

- And you're listening to *After Hours*, 90.1 FM, KPFT, Houston. (SINGING) Radio, radio, radio, radio. Celebrating life from the heart of Montrose. (SPEAKING) Louise is out celebrating with the queens. Let me find out where that played in.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Just set up a flare to find that queen. You get more than two people in the room, and she's got to go visit. Oh, anyway, girl you missed the news.

- I know. I was making coffee.

- What you got Richard, something?

- Well, we got to keep awake here.

- Oh, look. Look on the floor.

- Hi, Harvey.

- There's my little puppy.

- Harvey Milk.

- Yes, it is Harvey Milk.

- Yes. Baby.

- A little black Cocker Spaniel puppy. Well, he's not really a puppy anymore.

- He can't walk on this thing. He's having a hell of a time walking on the hardwood floors.

- All right, baby.

- He came over to visit us tonight because we're doing spring cleaning early. So we started by fogging for fleas, and all that kind of stuff.

- Oh, yeah.

- He's going to go home and get a flea bath at 4:00 in the morning.

- Oh, lucky him.

- Isn't that exciting?

- Lucky you.

- I know. We're going to play the song--

- We're all lucky. I'm lucky. You're lucky.

- Oh, never mind. We're going to play this song one more time. Because we're getting ready to listen to Dr. King's program, which is brought to us by the Pacifica Archives, and another reason you need to support Pacifica. But this particular speech-- or sermon, was preached at Ebenezer Baptist church in Atlanta, Georgia on-- it doesn't say when. Damn, it doesn't give the date. But oh, here it is. Recorded in Atlanta, November 1967. And this is one of the greatest speeches that Dr. King ever gave. Because he says, if things just don't go your way, don't give up.

- That's the point.

- Even though that the crap is going to hit the fan, we're going to win. And that's what he says. But Dr. King was very outspoken, and very much against the war. So before we listen to him, we're going to listen to Freda Payne one more time.

- Oh, good.

- In a little tune that we're going to play the hell out of until the war is over, called "Bring the Boys Home." And Kathleen brought this to us last week. And I understand that as the Vietnam War was raging on, it didn't get a lot of airplay.

- Right.

- I wonder why.

- Yeah.

- Because it goes something like this.

[MUSIC - FREDA PAYNE, "BRING THE BOYS HOME"]

- It's still wild. But I'm not going to get on the rag about the war because I think it's obscene. And we just won't talk about it. Maybe it'll go away.

- You know we will talk.

- This is Black History Month. And we do lots of things in relations, I guess, to the Black struggle, for freedom and civil rights. And this is a speech that we're going to listen to from Dr. King that I think is one of the best.

- You bet.

- So stay with us. This is *After Hours* on KPFT, Houston, 90.1 FM.

- Martin Luther King speaks.

[MUSIC - "NEVER ALONE"]

- We are in the midst of a crisis in this country, which is probably the most severe in our history. It is a time when people are questioning the very legitimacy of government. Because a government's legitimacy is ultimately determined not by its own laws, but by the people under its jurisdiction. What we are seeing today is more than dissent or protest, it is open defiance of laws of our government in response to laws of a different order. President Eisenhower once said, that the people want peace so much, that one of these days, governments had better get out of their way, and let them have it.

Last month, Washington D.C. was literally put under siege by unarmed citizens seeking an end to an immoral war and terrible repression. Martin Luther King Jr. called for civil disobedience five years ago. We are slowly responding to that call. Today's program is a sermon Dr. King preached at Ebenezer Baptist church in Atlanta, Georgia in November 1967.

- Now this morning, I want to talk with you a few minutes about civil disobedience. And I want to use as a subject from which to preach-- But If Not. But If Not.

There was a day when many of the Israelites found themselves in bondage in Babylon. And there was a king of Babylon by the name of Nebuchadnezzar-- you read about him a good deal in the book of Daniel, and it stands as an epic that will remain stenciled on the mental sheets of unfolding generations.

Nebuchadnezzar was a mighty king. And when he ruled, he ruled. And when he issued an order, he meant business. And Nebuchadnezzar issued an order. He made a golden image, and his order was that everybody under the reign of his kingship had to bow before that golden image and worship it. Now those of you who read the Bible remember that story.

One day, Nebuchadnezzar called in the judges and the governors and the sheriffs, and they had a dedicatory service for this golden image. And then he said to them, I'm instructing you to see that everybody bows before this golden image.

But there were three young men around there. One's name was Shadrach, the other one's name was Meshach, and the other name was Abednego. And they answered, and I read it from the scripture, and said to the King, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this manner. If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace. And he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the Golden image which thou hast set up."

Now I want you to notice first, here, that these young men practiced civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is the refusal to abide by an order of the government or of the state, or even of the court, that your conscience tells you is unjust. Civil disobedience is based on a commitment to conscience. In other words, one who practices civil disobedience is obedient to what he considers a higher law.

And then there comes a time, when a moral man can obey a law which his conscience tells him is unjust. And I tell you this morning, my friends, that history has moved on. And great moments have often come forth. Because there were those individuals in every age, in every generation who were willing to say, I will be obedient to a higher law. These men were saying, I must be disobedient to a king in order to be obedient to the king.

And those people who so often criticized those of us who come to those moments when we must practice civil disobedience, never remember that even right here in America, in order to get free from the oppression and the colonialism of the British Empire, our nation practiced civil disobedience. For what represented civil disobedience more than the Boston Tea Party.

And never forget that everything that Hitler did in Germany was legal. It was legal to do everything that Hitler did to the Jews. It was a law in Germany that Hitler issued himself-- that it was wrong and illegal to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. But I tell you, if I had lived in Hitler's Germany-- with my attitude, I would have openly broken that law. I would have practiced civil disobedience.

And so it is important to see that there are times when a man-made law is out of harmony with the moral law of the universe, there are times when human law is out of harmony with eternal and divine laws. And when that happens, you have an obligation to break it. And I'm happy that in breaking it, I have some good company. I have Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I have Jesus and Socrates. And I have all of the early Christians, who refused to bow.

Now the second interesting point is that, these men never doubted God and his power. As they did what they did, they made it very clear that they knew that God had the power to spare them. They said that to the king, now we know that the God that we worship is able to deliver us. And that grew out of their experience.

They had known God. They had experienced God in nature. They knew God as the creator. And then, they had seen God in history. And then they had seen God, I'm sure, in their personal lives. They never doubted God's power to deliver them.

But let me move now to the basic part of the message. Know this morning, if we forget everything I said, I hope you won't forget this. It came to the point after saying, our God is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace. But if he doesn't deliver us, we still are not going to bow. But if not-- do you get that? That these men were saying that, our faith is so deep, and that we found something so dear and so precious, and that nothing can turn us away from it. Our God is able to deliver us, but if not-- this simply means, my friends, that the ultimate test of one's faith is his ability to say, but if not.

You see, there is what you may call an "if" faith, and there is a "though" faith. And the permanent faith-- the lasting, the powerful faith, is the though faith. Now the if faith says, if all goes well, if life is hopeful, prosperous, and happy, if I don't have to go to jail, if I don't have to face the agonies and burdens of life, if I'm not ever called bad names because of taking a stand that I feel that I must take. If none of these things happen, then I'll have faith in God, and I'll be all right. That's the if faith.

I know a lot of people have the if faith. Jacob found himself in that dilemma once, and his faith was contingent on an if. And he said, now if God will be with me, and if he will keep me in this way that I go, and if God will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God. That's the if faith-- though Jacob hadn't quite gotten to the essence of religion.

There is a "though" faith, though. And the though faith says, though things go wrong, though evil is temporarily triumphant, though sickness comes and the cross looms, nevertheless, I'm going to believe anyway, and I'm going to have faith anyway. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, the Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge.

And old Job got to that point, and he had a though faith. He looked out, and everything that he had been taken away from him. And even his wife said to him, now, what you ought to do, Brother Job, is to curse God and die. God has been unkind to you, and you should have let God know a long time ago that you will only follow him if he allowed you to stay rich, if he allowed your cattle to stay in place. You ought to curse him and die, Job, because he hadn't treated you right. But Job said, honey, I'm sorry, but my faith is deeper than that. Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. My faith is a though faith.

And this is the essence of life and religion. The question is whether you have an if faith, or whether you have a though faith. You know what this says in substance, that ultimately, religion is not a bargaining matter. A lot of people bargain with God. If you just let me avoid pain, God, if you allow me to be happy in all of its dimensions, if you don't allow any suffering to come, if you don't allow frustrating moments to come, then I'll be all right. I'll give you a tenth of my income, and I'll go to church and I'll have faith in you.

But religion is not a bargaining experience. It's not a commercial relationship. And you know, no great experience exists in the bargaining atmosphere. Think of friendship, think of love, and think of marriage. These things are not based on if, they are based on though. These great experiences are not based on a bargaining relationship, not an if faith, but a though faith.

And I'm coming to my conclusion now. I want to say to you this morning, my friends, that somewhere along the way, you should discover something that's so dear, so precious to you, that is so eternally worthwhile, that you will never give it up. You ought to discover some principle, you ought to have some great faith that grips you so much, that you will never give it up. Somehow, you go on and say, I know that the God that I worship is able to deliver me, but if not, I'm going on anyhow, I'm going to stand up for it anyway. What does this mean?

It means, in the final analysis, you do right not to avoid hell. If you're doing right merely to keep from going to something that traditional theology has called hell, then you aren't doing right. If you do right merely to go to a condition that theologians have called heaven, you aren't doing right. If you are doing right to avoid pain, and to achieve happiness and pleasure, then you aren't doing right.

Ultimately, you must do right because it's right to do right. And you got to say, but if not. You must love ultimately because it's lovely to love. You must be just because it's right to be just. You must be honest because it's right to be honest. This is what this text is saying more than anything else. And finally, you must do it because it has gripped you so much that you are willing to die for it, if necessary. And I say to you this morning, that if you have never found something so dear and so precious to you that you will die for it, then you aren't fit to live.

You may be 38 years old as I happen to be. And one day, some great opportunity stands before you and calls upon you to stand up for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause, and you refuse to do it because you are afraid. You refuse to do it because you want to live longer. You're afraid that you will lose your job, or you're afraid that you will be criticized, or that you will lose your popularity, or you're afraid that somebody will stab you, or shoot at you, or burn your house, and so you refuse to take the stand.

Well, you may go on and live until you are 90, but you are just as dead at 38 as you would be at 90. And the cessation of breathing in your life is but the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit. You died when you refused to stand up for right. You died when you refused to stand up for truth. You died when you refused to stand up for justice. These boys stand before us today, and I thank God for them, for they had found something. The fiery furnace couldn't stop them from believing. They said, throw us into the fiery furnace.

But you know the interesting thing is, the Bible talks about a miracle. Because they had faith enough to say, but if not. God was with them as an eternal companion. And this is what I want to say finally, that there is a reward if you do right for righteousness' sake. It says that somehow, that burning, fiery furnace was transformed into an air-conditioned living room. Somebody looked in there and said, we put three in here, but now we see four.

Don't ever think you're by yourself. Go on to jail if necessary, but you never go alone. Take a stand for that which is right. And the world may misunderstand you and criticize you, but you never go alone. For somewhere I read that, one with God is a majority, and God has a way of transforming a minority into a majority. Walk with him this morning and believe in him and do what is right, and he'll be with you, even until the consummation of the ages.

Yes, I've seen the lightning flash. I've heard the thunder roll. I've felt sin's breakers dashing, trying to conquer my soul. But I heard the voice of Jesus saying, still to fight on. He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone, no, never alone, no, never alone. He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone.

Where are you going this morning, my friends, tell the world that you're going with truth. You're going with justice, you're going with goodness, and you will have an eternal companionship. And the world will look at you, and they will understand you. For your fiery furnace will be around you, but you go on anyhow. But if not, I will not bow, and God grant that we will never bow before the Gods of evil.

[MUSIC - "SOMETHING INSIDE SO STRONG"]

- Somewhere in Des Moines or San Antonio, there's a young gay person, who all of a sudden realizes that she or he is gay. Knows that if the parents find out, they'll be tossed out of the house. The classmates would taunt the child. And the Anita Bryant's and John Briggs are doing their bit on TV. And that child had several options-- staying in the closet, suicide.

And then one day, that child might open a paper, it says, homosexual elected in San Francisco. And there are two new options-- option is to go to California--

[LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE]

Or stay in San Antonio and fight. Two days after I was elected, I got a phone call. And the voice was quite young. It was from Altoona, Pennsylvania. And the person said, thanks. And you've got to elect gay people. So that young child, and the thousands, upon thousands, like that child, know that there's hope for a better world. There's hope for a better tomorrow.

Without hope, not only gays, but those Blacks, and the Asians, the disabled, the seniors, us-es, the us-es. Without hope, the us-es give up. I know that you cannot live on hope alone. But without it, life is not worth living. And you, and you, and you, got to give them hope. Thank you very much.

- That was Harvey Milk in Dallas, Texas. Not too long after he was elected to supervisor San Francisco. And if Harvey has done anything over the last 4 and 1/2 some odd years, for me, in here, he's given me hope that life will be better, and it does get better. And listening to Dr. King this morning will continue, even though things aren't going our way.

And if there's one thing we've never done here, it's apologize, especially for the last several weeks. We've been so goddamn angry that bombs are falling, and gay men are dying, and Blacks and Whites at city council are trying to destroy the city. And Councilman Ben Reyes has got the Hispanics huddled in a corner, bitching, because everyone's not speaking Spanish.

And I have to look at gay men in blue uniforms with badges on their chest and guns on their sides and know, with all my heart, how they feel-- that they're so afraid. And if someone finds out, baby, it's just not right. And life is just too short to care what anybody thinks.

When my dad died, I remember looking at his body lying in the casket, and comparing our hands, and knowing that I have his hands, and it's his hands that are pushing these buttons every week. And with my grandfather's death, I know that it's his love and his energy that's gotten us here this morning.

And even though my mother won't talk to me and acknowledge the fact that her son is a faggot, it's her energy, in a twisted kind of way, that keeps us going. Some idiot called all night and harassed us. And you don't get to hear that, all you get to hear is us. And what we want to tell you is that somehow, it is going to be OK.

But I think we get bogged down. I know-- no, I know I do-- worrying about having to be here someday maybe without Jimmy, or without Roger, or maybe Jimmy being here without me, and I don't like that. As long as we're not here without you. If you're a cop-- hey, Mary, come on out. If you're just somebody that needs somebody to talk to, call the switchboard.

- You bet.
- At 529-3211. If you're somebody that's got something going, and the whole world needs to hear about it, and it's got anything to do with us, well, call us at the *After Hours* hotline at 529-- what's the number? I forgot the number, man.
- 529-4636.
- Anyway, just-- whatever it is, just hang in there. And when you hear this little tune called you, you know it's going to be OK.
- Yeah.
- So we'll get better, and we'll quit bitching. And--
- Well, we probably won't quit bitching.
- And when-- I don't know if we're going to get better. I don't know, Mary. Kathleen's here.
- Oh, good.
- And we're getting ready for *Blues For You*.
- Kathleen and Terry.
- I haven't seen Terry come through the door yet, but I'm looking for--
- I thought she was here.
- Well, maybe she is. And how those--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- --they can sneak up on you when you least expect them. Anyway--
- But she's got some good blues.
- What's going on in the rest of the month, Mary? You schedule all this stuff. Anything happening--
- Well, I don't want to say, because I've got a couple of things going. I know that we're going to have *Stone Soup* on.
- Oh, that's good.
- Close to Easter. And we've talked in to other groups, and stuff like that. So if we know, we'll tell you.
- Yeah, well, just stay tuned. And remember, you can call us the *After Hours* hotline at 529-4636. Or please drop us a line. The address is--
- KPFT After Hours, 419 Lovett Boulevard, Houston, 77006.
- And join us next week at 10:00-- or 12:00, 11:00, something after-- sometime after midnight.
- Oh, about quarter after midnight.
- After the BBC. We'll say once again, you're listening to *After Hours* on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. And we're here--

- And we're queer.
- Until then kids, just grab your butt with both hands, and hope for the best.
- Goodness.
- Well, that could be fun too.
- Have a great week, and we'll see you next Sunday.
- We love you, babies.
- I love you, bye. If you're a cop, please call now. The lines are open. I want to get a cop one way or the other, Mary.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Phones ringing, you think it's a cop?
- Ooh, I hope.
- Let's get out of here, and let Kathleen in.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Hi, there. This is BB King, the guy who plays a guitar called Lucille. And you are listening to 90.1 FM, that is KPFT Houston, Pacifica's listener-sponsored radio. Set up to see if they know it.

[MUSIC - BB KING, "WHY I SING THE BLUES"]

- It's 4:00 AM. You're tuned to 90.1 FM KPFT in Houston, Texas and I have blues for you.