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### THE STAND DR. KING

A man thoroughly respected and revered by so many, was he. He was perhaps one of the greatest orators of all time. His words were pungent, his personality mesmerizing. His message, poignant and relevant, then and now.

He was indeed prolific, with dialogue and sermons which are part of our rich national heritage. He championed the rights of minorities, in particular, African-Americans. He railed against discrimination of any kind. He championed the poor and the downtrodden, the elderly and the handicapped. He was a man of reason, tolerance and noble objectives.

At the bottom line, there was one common denominator to everything he said and believed:

#### LOVE

He preached tolerance and brotherhood, held together by love. He wanted all humankind to see beyond color, red, yellow, black or white. I believe he knew that would never happen without love. Color can often motivate human beings negatively but only love positively. For Dr. King, minister of the gospel, that love had to come from his deep Christian convictions, from Jesus Christ himself. He came from the pulpit and he brought that message to everyone and as the solution for every problem. That is the right message. All the affirmative action in the world will avail little without love. For to see someone different whether color or not, the other, without love is to emphasize those differences, often negatively. Not so with love.

Dr. King was also concerned with the content of our character. He would, I believe, be quite shocked at the moral, or rather immoral, state of affairs in America and the world today. Character for him had content, standards, rules and regulations, duties and responsibilities. We have little of those things left today. Relationships without character are impossible. Fellowship and brotherhood without character are impossible. Love and character combined are the answer to the racial problems of our world, not affirmative action.

It is easy to think and believe negatively, even hatefully when we generalize. If we think negatively of all people of a certain color, it is easy to be suspicious, even hateful. But when we interact one on one, when we really get to know another person, another human being, all the assumptions, the generalities, the misunderstandings disappear. We refuse to relate to that individual on the basis of all the general assumptions we may have made regarding race, color, or creed. We stand one on one with another God-created human being and the individuality prevails. LOVE PREVAILS! If we are loving, love makes it possible for us to relate to any individual God has created.

That I believe is the bottom line of the King message. As we remember this man, his message and meaning, may we not translate that message in terms of aggression, confrontation and attack. But rather, turning the other cheek, announcing ourselves ready and willing for dialogue, and pursuing brotherhood and fellowship. We are all equal. We are all brothers and sisters, God created.

If you could have asked Dr. King, there is no doubt he would agree.