



Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Our Current Moment: A Podcast Conversation with Lewis V. Baldwin

MICHAEL CHAN AND LEWIS V. BALDWIN

Michael Chan: Hello, friends! Welcome to the *Gospel Beautiful* podcast. I am your host, Michael Chan. Today's conversation is with Dr. Lewis V. Baldwin. Dr. Baldwin taught for decades at Vanderbilt University in the Department of Religious Studies, focusing on some really important questions grounded in the history of the civil rights movement, grounded in the histories of especially Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, and also focusing on black congregations and congregational dynamics. Some really interesting stuff that I think in many ways continues to speak to our current moment.

I personally first encountered Dr. Baldwin's work a couple weeks back when I was working on an article for the Church Anew blog. Dr. Baldwin wrote this book called *Never to Leave Us Alone: The Prayer Life of Martin Luther King Jr.*, actually published by Fortress Press here in the Twin Cities. I highly recommend this book. I certainly learned a lot leafing through it, and I think you will as well,

Dr. Lewis V. Baldwin reflects on the spiritual leadership of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X during the civil rights movement. This conversation between Dr. Baldwin and Dr. Michael Chan, which first aired on August 11, 2020, is transcribed with permission from the Gospel Beautiful podcast series. It has been edited for length and clarity.

especially if you are interested in the life of MLK and especially in his prayer life. There is just a lot to learn about the centrality of prayer in the life of Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. Lewis Baldwin, thank you so much for joining me.

Lewis Baldwin: Thank you for having me.

Michael: Well, I have been looking forward to this conversation for a long time. I really appreciate the work that you have done. You have been working on these questions for decades. I feel like they have become relevant across the culture in some really fresh and new ways, so I am looking forward to having you help us.

You were a young man during the civil rights movement. Is that right? Did I get the dates right?

Lewis: Yes, I would say I was in the eleventh grade when Dr. King visited my hometown. I was in the eleventh grade when the Bloody Sunday March occurred. I remember when it occurred. I also had some involvement, though limited involvement, in some of the demonstrations in my hometown—my brother and I. I was a teenager in the mid-'60s and had a chance to see a lot and also to participate in some of what was going on at that time.

Michael: As a young person, how did you process what was happening at that moment? We look back on the civil rights movement now, and of course, King's life ended, and it was momentous. Right? It was one of the most significant points in American history. Did it feel that way at the time?

Lewis: Well, I must say that when I grew up as a child in the little town of Camden, Alabama, I really had no sense of what was going on. You know, as a child unless you are told something is wrong, you don't think so. I would say that once the movement started in Montgomery in 1955—I was in the first grade at that time—it did a lot in terms of raising my consciousness about what was happening and about the issues involved around Jim Crow and the whole system of segregation in the South.

I would say that it was a moment of awakening for me. I think that was the case for so many of my classmates and other young African Americans in rural Alabama at that time, and perhaps across the South. We were educated by the movement. We had not really thought through a lot of the issues surrounding segregation, but as we read Dr. King and Malcolm X and some of the other important figures who were involved, and as we heard them, of course, we were sensitized to what was going on and the issues involved.

Michael: Your research work is focused on the life and even spirituality and prayer life of Dr. King for a long time. What led you to that as a topic?

Lewis: Well, I would say it had much to do with what I observed on the civil rights movement, but I saw what I participated in. I was inspired by that to make my own

contribution. I think the question that I confronted during the movement was, “What contribution could I make as an individual to the continuing struggle?”

That question was very pressing for me, particularly after Dr. King was assassinated. I thought that I could make a contribution through education and especially through scholarship. That is how I got involved. I decided to write. I decided to teach, to do research, and to share the fruits of that research with the younger generations and to tell the story about the movement as I saw it and as I experienced it. That is very important to me. That was the inspiration for doing what I do.

Michael: You recently published a book with Fortress on King’s prayer life. The way I came across this is that I had recently done an article for a blog site, and I was thinking through the role of prayer in our current moment, especially the role of intercessory prayer, which I have a little bit of Pentecostalism in my background. (Both laugh.)

I think for a lot of charismatic churches and Pentecostal churches, intercessory prayer is not just about reciting words or even about self-therapy. There is a sense in which one is moving the heavens in which prayer is effective. (Both agree.) I was doing a bit of research there. That is, in fact, how I first came across your book. Talk a little bit about King’s prayer life, maybe in some general terms, and why that was of interest to you.

Lewis: Well, I would say that I wrote the book for a number of reasons. I was inspired to some degree by a conversation I had back in the late 1980s with Professor Lawrence Jones at Howard University’s Divinity School. Back in the late ’80s, we discussed unexplored areas in King’s scholarship and possible new directions for King’s scholarship. When I left his office, I decided that I would do the necessary research and would ultimately publish a book on King’s prayer life.

Dr. King was first and foremost a spiritual leader, not a civil rights leader. Civil rights activism was simply a component of his spiritual leadership.

Second, I wanted to continue the trajectory of King’s scholarship that I started back in 1984. In 1984, I published my first article on Dr. King. It covered his cultural roots and background. I looked at the religious traditions and the cultural traditions that shaped him. That topic had not been well explored at that time. I actually published a book in 1991 called *There Is a Balm in Gilead: The Cultural Roots of Martin Luther King Jr.*, and *Never to Leave Us Alone: The Prayer Life of Martin Luther King Jr.* actually built on that kind of scholarship.

Thirdly, I wrote *Never to Leave Us Alone* because I really think that Dr. King’s prayer life provides lessons for how we today might develop and nurture our own spiritual lives and our spirituality as a whole.

Let me also say that I wanted to stress the fact that Dr. King was first and foremost a spiritual leader, not a civil rights leader. I think we tend to view him

as a civil rights leader, but he was a spiritual leader first and foremost. Civil rights activism was simply a component of his spiritual leadership. I wrote that book for that reason as well, to make it clear that we have to view him first and foremost as a spiritual leader.

Michael: You mentioned some lessons that you took from King's own prayer life for today. How would you outline those for us?

Lewis: Well, I would say first of all that prayer is an essential part of our personal spiritual lives. Dr. King made that clear. Also, prayer is a critical dimension of our continuing struggle for justice and for human dignity, peace, and equal opportunity. Also, another lesson that I think we get from Dr. King is that we must never misuse prayer, and that prayer is no substitute for intelligence, for hard work, and for a sense of responsibility.

We cannot just depend on God's power. Dr. King often said that we and what we do are a part of the answers to our prayers.

Also, when we pray, we have to make sure that we ourselves and what we do are a part of the answer to our prayer. We cannot just depend on God's power. Dr. King often said that we and what we do are a part of the answers to our prayers. These are the kinds of lessons that I think we learn from Dr. King and his prayer life, of course.

Michael: Yes! If I hear you correctly, it would be inappropriate for a person to say, "Well, should I be doing prayer at the picket line?" (Both laugh and agree.) That is an inappropriate sort of dichotomy.

Lewis: Exactly! Part of Dr. King's genius, I think, was in his ability to unite the prayer circle and the picket line. I think that was part of his genius, to bring those two together into a kind of holistic kind of thing. That, I think, was a part of his genius.

Michael: You know, the first chapter of your book is called "An Inward Journey in the Wellsprings of the Black Prayer Tradition." What is distinctive about the black prayer tradition that you think sets it apart from, maybe, other forms of Protestantism prayer?

Lewis: I think the language of the black prayer tradition has been about deliverance and freedom. You go back to some of the prayers of the slaves. They prayed for deliverance and freedom. That would be a recognition of their whole humanity. I think that language of deliverance and freedom carried over into Dr. King's prayers, so I think that is actually what distinguishes that tradition.

Also, I would say, very importantly, that prayer has always been an essential part of our history of social activism and the struggle for freedom. It has been

inseparable from that and just as important as our freedom songs. This is what I have tried to get across in that very first chapter of the book.

Michael: You have also done quite a bit of work actually with MLK and Malcolm X. (Dr. Baldwin agrees.) I think sometimes these are sort of placed in tension with one another. Both are obviously civil rights icons but also maybe approaching those challenges from different angles. (Dr. Baldwin agrees.)

Give us the insider's view of how you think about these two men and how they contributed to the civil rights movement, and maybe how they thought differently or similarly about how to achieve their goals.

Lewis: I see the two men as they were moving toward converging paths toward the end of their lives. They had so much in common when it comes to the struggle for freedom, justice, and equality of opportunity. Both were religious leaders, and they felt that religion or spiritual values were essential to the movement.

Another thing that I often think about today as we look at what is happening with Black Lives Matter, Malcolm and Martin were saying that back in the 1950s and '60s. They were saying that black lives matter. Both were very concerned about racial injustice and law enforcement and the criminal justice system. Both were concerned about systems of segregation of the Jewish segregation in the South and the black segregation in the North.

Both had a vision for this country. Malcolm X often spoke in terms of a Society of Brotherhood, of the Muslim term "Ummah." King talked a lot about the beloved community of the "world house." They were saying essentially the same thing, that we need to move toward a more perfect union. For them, that perfect union was about, and ultimately even, for Malcolm X, a totally integrated society based on mutual acceptance, intragroup and intrapersonal living, and shared power.

We often forget that last part of it: shared power. They both felt that blacks had to have their share in the power of this country. They had so much in common despite the fact that they were divided by different loyalties to religion (Malcolm being a Muslim and King a Christian). We often focus on what divided them, but I think we need to think more in terms of what brought them together and how they were moving toward converging paths toward the end of their lives.

Michael: That is really helpful. I appreciate that. It does strike me, it is interesting that both of them found deep inspiration in religious figures who were squarely outside of Christianity. Right? For Malcolm X it is within Islam, and Gandhi, of course, for MLK. That just strikes me as interesting. They have this almost, like, ecumenical kind of interreligious impulse that leads them outside of Christianity to find resources for their justice vision.

Lewis: Yes! Malcolm X also was inspired and influenced a lot by Albert B. Cleage, who was a Christian nationalist. He was inspired a great deal by Franklin Florence in Rochester, New York, who was a Christian nationalist and, of course, Marcus

Garvey. He was not a Muslim. He was very much involved in the Episcopal tradition and other West Indian traditions.

I think you are right in saying that both were concerned about this lifelong search for truth. They found truth in different venues: King looking at Gandhi, who was a Hindu, and looking at the prophet Muhammad and Islam; and Malcolm being influenced by some of these figures who had come out of black Christian nationalist traditions. I think you are right about the interfaith meaning of all of this.

Michael: The nationalism piece is interesting too, because you also have kind of Arab nationalism movements that are at work within the Middle East at the time. What is just fascinating is that I think in those contexts or at least in the civil rights context, nationalism was actually a narrative that could be used to move toward liberation. In the modern moment, nationalism has a very different tenor to it. I think that when people hear it, they don't necessarily hear it in the same way that maybe it was being heard in the civil rights movement. You agree?

Lewis: Yes, I think you are quite right, because in the 1960s, we heard a lot about what nationally is a myth in terms of a separate nation or a separate existence. You don't hear a lot about that today. Malcolm X's understanding of nationalism, of course, came out of that Garvey tradition, and also Elijah Muhammad's tradition. That distinction that was being made at that time in the 1950s between integrationism and nationalism—you don't hear much said about that today.

Michael: No, you really don't. We live in a remarkable moment for people like yourself who are working with history. I feel like as a nation, there is this larger conversation about how to relate to our past. (Both agree.) This is everything from sort of statue toppling to the 1619 Project to all these things that are really dealing with historiography in some interesting ways. I just feel like we are at an interesting moment where Americans are sort of looking back. Some narratives are being eroded. Some are being lifted up. What is your sense of how we are relating to our own history right now?

Lewis: Well, I would say that you are quite right. I think you hear at the highest levels of our national political life, this language about "making America great again." I think that has a lot to do with why and how a lot of people are looking back instead of forward. I think that it is great that we are coming to grips with our past and especially the dark side of that past.

You mentioned, of course, the elimination of certain Confederate monuments in the country because they remind us of that dark side of our past. I think it is okay for us to look to the past as long as this becomes an inspiration to bring about the kinds of changes that we need to live together in the future across the boundaries of race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality.

I think we are still in the process of trying to learn how to live together as brothers and sisters. That requires, I think, a reckoning with the past. We see

that happening. As long as we don't get so preoccupied with our past that we do not develop a clear vision for the future. A vision that takes us beyond that past because in many ways, we are still living there in terms of the injustices that we see in society and the inequalities that we see in society.

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Michael: There is no doubt about that. I wonder, as somebody who works so much with history, how do you go about thinking about these historical characters within American history, like Jefferson and even Lincoln? Right? You could look at Lincoln's life from 2020 and find plenty of things to critique, right? Even around the topic of slavery.

Then when you look at King's "I Have a Dream" speech, it has many echoes to Lincoln. It is in the second paragraph where he says, "Five score." This is a clear kind of way of playing off of Lincoln and the whole notion of the uncashed check, the idea that this promise has not been fulfilled. He finds a usable past there. Is that like a model for us, or are we kind of past usable past?

Lewis: I think you are quite right. I think this is a model for us. You are talking about Dr. King's rhetorical strategies. Part of that strategy was to draw on these major figures from the past. Going back to Jefferson, "We hold these truths to be self-evident," and going back to Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address. Yes! This shows that Dr. King was steeped not only in African American religious and cultural tradition, but in the traditions of American participatory democracy.

He felt that what Jefferson and Lincoln and others had to say was very important. That even though they had their problems—Jefferson having some involvement in slave-holding, and Lincoln being not clear all the time on what he felt about slavery—Dr. King felt that their language spoke to an unfolding vision of what this country should become and how we might move toward a more perfect union.

He looked at it in that regard. This is why I think he felt that in his rhetorical strategy, he could look back on these figures and what they had to say about freedom and participatory democracy and draw on the language of what they said because it was very much consistent with his vision. That is why he often said, "My dream is rooted in the American dream." In other words, it is rooted in the dream that Jefferson had. Jefferson talked about it in the Declaration of Independence at length, and [Lincoln] in the Gettysburg Address. I think we have to look at it in that regard.

Michael: That is helpful. This is an impossible question for anybody to answer, but if you were to drop those two men into the current moment, in what ways might they feel comfortable and in what ways might they feel somewhat uncomfortable

with how the civil rights movement has evolved and the way that kind of advocacy is being done today? Maybe you would think there would be perfect continuity, but I just wonder, if you were to fictionally drop them into this moment, how might they feel both at home and maybe not at home?

Lewis: You mean Malcolm and Martin?

Michael: Yes sir! Yeah. That's right.

Lewis: Yes! Yes! Well, I think that there is a sense in which they would fit in very well. I recognize that we're dealing with a different time frame, but we are still confronting some of the same old issues, like racial injustice, religious bigotry and intolerance, sexism, and bias against immigrants.

We are facing some of the same old issues, and we still need leadership, of course. We still need organization. I think that if they were here today, they could fit very well into what is happening because of it. Both were concerned about leadership. They were concerned about organization. They were concerned about eliminating social injustice and social evil.

They were concerned about the looming nuclear threat, which is still with us. They were concerned about oppression that occurred not only in the United States but abroad. That is still with us, of course. I think they would fit in very comfortably with what we are seeing. As I said earlier, their whole message was Black Lives Matter and All Lives Matter. We are hearing that message today, especially from our young people. We are hearing it from the teenagers who are involved in March for Our Lives against guns.

We are seeing it in the peaceful protests of young people occurring after the murder of George Floyd. Malcolm and Martin believed that young people are the best hope for our future. Both said that and believed that. I think they [were in] some ways prophetic in that sense because we are seeing today young people.

We are seeing not just black youngsters, as was the case with SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] and some of the other movements back in the '60s. If you look at what happened on some of the peaceful protests after the George Floyd killing, they were not only interracial but multiracial in composition, and then young people.

I think young people share pretty much a vision that Martin and Malcolm had, that somehow we have to move beyond all of these artificial barriers that separate us in terms of race, ethnicity, and nationality. That is their vision. We see it still unfolding with these youngsters today.

Michael: Yeah, I think many of those threads continue to be relevant because the problem is still there. I was just rereading W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*. He is just a great writer. It is all absolutely worth reading. In that initial kind of intro, he talks about the color divide and the color line. It strikes me that many of those observations he was making even long before King and Malcolm X remain relevant today. (They both agree.)

Lewis: Exactly! He was writing in 1903 when he said that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the color line. I think that same prophetic statement applies to the twenty-first century so far, except that we are not only dealing with the color line that separates us; we are dealing with the religion divide which has become very much a part of our twenty-first-century existence and the attitudes that people have toward Muslim people. The religion divide is important too. You are right. So much of what Du Bois said in 1903 in *The Souls of Black Folk* was prophetic. We are seeing it today.

Michael: A lot of your work is focused on the congregational level. Congregation is kind of a social unit. I am just interested in why you chose to focus on congregations and what you think. Why was that an important sort of social unit for you to zoom in on?

Lewis: Perhaps I should make a couple points. First of all, I have not done that kind of research very much since the 1980s. I published two books on the African Union Methodist traditions in the 1980s. Even in those books, I was focusing more on denominations. I think you are right when you raised the question about the importance of congregations as a social unit and as a sociological phenomenon.

I think you are quite right in that regard, particularly when you look at congregations in the African American tradition, because congregations have met a multitude of needs in black communities that extend beyond what we would strictly call the “spiritual” or the “ecclesiastical.” Congregations have served as agencies of social cohesion. They have been educational agencies. They have been centers for black political participation and black congregations. This has been true historically. They have been places where people learn how to vote or register to vote. The congregations have been a proving ground for black political leadership. They have been that context in which talent has been discovered and nurtured and developed in the arts and in music.

When you speak of the congregation as a social unit, you have to take all of that into account: the fact that congregations have been really extended families. The function has not been merely spiritual or ecclesiastical but social, political, and educational. Unfortunately, I think we are losing that today.

Michael: I was just going to ask that question, if you think that. Certainly, on the kind of mainline Protestant side—I am within the ELCA Lutheran [denomination]—we are certainly seeing declines in numbers, and most especially among younger people. Is there a similar phenomenon within the black community as well?

Lewis: Exactly. Yes! A very similar phenomenon. In fact, C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence Mamiya back in the late '90s or early 2000s wrote a book, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. They came up with a lot of data that show that younger generations of blacks not only are not involved in the church; many of them know nothing about the church.

Of course, the change started with the generation that followed me and others and other baby boomers. Unfortunately, the church congregations are not getting the kind of support in black communities that they once got, numerically speaking and otherwise.

The other problem, I think, is that congregations as a neighborhood phenomenon are dying out. Church congregations are moving out of the inner cities and out of neighborhoods. Much of that has to do with crime and also the lack of support. It simply means that these congregations are no longer an accessible resource for people.

In the past, congregations fed people. They assisted in employment opportunities, etc. When you have these congregations moving out of neighborhoods because of crime and other reasons, it means that there is no longer an accessible resource for these communities. That is what is happening. We see the functions of the local congregations changing. Much of that has to do with the fact that they are being swallowed up by this megachurch phenomenon, which has become a rapidly growing phenomenon in this country.

Michael: All of that is really fascinating. It makes me think that the churches are singular institutions when it comes to developing social capital connections and just about everything in life. That may even be especially true of black congregations. You just think what is being lost on a neighborhood level if you do not have neighborhood churches that are deeply ingrained within the patterns and rhythms and reflect the neighborhood and all of that. It seems like there is such a remarkable loss there.

Lewis: It is a remarkable loss. It means just one more loss because in the inner cities, for example, you already have a dearth of resources on which to draw. You do not have recreational centers. You do not have swimming pools and that type of thing. The church has in the past provided much of that. They have been recreational centers. They have been educational centers. With the gradual movement of these congregations out of the communities, one can only imagine what that means in terms of lost resources.

Michael: Let's turn for just a few minutes to a little bit more of our current context. Looking back at the civil rights movement that you experienced as a young person and thinking now, how do you interpret this moment that we are living through?

I guess maybe when we put it in a different way, in fifteen or twenty years when historians look back at this moment in time, I'm convinced that they will see that we are in the middle of a major inflection point. I think that's been true since the recession, in fact. I think this whole decade that we are living through has really been formative for Americans. How do you interpret that as a historian?

Lewis: Well, I see a problem on many levels. We talk about the pandemic in terms of a health crisis. Yes, it is happening on that level, but we are also dealing with a

pandemic at other levels. We have not only a health crisis; we have an economic crisis. We also have a crisis in terms of poverty and the loss of jobs, etc.

We have perhaps equally importantly, I think, a credibility crisis. We have a crisis in race relations. So it is happening on so many levels. It cries out, I think, this crisis for ethical leadership to me. I am currently writing a book on King and ethical leadership and that topic. I think that is perhaps our major problem today in this country.

Certainly, we have a health crisis. We have an economic crisis. We have a crisis in racial relations. The greatest crisis, I think, is in ethical leadership. We don't have ethical leadership at the highest levels of our political institutions and our religious institutions. This is one reason why I think so many people in our society are losing faith in these institutions.

The greatest crisis, I think, is in ethical leadership. We don't have ethical leadership at the highest levels of our political institutions and our religious institutions. This is one reason why I think so many people in our society are losing faith in these institutions.

We don't have the kind of ethical leadership that we had with people like Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer, and others back in the 1950s and '60s. I think that is the greatest crisis. As I think about it, William Barber comes to mind as the only religious figure who is actually standing in the tradition of King and Malcolm and others today when it comes to ethical leadership.

We don't have prophetic ethical leadership today. We need that in a credibility crisis. I am sure you have seen that many scholars today are referring to a post-truth age. We are living in a post-truth era, an era in which there is a war on truth. Certainly, we hear evangelical leaders and leaders in these megachurches preaching Christ is Gospel of Truth and "the truth shall set you free." In this era when there is a wrong truth, they are either silent or noncommittal. They are not providing the kind of ethical leadership or the prophetic leadership that Dr. King represented and others in his time.

Michael: Of course, many of us are also thinking of John Lewis right now with his recent passing. (Dr. Baldwin agrees.) I think you are right about the credibility piece. It makes me think that we may be able to point to individual leaders who might represent that ethical leadership, but I think when there is distrust of the institution, that limits the ability of a single person to lead ethically even if they are a kind of ethical life. Wouldn't you agree?

Lewis: Yes! Yes! I think so, but we have to keep in mind that even during Dr. King's times, there were a lot of people who were beginning to question institutions.

Michael: It was the 1960s, right? (Both laugh.)

Lewis: Yes! Yes! We know what that era was like with the Jesus movement and hippie movement and the anti-war movement. There was a lot of questioning of institutions and values, but the power, I think, that Dr. King represented is this: he was able to bring some credibility to the church and its role as a voice of conscience in society, as a prophetic voice in society.

His work, I think, was significant in restoring a lot of the credibility that the church had lost. I think credible ethical leadership today could be capable of doing essentially the same thing, but we simply don't have those kinds of leaders. If you look at what is happening with the megachurch phenomenon, for example, many of these leaders have a platform to speak to the entire world, but they don't use that platform in ways that it should be used.

As I said, Dr. King talked a lot about silence even in his time, in a letter from the Birmingham City jail. What happens when the church or religious institutions become silent and noncommittal in the face of the human struggle? Once they become silent and noncommittal, they are of no use to the struggle. I think we are seeing that today.

Michael: Yeah. In that answer, you are kind of leaning into the next question, which is, What do you think the church's calling in this moment is? Maybe I should say something about the audience for this podcast. I think it is predominantly made up of probably pastors, or maybe even theologically educated church leaders, who are coming from predominantly white congregations as well as denominations. Given that audience, what would you say the church's calling [is,] and what is the Spirit summoning us to at this moment?

Lewis: Let me see. I think that in this moment, we have to think in terms of a vision. That is the most important thing. The Bible says, "Without a vision, the people perish." That is what we're lacking. We hear so much about "making America great again" and that kind of thing, but I think the important thing is how can we move toward a fuller realization of what Dr. King had in mind when he talked about the world house.

Dr. King said whether or not we know it, we live in a world house. We might be from different nations, different religious backgrounds, different political persuasions, and different cultures, but technology and scientific discoveries have brought us together. The only problem is that we have not become one spirit.

I think that for ministers, lay persons, and all religious traditions, predominantly black churches and interracial churches need to understand that the most important thing we have to do today is to develop a vision and to pursue that vision through practical action to bring it to full realization.

I will say that the future remains important. I think that we need to keep our eyes on the future as a nation, as people, even as we struggle with the present, because there is a future.

That is what I try to get across to people when I speak to churches and I speak to students. I try to get that across through my writings. The future is very, very important. We need to make sure that we are a part of something much larger than ourselves as we look to the future. We are a part of a struggle much larger than ourselves. This is what Dr. King, I think, taught us.

Michael: Dr. Baldwin, thank you so much for your time. Thank you for your many contributions that are still ongoing. I know you have projects that you are continuing to work on. May the Lord bless you in that work!

Lewis: I appreciate it very much. Thank you. ☩

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