

“As we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, “When will you be satisfied?” In his “I Have A Dream” speech, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. questioned his people as to when will they be satisfied. At what point will they be able to sleep at night? In a time of sever oppression that ranged from police brutality to being hung from the street light in your own neighborhood. “When will you be satisfied?” There’s a chance that the person sitting next to you wouldn’t be able to be in the same restroom as you or drink from the same fountain or even live in a two-mile radius of you. I wouldn’t be able to get the same education I have. Everybody here can see the change. It is evident that we have made progress. But “when will you be satisfied?” Did your satisfaction come in the form of affirmative action? Was it when you saw the success of Oprah Winfrey, Michael Jackson, or Michael Jordan. When did you find your security? Was it when you finally saw a black president? If you ask me, I have yet to be satisfied. My sister still reminds me to avoid being pulled over by cops. My cousin still goes to class and notices that he’s the only black kid. My uncle still asks me for five dollars because he can’t get a job in this country that he spent countless years defending. I’m not satisfied because my favorite athletes get ridiculed, fined, and publicly humiliated for defending me. I’m not satisfied because I still see white chalk around my people’s body. I can’t be satisfied because my protest will be heard for four days and

completely forgotten the next week. Dr. King said “the ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stand at times of challenge and controversy.” Therefore I ask again, “when will you be satisfied.” If you feel satisfaction at this moment, you must have missed the image painted by Dr. King. “Free at last, free at last, Thank God almighty, free at last.”

But I still feel the shackles of oppression wrapped around my wrists and ankles telling me “you can’t move forward young man.” The shackles of oppression discourages me with things like “you can’t get this job”, “this education was meant for all of your family”, “go play basketball, rap, or sell drugs”, “you’ll never be a lawyer, doctor, or engineer”, “you’re lucky to have made it to college”, “only way you have a chance is if you work 10 times harder than the kid next to you”, “around 21, I should be in a jail cell or even worse 6 feet under”. These shackles of oppression, still wrap around the necks of my peers as if they’re animals capable of destruction to society. I came here today to let you know, that I am not satisfied. I still have some encouraging to do. I still have progress left on my agenda. I may not be in darkness but I do see a brighter light further ahead in the distance. I’m not sure what the light is but it looks like freedom. It looks like a cop handcuffing my brother instead of shooting him. It looks like all of my little cousins walking across the stage to get their degree. It’s a day in the news where there are no killings in my city. I can see the day that I can calmly and happily tell my kids, “it’s safe to

walk to school and back home, nobody will harm you.” I see the day that my veteran comes back home to a country that supports him in every way possible. I see fair court systems. I see freedom. Freedom looks peaceful. Freedom keeps a smile on everybody’s face. This is the image that Dr. King dreamed so vividly about. “If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.