

Martin Luther King Day (3rd Monday in January) - Explanation Intro & Questions for Discussion

An 'Evening of Dreaming' on MLK Day...

using questions... of dreams, change, freedom & breakthrough

Spiritual Basis: When we wish or dream something for someone we are often intuitively declaring God's best for them, or ourselves! Its a form of prophecy - speaking into being what God's rule & reign most could look like in our lives. MLK day is the 3rd Monday in January, and is the same day that has become called 'Blue Monday' the day in the year supposedly most marked by difficulty, disappointment, low mood & depression [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_Monday_\(date\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_Monday_(date)).

What better antidote than to come with our dreams & wishes, both fun & profound of what God's best could look like in our lives? I have a dream today...

2 levels of response...

An 'evening of dreaming' can take on 2 levels of intensity, or be a journey of both!

To warm people up to the idea, there are a list of questions for around the dinner table. These are more inclusive, social, and fun, which are less invasive or personal, pointing towards 'bucket list' type 'dreams'.

The 2nd List are more deep, intimate and spiritual, which are focussed towards then praying for each other.

As an **introduction** (instead of grace at our supper table) we read out excerpts of Martin Luther King's most famous speech - reproduced on the following page - "I have a dream today..." we do it with a musical backing track by Simon that samples that speech - 'Free at Last' .

At the supper table we pass around a hat with the questions from **LIST 1** - everybody in turn draws out 1 question slip & answers it! If there are less of you around the table / in the room, you can go around multiple times; potentially in the later rounds nominating someone else to answer the question you draw out (everyone having 1 'pass'). Not everyone will connect with every question - go with the ones that stimulate an immediate emotional connection.

LIST 2 questions are more for a time to deeply hear from each other's hearts or pray for each other - maybe after a time of worship or during a home group sharing time? These follow on from List 1, once everyone is warmed up. You may want to show people the whole list of these & ask each person to share the top 3 they connect with? This list is in 3 sections (with different emphases), so you could ask people to share 1 from each section? Or, if confident & at ease with each other, you may want to draw out of the bag similarly to the more social questions, & then pray for that person after their response? You may want to pray for each other's dreams, then all come together and pray for the 3rd section responses where your dreams connect with injustice, or your shared hopes in section 1.

Excerpts from Martin Luther King Jr's "I have a dream" speech at the "March on Washington", Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC 28th August 1963

"...The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges..."

No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

So I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream...



I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood...

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning, "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring..."

So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.

Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi.

From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!" "

LIST 1) **more inclusive /social / fun / 'bucket list'?**

- **what show or concert** would you most dream of getting tickets for?
- **what flight ticket** to what **nation** would you most like to be given?
- **what destination** would you most like to visit in the world?
- **what sporting occasion** would you most dream of getting tickets for?
- **what** is the **craziest thing** you dream of doing? (and the thought makes you giddy!)
- **what film** would you most like to star in? As what **character**?
- **if** you hosted a meal for **4 people** you would most like to **meet, who** would they be?
- **what experience** you've yet to have, do you most dream of having?
- **what outrageous, socially embarrassing thing** would you most like to do (if you knew you wouldn't feel at all embarrassed)?
- **what** would be the most **amazing meal** you could imagine having? **where?**
- **what** is the **view** anywhere in the world that you would most like to see?
- **what** would be your dream **night out?**
- **what** is the **vehicle** you would most like to own, or drive?
- **where** would you most like to **retire?**
- **where** would your **dream holiday** be? And **what** would you most like to **do there?**
- **what** one **activity or skill** would you like to have a go at? And become brilliant at?
- **what luxury item** would you most appreciate having in your home?
- **when** you dream of being **most relaxed and happy - where** are you & **what** are you doing?
- **what** were you passionate about as a **child**, that you'd still like to **explore?**
- **what experience** you've yet to have, would you most expect to be left **awe-struck?**
- **what** for you is the ultimate in being **pampered?**
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LIST 2) **more spiritual / prayerful / declarative / intercessory home group Qs?**

A) I have a dream...

- **what** do I most dream of for my **local community?**
- **what** do I most dream of for my **city / region?**
- **what** do I most dream of for my **nation?**
- **what** do I most dream of for my **church community?**
- **what** do I most dream of for my **personal relationships / connections?**

B) All of God's Children...

- **what** do I most dream of for my **family generation OLDER** than me?
- **what** do I most dream of for my **family generation YOUNGER** than me?
- **if** you could be **ambitious for some-one else** in this room, **who** would it be? & **what** would it be about? (be really specific!)
- **what one person** not in this room do I **see the dreams of their heart** and most wish those dreams come to pass?
- **what** is the **BIG, Hairy, AUDACIOUS Goal (BHAG) for your life?**
(that you could feel self-conscious saying out loud...)
- **who** have I **not seen for ages** & dream of getting to **re-connect** with?
- **who** would I most like to **show my gratitude to**, and **what** would I like to **thank** them for? (if I knew I wouldn't be embarrassed?)

C) Free at last...!

- **what people group experiencing injustice** do I most care about that breakthrough or change happens?
- **what one person experiencing difficulty or hardship** do I most wish breakthrough, healing, deliverance, comfort or change to happen?