



THE 1963  
 BACCALAUREATE ADDRESS OF  
*Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*  
 at Keuka College

LISTENER'S GUIDE

02:14

**The Three Dimensions of a Complete Life:**

This is a wide-ranging sermon taken from Dr. King's study of and reflections on the Book of Revelation. It was first delivered at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church of Montgomery, Ala., in 1959, and was published in Dr. King's book "Strength to Love." That collection of sermons was published on June 5, 1963, just 11 days before Dr. King spoke at Keuka College. The manuscript received editorial direction from Keuka College English professor and Minister Charles L. Wallis, who offered the Call to Worship at the Baccalaureate Service at which Dr. King spoke.

02:34

**A man by the name of John:**

Dr. King is referring to the Apostle John, who, according to tradition, is the only apostle not to have been martyred, and to have written the Book of Revelation on the island of Patmos.

02:40

**Patmos:**

A small Greek island in the Aegean Sea, it is the site of the Cave of the Apocalypse, where St. John is said to have written the Book of Revelation.

07:16

**Rabbi Joshua Liebman:**

A rabbi and best-selling author whose book "Peace of Mind" was wildly popular, spending more than a year atop the *New York Times* best-seller list. Like Dr. King, Liebman (1907-1948) died young, at age 41, reportedly of a heart attack.

09:37

**Douglas Malloch:**

Malloch (1877-1938) was an American poet. Dr. King is quoting the opening and closing sections of Malloch's inspirational poem "Be the Best of Whatever You Are."

12:34

**A dangerous curb between Jerusalem and Jericho:**

Dr. King is about to relate the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

16:42

**Albert Schweitzer:**

A French-German theologian, philosopher, organist, and humanitarian, Schweitzer (1875-1965) spent much of his life in what is now the African nation of Gabon. He went to Africa as a medical missionary and established the Lambaréné hospital. Like Dr. King, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (in 1952).

18:30

**The jangling discords of our nation ...:**

This phrase would reappear several months later during Dr. King's August 28, 1963 "I Have a Dream" speech on the mall in Washington, D.C.

22:16

**John Donne:**

An English poet who lived from 1572-1631. Dr. King is quoting Donne's 1624 poem "No Man is an Island."



24:27

### The poet Keats:

John Keats was an English poet (1795-1821). Dr. King is referring to Keats' unfinished epic poem "The Fall of the Hyperion."

26:05

### Professor Sorokin of Harvard:

Dr. King is referring to Pitirim Sorokin (1889-1968), a Russian-born sociologist and author, and an active opponent of Communism, who settled in the United States after being banished from Russia in 1922.

26:30

### Since 1914:

Dr. King is referring to World War I. The year 1914 was often used by theologians during this period to indicate that the beginning of World War I was the death of idealism and optimism insofar as man's capabilities.

28:40

### Plato was right:

Dr. King is referring to the Greek philosopher's "The Allegory of the Cave" from "The Republic." Plato, like the others Dr. King quotes throughout this address, was an anti-materialist, and, like the others, Plato believed that true and lasting realities were not of this world.

29:45

### The Psalmist of old:

Dr. King goes on to quote Psalm 8:3-4.

30:40

### St. Augustine:

An early Christian theologian. Dr. King is paraphrasing a passage from St. Augustine's "Confessions." Again, Augustine, like the others Dr. King quotes, was not a materialist, and saw this world as only an approximation of the heavenly realm.

30:57

### We have a little song:

Dr. King is quoting verses from the gospel song "We Shall Overcome," a key anthem of the Civil Rights movement.

31:06

### We've joined together to sing it ...:

Dr. King is giving extremely recent examples of events in the Civil Rights movement. He was jailed just two months prior to his Keuka College address as part of the Birmingham Campaign against segregation. And Birmingham's Public Safety Commissioner Bull Connor turned loose "vicious and howling dogs" on demonstrators just one month earlier.

32:16

### Medgar Evers:

Evers was a Civil Rights activist and the first state field secretary of the NAACP in Mississippi. He was assassinated outside his home on June 12, 1963, less than a month shy of his 39th birthday.

32:40

### Carlyle is right:

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was a 19th century Scottish writer, philosopher and historian. Dr. King is quoting a passage from Carlyle's book "The French Revolution: A History": "For if there be a Faith, from of old, it is this, as we often repeat, that no Lie can live forever."

32:47

### William Cullen Bryant is right:

Bryant (1794-1878) was a 19th century American poet and journalist. Dr. King is quoting Bryant's poem "The Battle-Field," later adopted into a hymn called "Truth Crushed to Earth" by composer F.E. Belden. Underlying this is Bryant's "Thanatopsis" ("consideration of death"), his most famous work, and it continues Dr. King's theme of contrasting earthly reality with the true heavenly reality.

32:53

### James Russell Lowell:

Lowell (1819-1891) was a 19th century American poet and writer. Dr. King is quoting Lowell's poem "The Present Crisis."

34:48

### The morning stars will sing together ...:

Dr. King ends by quoting Job 38:7.

*Although Keuka College is not authorized to release the transcript of the 1963 Address of Dr. King, documentation of his well-known "Three Dimensions of a Complete Life" sermon is available online through the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change at: [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org).*



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