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Grade 9

As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr once said, “Loving your enemies...far from being the pious injunction of a utopian dreamer, this demand is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization”. The ability to tolerate people in our community is needed now more than ever. With the increase in gun violence, we must focus on unity, before we collapse on ourselves.

To make Dr. King’s dream a reality we must first address issues in our community. In Carlisle we see homelessness, poverty, and discrimination. Though we are connected through our town, the internal prejudices we hold inside of ourselves become present with every decision we make. The members of our community are the dreamers, the activists, and the people willing to stand together. Exclusion can eat away at the soul, and to that, our biases mean nothing. Inclusion in our community is inevitably what holds us together. As MLK said, love is the most durable power in the world, so we must tolerate differences.

Secondly, we must combat biases and make change in our community. I can see change in Carlisle, from food drives to clothing donations, Carlislians fight to make a difference. As a member of the Social Activism Club, I believe that the smallest actions can blossom into momentous changes. Currently, my club is preparing a mural to be painted in Carlisle High School, reading the quote, “We were all humans until race disconnected us, religion separated us, politics divided us, and wealth classified us”. This quote embodies all that Martin Luther King wanted to see in the world. separation leaves no room for love, no room for solidarity. Through work in our community, we are making a change.

Finally, we can continue to apply Dr. King's vision in our community. To reach "The Beloved Community"; a place with justice, and equal opportunity, we must rally and stand together. The power dynamics of women in our society have changed drastically since MLK's time, and I believe that women in our community should have a righteous say in a renewal of Carlisle. We need to stop waiting for other people to make changes for us, the time is now to act. We can continue to donate but we must also enforce equality. Charity events, and pep rallies involving students, could be a great way to incorporate Martin Luther King's dream into our community. Though some may believe that a world, or even a community with no bias is unattainable, I can say that through acts such as these we will see a shift in our general public.

To conclude, Dr. King's work sought out to reconstruct America into "The Beloved Community". MLK was ahead of his time, and as he said, "Lightning makes no sound until it strikes" and we will not realize our mistakes, such as injustices towards others, until our community has plummeted and perished. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. strived to create a conversation about change, and that is what I believe we need as we are approaching a new decade.