

Dr. Mosser's Blog

January 5, 2018

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Observed this coming January 15

For faith, Samson, Jeremiah, John the Baptizer, Peter, Paul, and Silas all spent jail time. Possibly some of the best preaching and witnessing to our faith came straight out of jail. And if you think that preaching from jail is only an honorable and ancient form of Christian testimony then consider an important epistle that Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote over fifty-four years ago.

In 1963 King called Birmingham, Alabama, "by far the worst city for race relations in America." Also known as "Bombingham," the city had become infamous for at least fifty bombings of black homes and churches in the years after World War II, along with Sheriff Bull Connor's fire hoses and snarling police dogs during 1961's Freedom Summer. This bloodshed preceded the awful slaughter at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on 15 September 1963, when white supremacists blew up the spiritual home of the local civil rights movement during crowded Sunday services, killing four little girls. Like Paul who wrote Philippians from prison, King wrote his famous "Letter From a Birmingham Jail" on 16 April 1963. This letter, written to among others at least two Methodist bishops, Paul Hardin and Nolan B. Harmon, explained King's thinking with regard to the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.

We live in a different era now, in part thanks to King's courage of conviction. Take a moment sometime this month to reflect on the meaning and price of freedom for all people.

**Come, Worship
Stay, Learn
God, Serve**