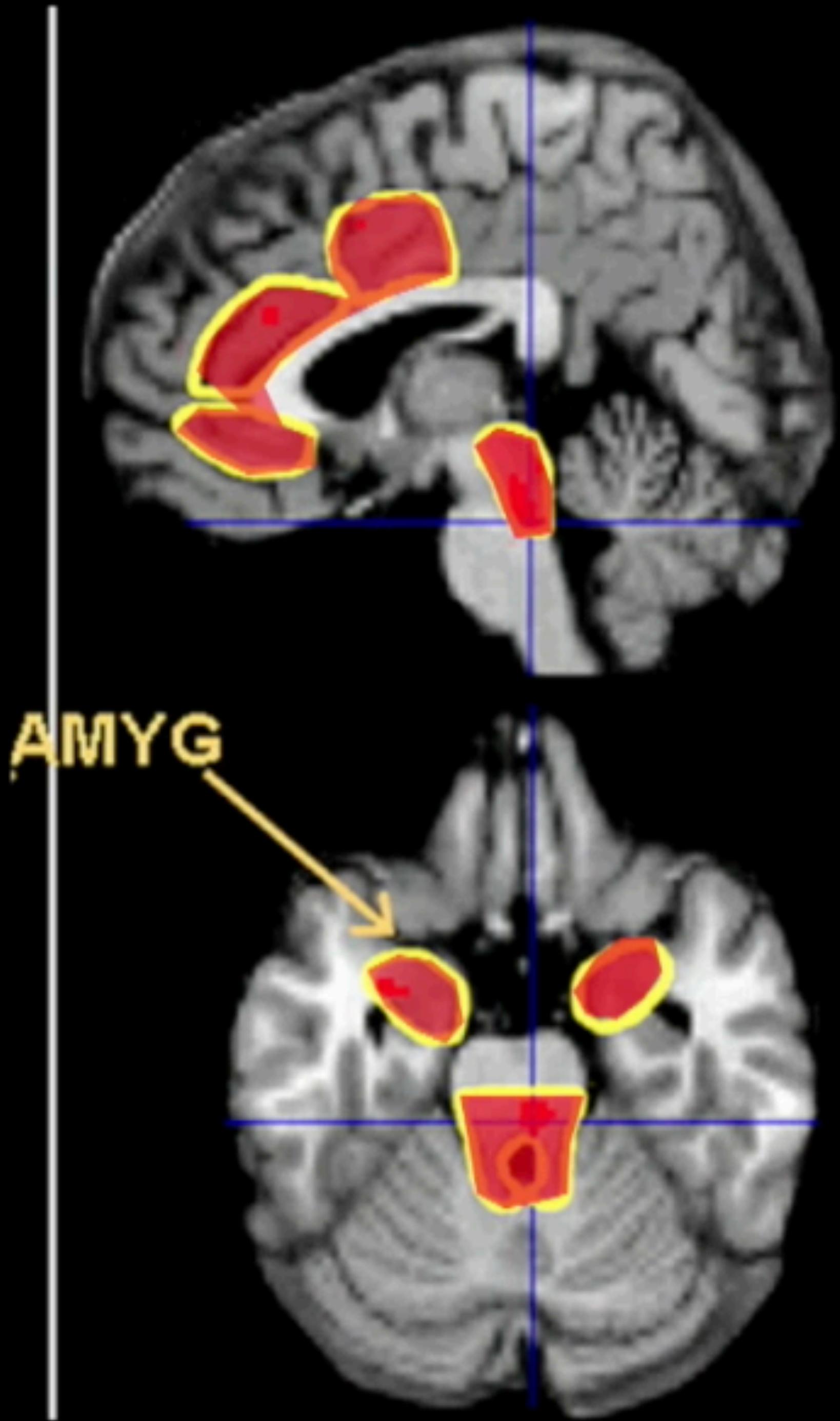
Term coined by
Dr. John Gottman,
U of Washington



Stop when “flooded”

Term coined by
Dr. John Gottman,
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When hormones
override parts of brain
associated with
analytical thinking



3. Release
those who owe me

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, **forgiving each other**, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

(Ephesians 4:32)

A dramatic detail from the painting 'Christ on Cross' by Eugène Delacroix. The central figure of Christ is shown in a state of agony, his body contorted and his head tilted back. His skin is rendered in a palette of dark reds, yellows, and browns, with visible brushstrokes and impasto. The background is a swirling, dark green and black, suggesting a stormy sky or a hellish atmosphere. The lighting is stark, highlighting the suffering and torment of the crucified Christ.

“Christ on Cross” detail, *Delacroix*

**Forgiveness is
cancelling a debt**

“Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

(Matthew 18:21)

“Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, not seven times, but **seventy-seven times.**’”

(Matthew 18:22)

“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him.”

(Matthew 18:23,24)

“Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.”

(Matthew 18:25)

“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, **canceled the debt** and let him go.”

(Matthew 18:26,27)

“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.”

(Matthew 18:28)

“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’”

(Matthew 18:29)

“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison **until he could pay the debt.**”

(Matthew 18:30)

“When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.”

(Matthew 18:31)

“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.’”

(Matthew 18:32)

“Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.”

(Matthew 18:33,34)

“This is how my heavenly Father
will treat each of you unless you
forgive your brother or sister from
your heart.”

(Matthew 18:35)

**Forgiveness is
cancelling a debt**

Forgiveness is not
trust

Forgiveness is not
trust
reconciliation

**Forgiveness is not
trust
reconciliation
a substitute for justice**

**Forgiveness is not
trust
reconciliation
a substitute for justice
a substitute for healing**

3. Release
those who owe me

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In most cases...
they can't pay you back
anyway

How do I release those who “owe me”?

How do I release those who “owe me”?

- **Identify** who you’re angry with

How do I release those who “owe me”?

- **Identify** who you’re angry with
- Determine what they “**owe**” you

How do I release those who “owe me”?

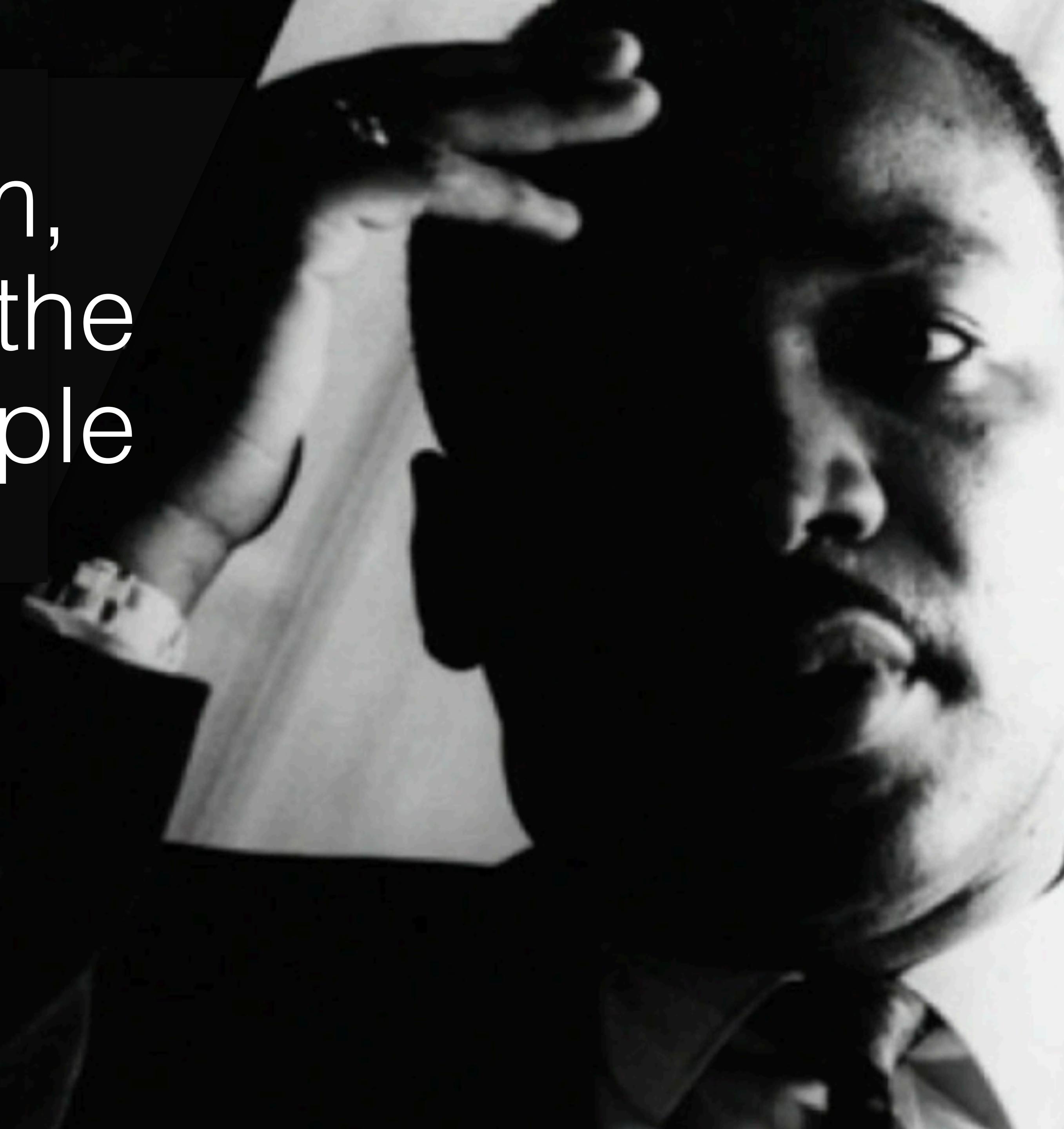
- **Identify** who you’re angry with
- Determine what they “**owe**” you
- **Cancel the debt**

Heavenly Father, _____
has taken _____ from me.
I have held on to this debt long
enough. I choose to cancel this
debt. _____ doesn't owe me
anymore. Just as you forgave me,
I forgive _____.

How do I release those who “owe me”?

- **Identify** who you’re angry with
- Determine what they “**owe**” you
- **Cancel the debt**
- **Dismiss the case**

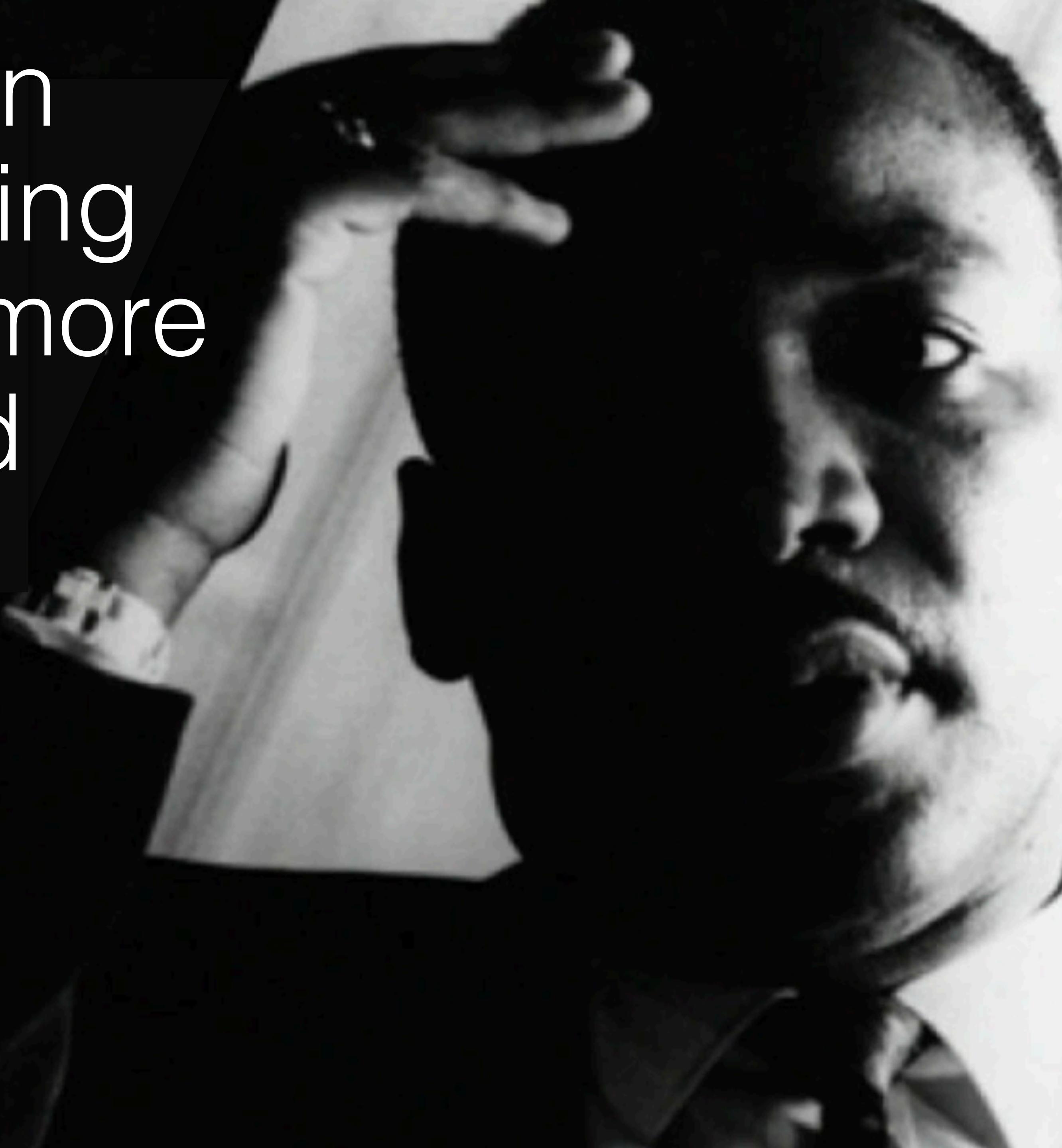
“While I lay in that quiet front bedroom, I began to think of the viciousness of people who would bomb my home.”



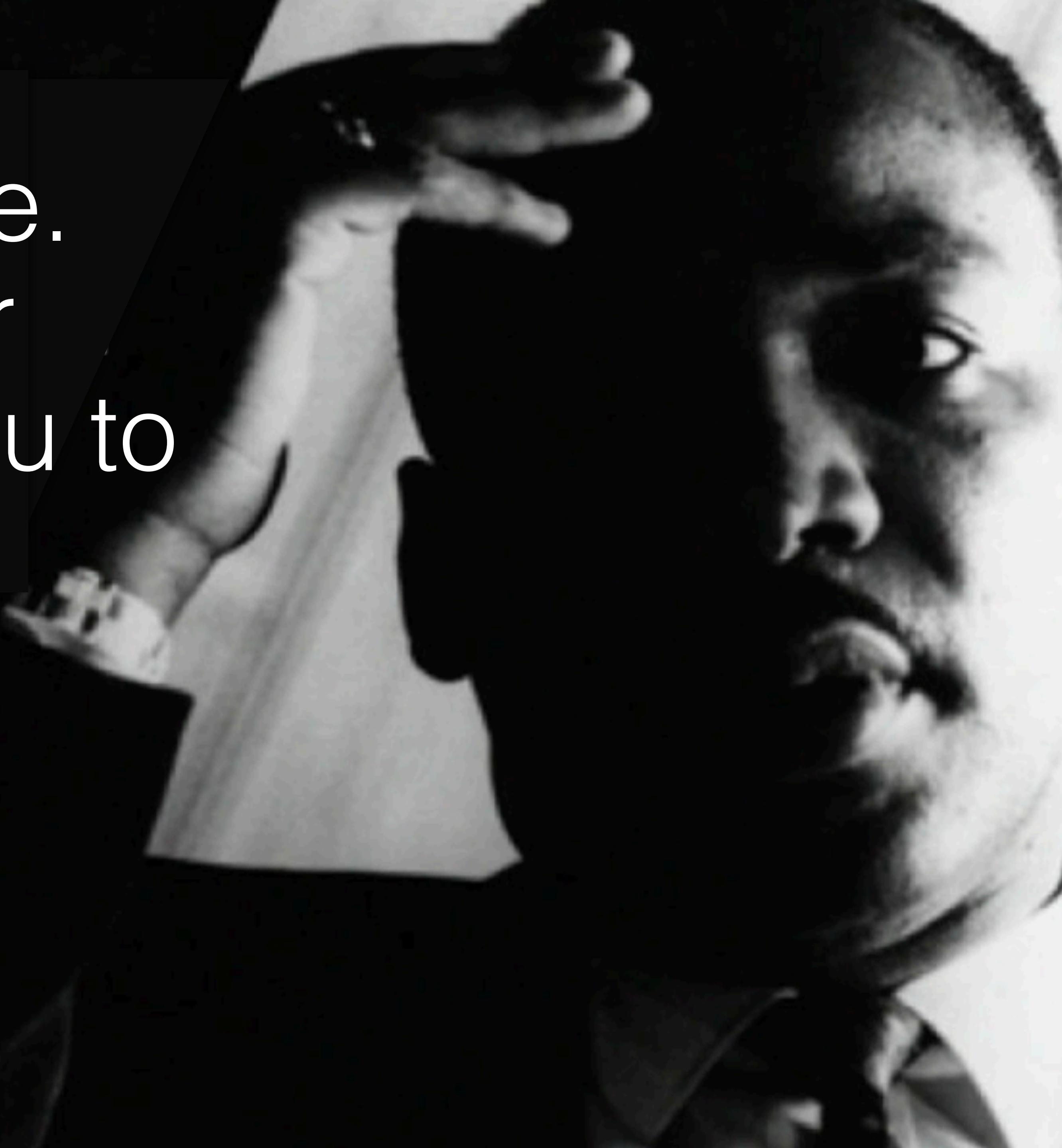
“I could feel the anger rising when I realized that my wife and baby could have been killed.”



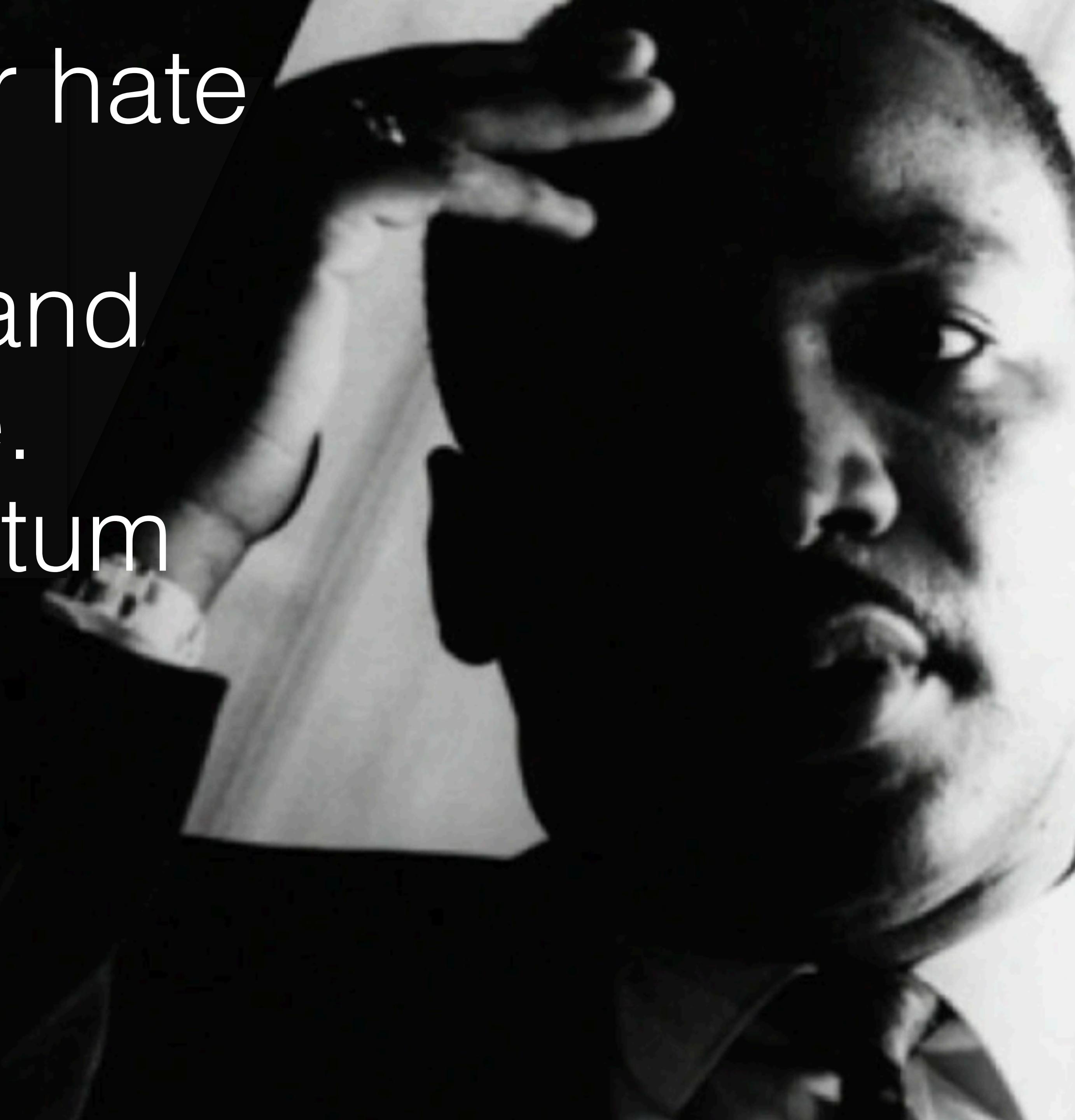
“I was once more on the verge of corroding hatred. And once more I caught myself and said: ‘You must not allow yourself to become bitter.’”



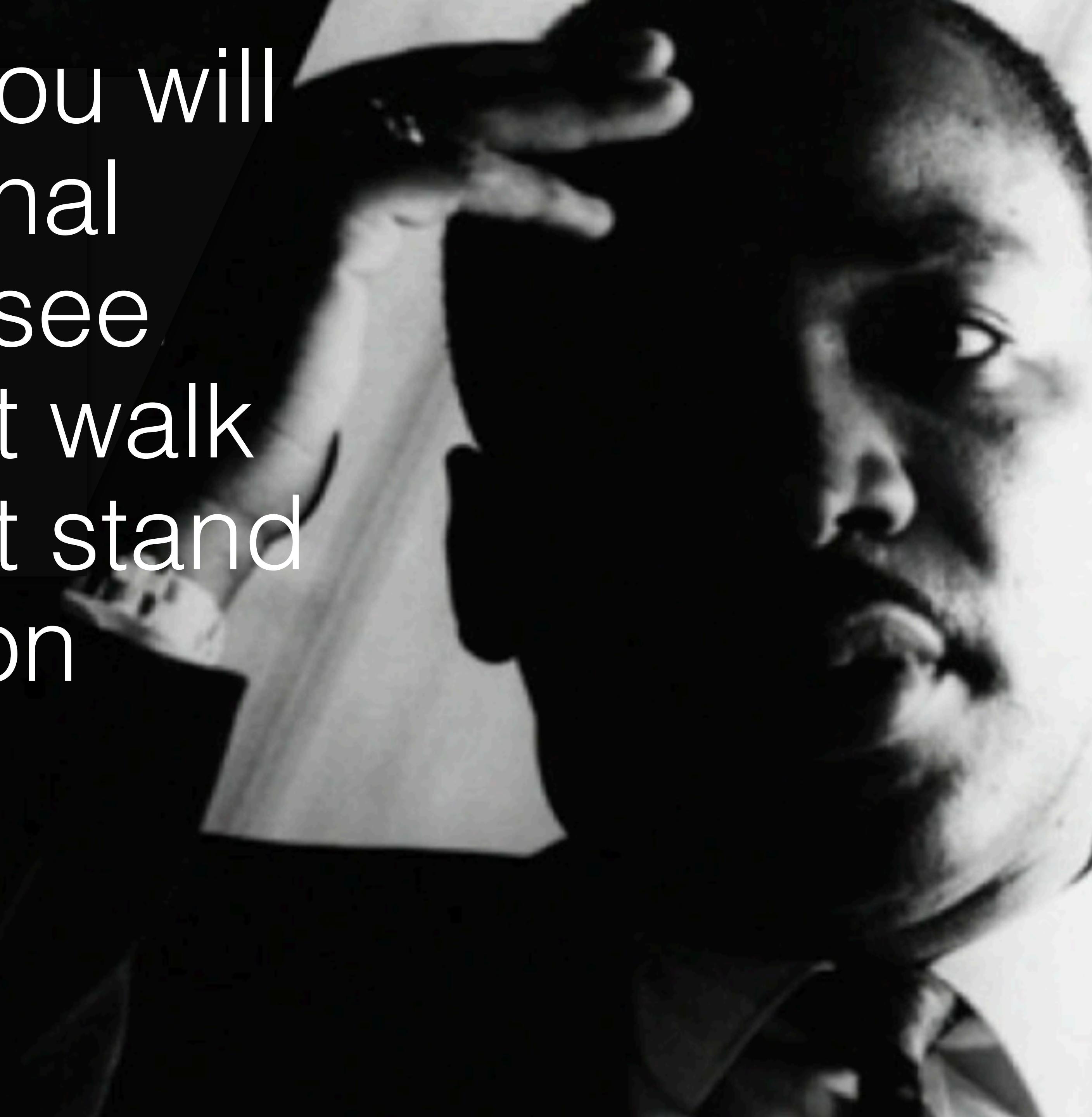
“We are not advocating violence. We want to love our enemies. I want you to love our enemies. Be good to them. Love them and let them know that you love them.”



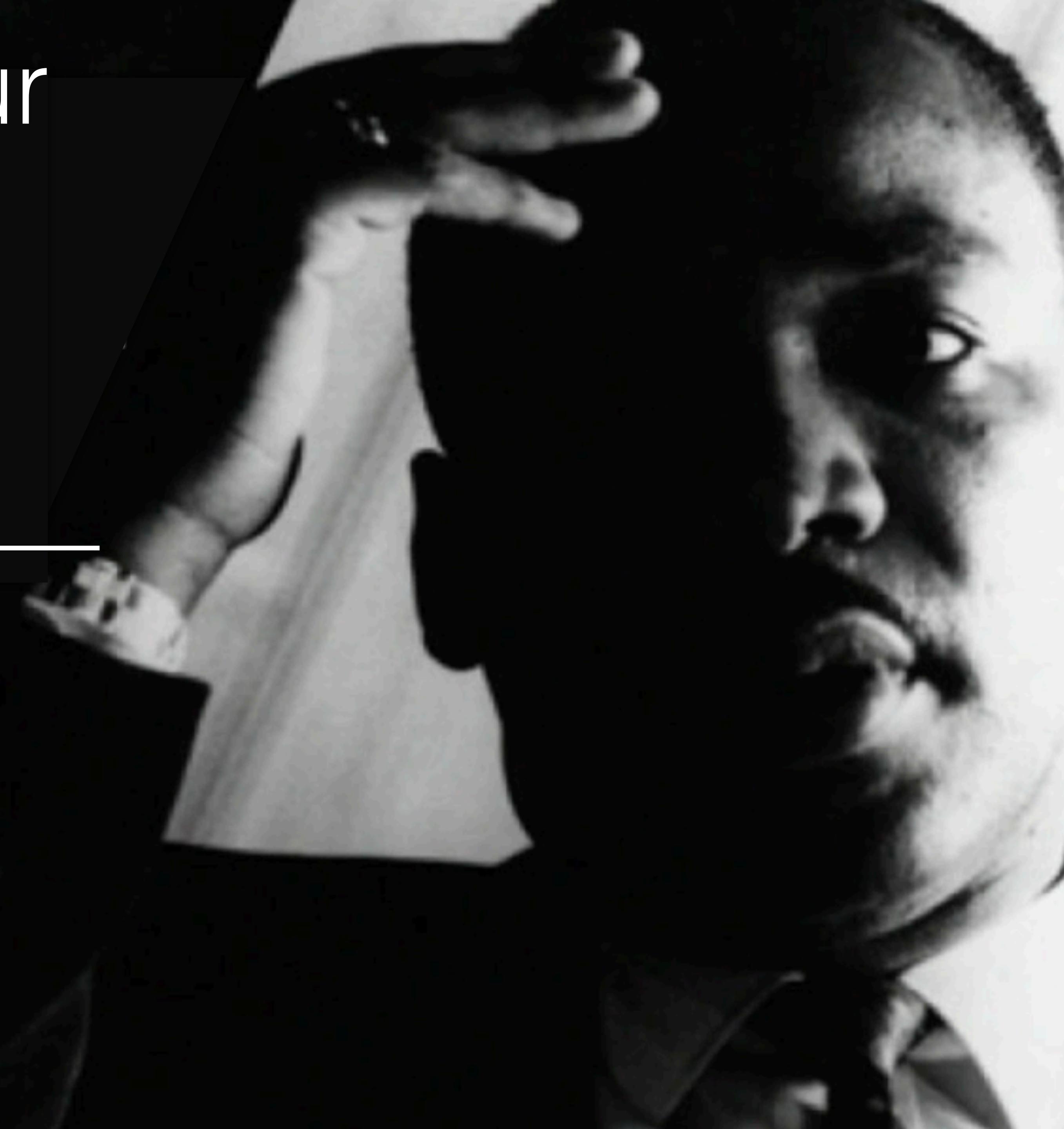
“Returning hate for hate
only intensifies the
existence of hate and
evil in the universe.
It goes on ad infinitum
it just never ends.”



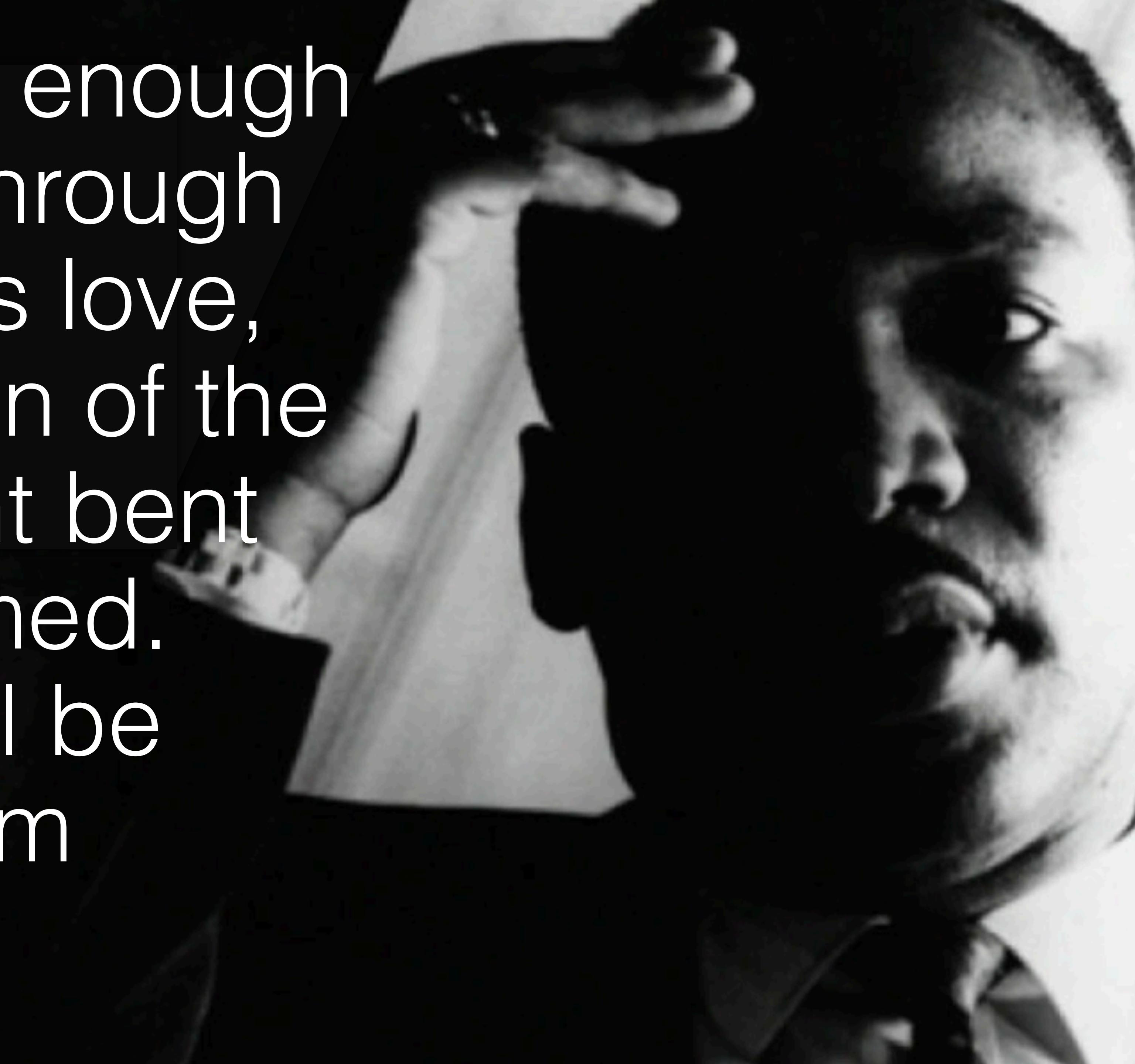
“Stay angry and you will begin to do irrational things. You can't see straight. You can't walk straight. You can't stand upright. Your vision is distorted.”



“But if you love your enemies, you will discover that love has within it a redemptive power — for your enemies.”



“And I’m foolish enough to believe that through the power of this love, somewhere, men of the most recalcitrant bent will be transformed. And then we will be in God’s kingdom together.”





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