

BY C.L. LANEY

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1

**Who Was Martin Luther King Jr.? 5**

## CHAPTER 2

**A World Apart 9**

## CHAPTER 3

**Early Life 15**

## CHAPTER 4

**Finding His Purpose 21**

## CHAPTER 5

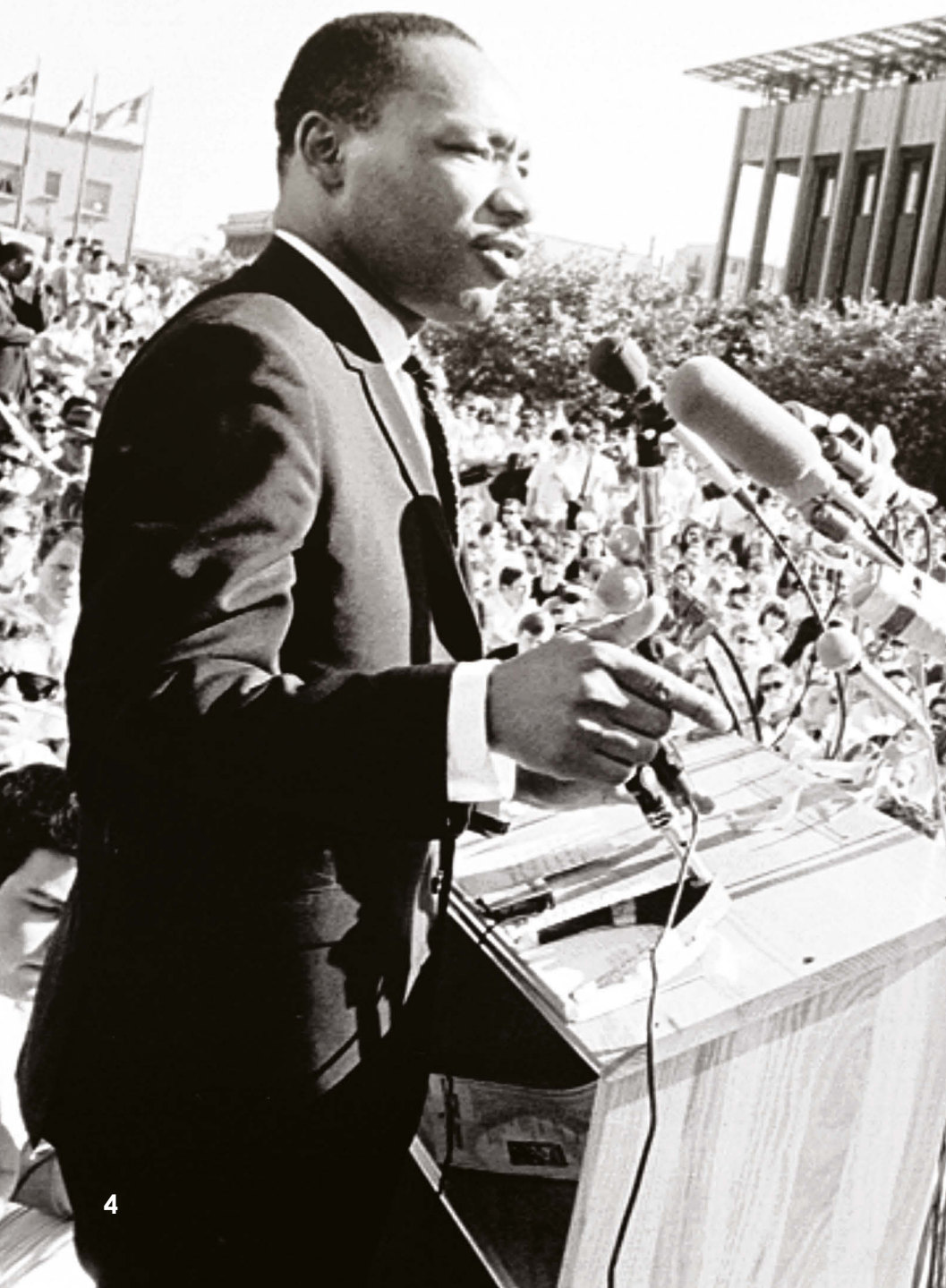
**Changing the World 29**

## CHAPTER 6

**A Lasting Impact 41**

**GLOSSARY 44**





A large crowd of people is gathered in front of a modern building with many windows. The image is dark and serves as a background for the text.

# CHAPTER 1

## Who Was Martin Luther King Jr.?

“The time is always right to do what is right.”

These are the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. They show the kind of person he was. Throughout his life, King saw people mistreated. He experienced **injustice** himself. This led him to dedicate his life to helping others.

King came from a long line of religious leaders. He became a minister too. This shaped the way he treated others. The Bible taught love for all. Compassion was important to him.

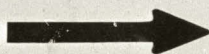
King was also an **activist**. He saw injustice in many forms. Rights were denied. People were beaten and sometimes killed. All of this happened because of **racism**.

For centuries, racist laws divided America. Black people were treated poorly. They were not seen as equal to white people. **Segregation** kept them apart. Black people lived under one set of rules. White people followed another. King knew this was wrong. There should be one set of laws for all. He spoke up. Through preaching and community work, Dr. King gained respect. His speeches inspired others. This made him a great leader.

King fought for equality. He once wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." These words were powerful. They spoke of the importance of justice for all. Dr. King inspired progress. His voice and leadership made a huge impact. Indeed, they changed the course of history.



**WAITING ROOM  
FOR COLORED ONLY**



**BY ORDER  
POLICE DEPT.**



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife, Coretta Scott King, led many civil rights marches in the 1960s.





This wood engraving by artist Frederick Dielman shows a crowd celebrating the abolition of enslavement in Washington, D.C.







## CHAPTER 2

### A World Apart

The Declaration of Independence says that “all men are created equal.” However, this idea has not always been accepted.

When the U.S. was founded in 1776, many people enslaved others. Black men, women, and children were seen as property. They worked without pay. Many were treated very poorly. In 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished enslavement. Still, Black people struggled for equality.





# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

As a minister and an activist, Martin Luther King Jr. dedicated his life to helping others. He fought for equality during a time when Black people in America experienced great injustice. Through peaceful protests and powerful words, King worked hard to make a difference. His life and legacy continue to inspire others to push for change.