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- Martin Luther King Jr. memorial service. April 4, 1980, Duke Chapel. (gentle piano music) (choir singing)

- Good evening. I bid, to each and every one of you, a very hearty and joyful welcome. Tonight, on this very memorable and heartbreaking and sad, but yet joyful occasion, we welcome you to this house, this house of worship, for those of you who are new here and we hope that you will feel as if this is your house. It is always your house and you're always welcome here, but we are making a very special effort tonight to make you feel right at home. Tonight we come together to commemorate the life, the workings and the teachings of the late brother Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. There are many facets we could talk about. We've come to talk about, to commemorate the man, a father, a husband, a worker in his community. We've come to commemorate the ideal, the philosopher, the teacher. We've come to commemorate the spirit of service to mankind, the search for the truth and the search for love and understanding. So we've come to commemorate many things tonight. We've come to commemorate what he meant to the struggle, to that never ending quest for self autonomy and self identity in this country and we've come to commemorate what he meant to the faith, to those many Christians who believe that God is very much a part of the struggle and is very much a part of their lives and their existence, because of him. We've come to commemorate the man, Martin Luther King Jr., share in his joys and his triumphs and to share in his dreams for tomorrow. That is why we are here and on behalf of Duke University, the chapel staff, the union, Black Campus Ministry and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, I bid you welcome this evening.

- At this occasion also, we come to worship, therefor praise the lord, oh nations. Extol him all peoples. For great is his steadfast love toward us and the faithfulness of the lord endures forever. Praise the lord. (gentle music) ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry 'cause ♪ ♪ I'm never alone ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry 'cause ♪ ♪ I'm never alone ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ Oh, oh, oh ♪ ♪ He walks beside me ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ And he guides my footsteps, yes he does ♪ ♪ Each and every day ♪ ♪ That's why never ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ Ooh. ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ Oh, oh, oh ♪ ♪ He walks beside me ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ And he guides my footsteps, yes he does ♪ ♪ Each and every day ♪ ♪ That's why never again ♪ ♪ Never again ♪ ♪ Will I be insecure anymore ♪ ♪ I won't be insecure ♪ ♪ Ooh ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never again ♪ ♪ Will I be insecure anymore ♪ ♪ I won't be insecure ♪ ♪ Never gain ♪ ♪ Oh, oh, oh ♪ ♪ He walks beside me, yes he does ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ And I'm so glad to know that he does ♪ ♪ He guides my footsteps ♪ ♪ Each and every day ♪ ♪ Oh, oh, ooh ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever be alone anymore, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever have to worry 'bout these ole problems, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever have to worry again, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Ooh ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever, ever, ever be alone ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Oh, because he walks ♪ ♪ He walks beside me ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ And I'm so glad to know that he does ♪ ♪ He guides my footsteps ♪ ♪ Each and every day ♪ ♪ Every day. ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever have to worry about these ole problems, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever be alone, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Will I ever have to worry again, never ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Because he walks ♪ ♪ He walks beside me ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ All the way ♪ ♪ And I'm so glad to know the he does ♪ ♪ He guides my footsteps ♪ ♪ Every day ♪ ♪ Every day ♪ ♪ Ooh, ooh, ooh ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't

have to worry ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ Ooh ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to
worry ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ Never ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪ ♪ I don't have to worry ♪ ♪ Never
alone ♪ ♪ Never alone ♪

- This evening's scripture will be read from the book of Isaiah chapter 55 verses 6 through 13. Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man, his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, that he may have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, "neither are your ways my ways," said the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, "so are my ways higher than your ways "and my thoughts than your thoughts. "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, "and return not thither, but water the earth, "making it bring forth and sprout, "giving seed to the sower and bread for the eater, "so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth: "It will not return to me empty, "but will accomplish that which I purpose "and prosper in the thing for which I sent it. "For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; "the mountains and hills before you "shall break into singing, "and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. "Instead of the thorns shall come up the cypress, "and instead of briars shall come up the myrtle "and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, "for an everlasting sign, which shall not be cut off."

- Also, another chosen passage will come from the book of Jeremiah chapter 37, beginning with verse 16. When Jeremiah had come to the dungeon cells and remained there many days, King Zedekiah sent for him and received him. The king questioned him secretly in his house and said, "Is there any word from the Lord?" Jeremiah said, "There is." Then he said, "You shall be delivered "into the land of the king of Babylon." Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah, "What wrong have I done to you or your servants "or this people, that you have put me in prison? "Where are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, "'The king of Babylon will not come against you "'and against this land'? "Now hear, I pray you, O my lord the king: "let my humble plea come before you "and do not send me back to "the house of Jonathan the secretary, lest I die there." So King Zedekiah gave orders and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard. And a loaf of bread was given him daily from the bakers' street, until all the bread of the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

- Let us pray. As we come on this Good Friday in which we celebrate our lord's death, we too celebrate the death of one of our loved ones. Eternal God, the source and the giver of all life, wisdom and truth, we thank you for this day, as we honor one of the patriarchs of the faith, Martin Luther King Jr. and for the many other unsung heroes of the faith who gave their lives for the cause of justice and freedom and helping us to see what our world could be and what our people could become. We continue to pray that the goals and objectives they labored and died for will continue to guide and direct our efforts. Hear the prayers of our times, which come from souls torn and tossed by the ills of a world in rapid change. Although our flame of hope seems to be glimmering in a distance, we pray for faith and hope, in times of despair. For we know our road has been stormy, our circumstance here have been bitter, yet with a steady beat, may we be all challenged and prodded to join the mighty procession of those who gave their lives in love for the betterment of humanity everywhere. Help us, oh God, not to be satisfied with the mediocre crumbs that fall from the table or tokenism in a few places, but let us march on until every valley of justice shall be lifted up

and every mountain and hill of racism, bigotry and discrimination be made low and the uneven ground shall become the level ground of righteousness and the rough places a plane of peace until truth joy and freedom shall be the song that all God's children can sing, until all God's children can walk together in unity and in fellowship. Now father we confess our sins before you. We're grateful, oh God, for the life of Martin Luther King Sr. and we pray, oh God, that his ministry will continue to impact our lives, give him strength, increase his wisdom and power and as he shares the message with us tonight, open our ears to hear it and touch our hearts to act upon it. In the name of the father, the son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. (gentle piano music) ♪ I've had many tears and sorrows ♪ ♪ I've had questions for tomorrow ♪ ♪ There've been times I didn't know right from wrong ♪ ♪ But in every situation ♪ ♪ God gave blessed consolation ♪ ♪ That my trials come to only make me strong ♪ ♪ I've been to a lot of places ♪ ♪ And I've seen a lot of faces ♪ ♪ But there've been times ♪ ♪ I felt so all alone ♪ ♪ But in my lonely hours ♪ ♪ Yes, those precious lonely hours ♪ ♪ Jesus let me know ♪ ♪ That I was his own ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in Jesus ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ So I thank God for the mountains ♪ ♪ And I thank him for the valleys ♪ ♪ I thank him for the storms he's brought me through ♪ ♪ For if I never had a problem ♪ ♪ I'd never know that he could solve them ♪ ♪ I'd never know that faith in God could do ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in Jesus ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in Jesus ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in Jesus ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Oh, I've learned to trust him ♪ ♪ Learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to trust him ♪ ♪ Learned to trust in God ♪ ♪ Through it all ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his word ♪ ♪ I've learned to depend upon his ♪ ♪ Word ♪ (gentle piano music)

- Before I say a word of introduction for Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., let me say that we are honored to have another member of the King family here tonight, one of Dr. King's grandsons, Isaac Farris, who lives in Atlanta, has traveled with Dr. King. Isaac, would you stand, so that the congregation may see you? We're pleased to have you with your grandfather to share in the service with us tonight. A man whose life and influence surely has touch and shaped the lives of all of us and millions of others on the face of this earth and countless others who have been here during this century, Dr. Martin Luther King Sr. has been a preacher of the word for 63 years. He served one church for 45 years, Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, where he continues to serve as minister emeritus to that congregation. I was asking Dr. King about that congregation this afternoon, as he and Lieutenant Dean and I drove back from the airport. When he went there as a young pastor, they had 170 members. When he retired 5 years ago, they had over 3,000 members. Not bad huh? He is a graduate of Morehouse College, one of many distinguished graduates from that school, many of whom are gathered here this night to worship with us. He has honorary degrees from many institutions around this country and again, with some questioning and prodding by me, this afternoon he told of an honor which he had received. One which, to my knowledge, not many Americans have received. Since last he preached here in Duke Chapel two and a half years ago, he was honored by receiving and honorary degree from an academy in Budapest, Hungary. I don't know of many Americans who have been so honored with an honorary degree from behind the Iron Curtain. So his influence has been felt, not only this in this country, but around the world. He said that he preached in many churches in Hungary, four of which have been

named after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This night is a night in which we all gather here and in countless other places across this nation of or ours to remember the life and ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., but we are privileged to have Dr. Martin Luther King Sr. With us here tonight, a man who has known tragedy and suffering and heartache, at least as I have thought about his life perhaps as very few of us, if any of us, have. The King family and the Kennedy family, perhaps more than any other one family, are the two families in this country have shared tragedy and heartache as no others. When I think of the King family, I think of that old spiritual Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen, Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen, Nobody Knows, but Jesus. And I think of the King family and of Dr. King Sr. in particular, but as a think of him, I think also no one lives and witnesses to faith in Christ in the way that any of us has seen as does he. I never will forget how he began his last sermon here. And if I'm stealing the thunder for the way he'll begin tonight, he'll have to pardon me. He stood in the pulpit there, looked around the congregation and if my memory serves me correctly, he began by saying, "I stand before you this morning "brothers and sisters, to tell you "and to tell all others "that I hold hatred in my heart "for no other man." The love of God, the spirit of God, the compassion of Christ, the forgiveness which our lord calls all of us to show all manifest in the great, great man. Valdasia Merrick will sing in a few minutes and if you haven't heard Valdasia sing, we'll all be lifted to the throne of God's love and grace, as she sings for us. She will sing a tribute to the King family and then Dr. King will preach the word of God for us on this very meaningful occasion. Dr. King, we are honored by your presence. We welcome you again to Duke University and to Duke Chapel. And on this particular occasion, we feel a very special honor that you have chosen to be among us. My friends in Christ, will you stand and greet with me Dr. Martin Luther King Sr. (crowd applauding) ♪ He was born on Sunday morning ♪ ♪ To carry on, carry on ♪ ♪ It was like a ray of sunshine ♪ ♪ Come the dawn ♪ ♪ Come the dawn ♪ ♪ And I looked at him and I smiled ♪ ♪ When I realized this child had come into the world ♪ ♪ Carry on ♪ ♪ La, la, la, la, la ♪ ♪ Mmmmmmmmm ♪ ♪ Well, soon his eyes were open ♪ ♪ Oh, so wide ♪ ♪ Very wide ♪ ♪ And with just one look ♪ ♪ I knew that God was on his side ♪ ♪ And as he grew ♪ ♪ I gave him all the love I had inside ♪ ♪ And I hoped that he would use it ♪ ♪ As his guide ♪ ♪ As his guide ♪ ♪ And I know they'll always be somebody watching over you ♪ ♪ And mama may have ♪ ♪ And your papa may have ♪ ♪ And I know you've got it too ♪ ♪ He said, "Mama, don't you worry ♪ ♪ "I've got love in my heart ♪ ♪ "You know it's always with me from the start ♪ ♪ "From the start ♪ ♪ "And I know there'll always be somebody watching over me" ♪ ♪ And my mama may have ♪ ♪ And my papa may have ♪ ♪ And I got what it takes to be free ♪ ♪ He said, "Mama, don't you worry ♪ ♪ "I've had love since I was born" ♪ ♪ Martin come into the world ♪ ♪ And carried on ♪ ♪ He had to carry on ♪ ♪ He came into the world ♪ ♪ And carried on ♪ ♪ Ooh ♪ (congregation applauding) (congregation applauding)

- Thank you. I would like for you now to; and there should not be anybody in here tonight, no matter where you're from or where you're going or to what denomination to which you belong; I don't think anybody would not know this hymn that I wanna play a few verses this evening and I want you to sit there for the moment. God would like to speak to you and to me and to all of us, but we are so often busy. Just busy. And as we continue to be busy and I'm afraid not spending enough time listen to God, we find ourselves in a dilemma, in a quandary and we're trying to walk our way through without listening too much to God, I think. In this invitation that you have extended to me tonight to speak to you, you have it written here, "a sermon". That means church. I've been doing it long enough to know what it is and what it means. So I want you to walk around these words: amazing grace. That'll get you home, you know. I want you to pull out the swells

and move away the stops and let the instruments speak now and you sit there and listen. God's trying to speak to you. It's amazing, you know, that you made it out here tonight. Some good folks. Some religious folk would like to have been here tonight, but are unable. Lord help me. They're upon beds of afflictions. Some are in hospitals and right now, right now, some are crossing over going on home. You know, we're not home yet. We've still got to go home. The question may be asked how did you get here anyhow. Who brought you? How did I get here? As God carried me through the friendly skies. Lord help me. When I had to do what I do all the time, when I get up there I up, God has to take over. How did you get here? Lord helped. It was grace that brought me safe thus far and grace and grace will lead me home. ♪ Ama ... ♪ I want you to sing it everywhere. How sweet. ♪ How sweet the sound. ♪

- Not into it. They don't know where it is.

- 92 in your hymnal. 92. ♪ A wretch ♪ Like me. ♪ Like me ♪ ♪ I once ♪ ♪ Was lost ♪ ♪ But now I'm found ♪ ♪ Was blind, but now I see ♪ Glory to God. I want you to close your mouths everywhere. 70 odd years ago, I was there, old enough to sing with them back there. Lord help me. And that old deacon had no formal training at all, but he could raise that old hymn. We didn't have no piano, didn't have no organ. Music was in our throats; Lord help me; but our old deacon would get out and walk the aisles in our little church and tell us, "I want you to sing it now chillens, "we going home." He's already gone many years ago, but at the at end he said, "Now chillens, "I want you to moan it." We've kinda dressed it up now. We say, "I want you hum it." Same thing ... (congregation laughing) in a dressed up fashion. So I just want you to close your mouths now. You lift up the instrument as we hum it. (congregation humming Amazing Grace) Come on, come on. (congregation humming Amazing Grace) Lord help me. I want you shake hands now with your neighbor. Everybody, everybody shake hands with your neighbor. Tell God that you're blind. You're going on home. (congregation humming Amazing Grace) Yes Lord. Yes Lord. (congregation humming Amazing Grace) Thank you very much. There's so many folks to address here and I'm not gonna take time to do all of this addressing to you tonight, but I want to thank a friend that I met here some two and a half years ago and when I met him, I learned to have a deep admiration for him. He did so much to make my visit here a rewarding and enjoyable one and I wanna thank my good friend and brother Young, for this general introduction of me. (coughing in background) Sounds good. And when you get my age, you thank God for any nice thing anybody may say about you. I told you, when I was here before, that I was not old, I was getting older. I'm still not old, but getting older, but I know that I am older than I look. I don't look as old as I am and I know why. You could too. You just getting old too fast. If you take that step with me and come on and go and refuse to stoop low enough to hate anybody, not carrying ill will in your heart against anybody. I do not. I refuse to hate anybody. If anybody could hate, I could stand at the head of the list, but I know what hate can do for you. As a result of hate, I don't have that young man, my namesake, with me in this world now. It was hate that killed my son Martin. It was hate that caused my youngest son, both of whom were preachers, to be drowned. I'm not gonna hate. And then after a few years, when we were trying to go on and live it out and live together, a little lady that I married and lived together 48 happy years. That fella came into church and shot my wife playing the organ, The Lord's Prayer. That hurts. All of this hurts, but I'm not gonna hate them. But I tell you what I made up in my mind that I'm gonna do. I'm going on and see what the end's gonna be for all of this. This is not the end. People invite me. And I'm honest with you, much of it I don't accept. I don't want this sad thing tonight. I don't wanna keep on perpetuating the assassination of

Martin Luther King Jr. If you're gonna make it sad, don't invite me. I don't want that. I don't need it. I've had enough of it, enough of it. I miss him. I'm lonesome in a crowd many times and I get some inspiration sometimes, a lot of times. I see these pretty girls going down to sing and see you out there. They can't kill you for that, you know. (congregation laughing) It gives me inspiration. Ain't nobody can kill you for looking. (congregation laughing) Ain't no sin in worship. (congregation laughing and applauding) So by these things men live. (congregation laughing) That little fellow, young man, little boy; one day kept saying to his mother, "Mother", little did I know as he followed around with me and listened to the differences we had with people and that day, that awful segregated hour and he'd go back home and said, "Mother Del, when I get to be a man, "I'm gonna turn this world upside down." And his mother would say to him, "How you gonna do this by yourself?" "I'm gonna get the people, "the people of the world to look at it with me." That little boy kept saying that. He said, "First "I'm going to school and I'm going to "get all the training I can. "I'm gonna be prepared "to meet it." You know that little fella did that? That little fella Martin Luther King Jr. did that. He kept saying it to me and I paid no attention and I regret that I didn't. He said, "Daddy, if you let me board in school, "I'll finish top man of my class. "I need to be where I can study "and get away from these things "that stand in my way." I wouldn't listen. He did finish Morehouse College with honors, but that wasn't enough. And when he was through he said, "You know, "Daddy, I wanna go to an all white seminary." I said, "All right, pick your seminary." He said, "I wanna go to a white seminary "and prove that all black folks "are not dumb." Do you know he went to Crozer Seminary and finished the top man of his class, walked away with all the honors and the awards and then all of that commencement. They gave him a scholarship to Boston University, to take his Doctorate and I had promised, my wife and I, when he finish Crozer we would give him an automobile and we did and when he drove that car, little car, up on the campus at Boston University, they began to check and double check and do you know they didn't pay one dime of that scholarship, never? Just kept saying that the money didn't come through or some excuse and frustrated my child death. And he wrote me and said they guess he'd have to come home. "I said what's happening?" He told me and I said, "Oh no you don't. "You just ... "You just figure and be sure you're sure "and tell me what you need monthly to stay there, "tuition and everything "and I'll see that that money will be there every month, "every minute on time." God had blessed me to do that, you know. I did it and he finished Boston University. His senior professor said that he had not had a mind that came through there that was at the proportion that Martin Luther King Jr. was. That man became his closest friend, until he went home. He's a scholar and he's still living. That young man made true his statement and I'm saying to you young people, don't take no for the answer. If others did, you can do it if you will. And some of his classmates would get angry with him. They'd go in his room when he's getting his lesson, writing the papers and getting his lesson and they said, "You know, man, "this professor's setting it hard. "He just kills us with all this work." They was in his room telling him and he'd get tired, because he didn't wanna stop getting his lesson. He said, "Boys, let's go to your rooms "and get the man's stuff and stop worrying about "how hard it is." He did it. He did that and he came on out and think you'll have to go with that. That young man did turn this world upside down. I don't know what would have happened. Maybe God would have had someone else. I just don't know, but I know what we were before then. Maybe if we hadn't have had a Martin Luther King Jr. to come along, we might be riding on segregated buses and eating at segregated counter, eating places. Though that young man came along with that kind of philosophy. You could go to New York or anywhere and you couldn't get reservations in a white hotel. Some of you sitting here tonight's old enough to know this to be true. But that young man turned it upside down and opened the doors of every hotel and

every eating counter. He did that and he was working, when he lost his life, he was working to improve on the income of poor and forgotten people and we having trouble right there right now, you know. Ain't no trouble checking in a hotel anywhere. You can check in, but my God, checking out is what kills you. (congregation laughing) We've come a long way, but my God we've got a long way to go. I have a deep admiration for these fraternal societies, sororities, what have you. Don't criticize unless you're sure you know what is happening. These fraternal societies, sororities have been responsible for children getting through college that would have never gotten through, never and they're still at it. I see at the bottom of this, somewhere I read where this said the funds that will be raised; and you oughta give good in this collection tonight; somewhere on here I read where it says it will go toward a scholarship effort to some universities. Yes, most of them like to drink a lot, but they always manage to save lots of something. So as a Baptist preacher for all these years, I don't drink. You don't have to believe it, if you wanna. It doesn't matter. I don't. But I say as long as they give freely as they do for different causes, let them take a little drink every now and then. (congregation laughing) (coughing) Yes, they like to dance. I can't dance, but let them dance, if they can take time out to gather together funds. They've made contributions to Martin Luther King's Center for Social Change. This is great; this is helpful. When you come to Atlanta and see what we're doing at Martin Luther King's Center for Social Change, you'll see whatever you've given and what is happening to it and where we are. Are you listening? If I'm preaching or speaking or whatever you wanna call it, I'll end up preaching anyway, but I never stop ... When I take a text or take a subject, I never stop to ask you to say amen. I can't do that. Help me somebody. Ain't you gonna pray with me. I wished I had a praying church. (congregation laughing) I can't do that, but I don't criticize those who do. If that's the way they do it, all right with me. I don't criticize it. They got a thing going around that bothers me, but I ain't gonna criticize. When a preacher gets up, "Say amen. "Say amen again. "Say amen again." That's too much of my strength and ... (congregation laughing) I'd rather be taking my text trying to go on and preach and not waste all that energy begging for amen. (congregation laughing) I can't do it. Others can do, all right, but I'm not, but I will raise a question with you all along through my message, by simply asking are you listening. That's important. If you won't listen then I wasted time to fly up here to talk to you tonight, because I can't communicate. But if you listen, we gonna get together somewhere along the way. I see a very pretty girl out there. She's pretty and she's listening and I'm glad of that. And I see others of y'all all around listening. A man said to me on the way over here somewhere, he said, "I'm coming out to hear you speak, "to hear what you're gonna say." I said, "I'm not gonna say much." He said, "I can't believe that, "but whatever it is, I'm coming to hear." Maybe, just maybe I haven't done too bad, to come from where I've come from and arrive where I have arrived. I came from Chitlin Switch, the bottom, below the bottom of the country. Couldn't go to school but two or three months of the whole year and when I went to school my teacher might have been a second grade pupil, I don't know. I knew one thing. I didn't know what I know she didn't know and that's what I had to make out with. When I left and put down that plow and decided that I'd plow no more mules, because I had been given a mule complex; I was a big, good sized boy. I didn't know a verb from a cat. Grown man when I went to college with a full background and the man that didn't want me to get in and did everything he could to keep me out said I've got to go back and take another year in high school and all of that, I became his boss, before it was all over. You never know, you know. But you know what I was determined to do? And when I saw that little lady that I lived with 48 years and said to some of my schoolmates, "That's gonna be my wife." "Oh, she wouldn't spit on you." (congregation laughing) "It's ridiculous, you talking about "you gonna marry this preacher's daughter." He didn't have but one daughter.

I said, "I don't care what you say. "That's gonna be my wife." And I kept on plugging away. I'm saying all this to tell you young folk you can if you will. That's what I'm trying to get you to see. I went on and those fellows that criticized my grammar and criticized my verbs, I went on and got them verbs straight. (congregation laughing and applauding) And I tell you If I had to crack a verb, I usually know when I did and I worked my way around to come back with that sentence again to let you know I do know. (congregation laughing) That's a true saying, more in the man than in the land. I married that lady and I said to them, "Another thing, and I bet you when we go walking "up or down the street, you will never say, ""There comes Mrs. and Reverend Martin Luther King." "I bet you won't say it. "I'm betting you'll say, ""There comes Reverend and Mrs. King." That same lady said they said wouldn't spit on me, I became her husband and I've heard her say it many times before she was taken away from me that she'd call and say, "I'm Mrs. Martin Luther King Sr." Glory to God. It can be, you know. So I've gotten all that straight and those folks that said I wasn't gonna make it, most of them never made it yet. Some of them's going on home to heaven hope, but they never did make it. I've gone about as far as preaching can carry you. Are you listening. That ain't boasting. I'd have to have something on the ball to come to Duke University Chapel. (congregation laughing and applauding) Issac, you got the time piece. Where is Issac?

- Right here.

- Are you awake? You got a timepiece? He ain't gonna do it. You got a watch? All right. Isaac, take my watch. It's not 10 minutes. Nah, it's just 9-3. That right? Hand him my watch. Isaac, when I've I've talked a quarter past that, you stand straight up.

- What about over here with the watch?

- That'll be messed up man. (laughing)

- I'm gonna give him my watch.

- All right. That's good enough. Tell him to be sure not to keep it. Listen. Are you listening? Despite all that I've said and the other words that I'm gonna say in the next 15 minutes thereabout, I'm gonna raise this with you. I think I'm gonna talk about this on Easter morning, this coming Sunday. You heard orators, you've heard teachers, you've heard preachers, you've heard diplomats, you've either heard or read about them, but isn't it time to stop right now and ask is there any word from the lord. We get in our pretty clothes and it's nice to look nice, nice to look good, making the merchant rich and we are poor. Just stop a minute. Is that a word from the lord? Shouldn't that question be raised in Iran tonight and in these other troubled spots across our world? Is that a word from the lord? All this looting and killing and stealing and robbing, is that a word from the lord about this? Or are we trying to go on and run it ourselves and we run it into a mess? Nobody's life is safe today. All you can do as you sit there now and hope that you can get home all right. Where you live, I mean, down here. Lord help me. So I'm gonna raise this question with you slower than the book itself: if thou be the son of God come down from the cross. If though be the son of God come down from the cross. The devil's saying that to you every day. If you be what you say you are and you be a student at Duke University, whatever field you're in, if you really be what you call yourself, come on down

and have a good time. Come on down from that lofty standing you're doing. Stop trying to go along and really be the finest person that walked. Come down! You know what that subject leads me to say to you tonight? I'm glad he didn't come down. If he had of come down, we'd have had no Easter. We'd have had no Palm Sunday. We'd have no Good Friday, if he had have come down. I'm glad he didn't come down. And that little young man I been talking to you about tonight, it hurts, I'm hurt, I'm stunned, I'm bothered, I'm worried, but I'm glad Martin Luther King Jr. didn't come down that first night in Montgomery, Alabama, when they hauled him around for two hours deciding whether they gonna do what they always had done, kill him. Had his hands chained, had his legs chained in the back seat of that car and those two ungodly police, finally one said, "Nigger, "If you'll go home and go away from here, "we'll take you across the line. "We won't put you in jail. "You just go on away from here." And that young man with those chains all around him and the other one say, "Are you going? "Are you going?" He said, "Gentlemen, I must be as honest with you as I can. "I can't afford to desert or to deny or fail these people "who elected me to speak for them! "I can't do it!" And that young man finally said, "I'd rather die "than to fool these people." Do you know that young man touched their hearts, those men and one of them said, "Looky here. "Let's take this nigger on to jail. "This is funny, peculiar nigger. "We've never had a nigger "in our hands like this negro. "There's something funny, there's something peculiar about "him. "Let's take him on to jail." I'm glad that night, if he had accepted going across that line, back into Georgia, give up, just as afraid as I can be that we would still be segregated. I'm glad he didn't down that night. I'm glad that little lady who was a seamstress earning a living making clothes, when she refused to get up when a white man asked her to get up and give him that seat. She refused to get up. They put her in jail, but I'm glad she didn't get up. Are you listening. Glad she kept that seat. And she must have been sitting there for you and for me, all of us, white and black alike too. You know, some white folks wanted freedom, but they're scared to speak out. They'd kill them, you know. But they wanted a way out and they'd proven that they wanted a way out. As a result of that little fella Martin Luther King Jr. who wouldn't come down, we've got black mayors, mayors. Some of those larger cities in America gladly ... I'm glad. I'm glad. I'm glad. I'm glad he didn't come down. I'm afraid we wouldn't have hundreds and hundreds of black officials. And we've got more men in Mississippi than any other state. Did you know that? We've got more black elected officials in Mississippi than anywhere else. Do you know in Birmingham; and we had to change it to bumin, Buminham; do you know Birmingham has a black man mayor of that city today. And what am I trying to say to you? Couldn't have been that, if some white folks hadn't got tired of this mess. They had to elect them, you know. Don't you go around here in this school turning up your face against whites. They're helping us through here; don't let nobody fool you; those whose hearts are right. They're standing with us. They're taking that.