

Class of 2021: Our Call to Rise Up

Our Letter from Birmingham Jail

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident,
that all men are created equal,
that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*

Yet, looking up, we see metal bars,
Looking down, we see another prison -- a prison of our people.

Our people have been oppressed, isolated, discriminated against,
and cast away from society.

Some have been denied the very rights guaranteed, no,
commanded by our founding documents.

Hands of all colors built this nation, yet only some have received the fruits of that labor
because our country is diseased...

It is a disease that has been passed down from generation to generation.
It is a disease where people turn from the ideal and lean into the faulty code.
It is the disease of racism and superiority.

This is the faulty reality that has been created,
and it is imperative that
we stop waiting
and **start taking** action against the disease in our society.

Now is the time to act because the modern epidemic of racism is spreading.
Now is the time to rise up as a people and to fight for justice.
Now is the time to work together as one world.
Now is the time to act because waiting prolongs the suffering that has existed for
centuries.

We will not wait for the infection of racism to set in more deeply
because as soon as we stop fighting
for our freedom--our very humanity--
we cease to be free-willed humans and devolve back into slaves.

We know that the more we wait,
the worse the impact this faulty code has on the next generation.

We know that without direct action now,
we will be trapped in this cycle of injustice forever.

We know that we have waited long enough -
civil rights are a civil urgency.

And we know we must not fight alone.

We must stand by each other to work for our rights.

We must rise above the negativity and the racism,
and we must confront the intolerable hatred.

We must bypass all of the stereotypes and social constructs
in order to live in harmony as an equal public.

We must push ourselves to change the minds of prejudiced people,
and we must move forward no matter how big or how small
the steps taking us forward may be.

We demand equality now.

We believe that open defiance to the faulty code
is and always has been
the only way to respond to oppression and tyranny.

We will stand up for what is right.

We will stand up for equality.

But,

We will not reciprocate the hatred directed towards us,
and we will march together as soldiers of peace.

We will never give our enemies the satisfaction of violence because

we are people of love –
not people of hatred.

It is our duty to face the enemies of freedom and justice with pride, dignity, and peace.

Therefore, we shall go out into this world unafraid
to perform acts that promote justice and freedom.

Our duty is to make our voices heard, and we will continue to make this country
the ideal that our founding fathers wanted it to be.

We will not back down

until our country has been cured of the disease of racism,
until the hatred is gone,
until our people are free.

It is our job

to protect the rights of others and not allow them to be discriminated
against.

It is our job

to stand up against the inequality we see in this world.

It is our job

to be the light in the darkness.

We must be brave and take chances.

We will leave a legacy for others to follow,
and we will never stop fighting for others.

We have the power within us to stand up and to keep marching for justice.

We are the force.

We are the hope.

Our way of life is the cure.

It is OUR time to change the world.

Let these words be our protest and spark a fire of revolution.