

## Peacefully Changing the World

In the past, not all people had the same rights. Things were not fair. People were segregated, which means there was no equality for them. For example, black people had to sit in the back seats of buses or they had to stand. They also had to drink from different fountains, and go to different restrooms than whites. Even before segregation, there was something even worse called slavery.

Slavery is when one person owns another. That means the person who is a slave is not free. People who were slaves had to suffer. They didn't have the basic rights that every human deserves. Some slaves had to work in the field picking cotton until their fingers bled. If they didn't do the work their master or slave owner instructed them to do, they would be beaten with branches or whips until their bodies were covered with uncomfortable wounds. It makes me sad that people had to suffer such horrible punishments.

Some brave men and women did not agree with such cruel behavior, so they took a stand. They had the courage to fight in order to make changes. People like Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and Thurgood Marshall changed history.

People in history blazed the trail for today. Without them, we would not have the basic rights all human should have such as freedom, equality, and justice. It makes me feel ecstatic that people in the past thought about us enough to sacrifice their freedom and lives so that we could have these basic rights. It tells me that many people cared about changing things so that they would be better today. If they only knew how different things are, they would be proud!

If Harriet Tubman could see through my eyes, she would be elated to know that African Americans are no longer slaves but are free. During Harriet's time, slavery was fully active.

Black people were owned by masters. These masters could sell them, which would separate them from their families. Harriet felt angry about how slaves were treated. So, she took a stand and became the conductor of the Underground Railroad. She was known as the Moses of her people, because she led over three hundred slaves to freedom. Harriet risked her life for others. She was strong and brave!

If she was alive today, she would discover that people of all races can roam freely without fear. Children do not have to work in the fields. Instead, children run and play during the day. African Americans can even go to school, which was against the law when she was alive.

But, Harriet isn't the only one who would be proud of how things have improved today. We can't forget Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When he was alive, we did not have slavery, but African Americans still were not treated equally to white people. We had to sit in the back of restaurants and buses, and go to different schools from whites. Segregation just wasn't fair!

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought to end segregation by protesting peacefully. One of Dr. King's most famous quotes was, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness only light can do that." This means that hatred cannot drive out hatred, only love can do that. Dr. King wanted us to realize that when we put our differences aside we are all people, and we are all equal.

If Martin was here today, he would see blacks and whites joining together in unity. We are no longer segregated, and I get to play with my white friends on the same playground, and read the same books, and share the same knowledge. Thanks, Dr. Martin Luther King... You're the best!

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is not the only person who would be pleased with the changes around the world. Rosa Parks would also be overjoyed. Why, you might ask? Well, because she

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took a stand when she refused to give up her seat to a white man on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She was a very brave woman to do this.

As a result, she went to jail. This led to the infamous Montgomery Bus Boycott. After that, a law was passed that made segregation illegal on transportation. Now, in my world, we are able to sit anywhere we want, anytime we want. Rosa Parks was known as the mother of civil rights movement.

But Rosa Parks was not the only hero for civil rights, so was Thurgood Marshall. He was the first African American Supreme Court Judge. He was known for the famous Brown versus Board of Education case. He ruled that segregation was not fair in schools, and it was unconstitutional to separate blacks and whites in schools. This is a good thing, because without it I would not be able to sit in the same classroom and go to the same schools as my white friends, but thanks to changes like this, I can. Now, blacks have the same resources, books, and the opportunity to learn as other people. So, if you think about it, Nelson Mandela's quote, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world," is true! The historical figures, I mentioned played a major role in changing the world from what it was back then to what it is today. The strong and courageous people in history gave us the basic rights we deserve, which are freedom, equality, liberty, and justice for all. Because we are all important... in our own way!

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