give great gifts to charity. You may tower high in philanthropy. But if you have not love it means nothing. You may even give your body to be burned, and die the death of a martyr. Your spilt blood may be a symbol of honor for generations yet unborn, and thousands may praise you as history's supreme hero. But even so, if you have not love your blood was spilt in vain.\textsuperscript{13} You must come to see that it is possible for a man to be self-centered in his self-denial and self-righteous in his self-sacrifice. He may be generous in order to feed his ego and pious in order to feed his pride. Man has the tragic capacity to relegate a heightening virtue to a tragic vice. Without love benevolence becomes egotism, and martyrdom becomes spiritual pride.

So the greatest of all virtues is love. It is here that we find the true meaning of the Christian faith. This is at bottom the meaning of the cross. The great event on Calvary signifies more than a meaningless drama that took place on the stage of history. It is a telescope through which we look out into the long vista of eternity and see the love of God breaking forth into time. It is an eternal reminder to a power drunk generation that love is most durable power in the world, and that it is at bottom the heartbeat of the moral cosmos. Only through achieving this love can you expect to matriculate into the university of eternal life.

I must say goodby now. I hope this letter will find you strong in the faith. It is probable that I will not get to see you in America, but I will meet you in God's eternity. And now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and lift us from the fatigue of despair to the buoyancy of hope, from the midnight of desperation to the daybreak of joy, to him be power and authority, forever and ever. Amen.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13.} 1 Corinthians 13:3.  
\textsuperscript{14.} Cf. Jude 24–25.

\textbf{The Martin Luther King, Jr. Papers Project}

\textbf{To Eleanor Roosevelt}

5 November 1956
Montgomery, Ala.

\textit{King was unable to schedule a meeting with Roosevelt during 1956.}

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
211 East 62nd Street
New York, New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

On returning to Montgomery I discovered that you had sent a telegram to me requesting that I meet you in New York. I regret very deeply that my schedule was
of such at the time that it was impossible for me to have the interview. I know nothing that I would have welcomed more. Let me express my personal appreciation to you for your interest in our struggle for justice. Please know that your moral support and Christian generosity are of inestimable value in the continuance of our struggle.

Very sincerely yours,

[signed]
M. L. King, Jr.,
President
MLK:b

Transcribed and signed in the absence of Rev. King.

TLSr. ERC-NHyF.

To Richard H. Dixon

8 November 1956
[Montgomery, Ala.]

Facing a 13 November circuit court hearing on the city's effort to shut down the car pool and a federal court hearing the following day on the MIA's request to enjoin the city's interference in MIA operations, King declines Dixon's invitation to speak in Pontiac, Michigan.1 On 9 April 1956 Dixon had forwarded $700 to the MIA from the Oakland County Ministerial Fellowship, of which he was president.

Trinity Baptist Church
Wessen at Maple Street
Pontiac, Michigan

Dear Richard:

Thanks for your very kind letter of October 22. First, let me apologize for being so tardy in my reply. Absence from the city for several days accounts for the delay. On returning to the city I discovered that we are once more confronted with court cases. In a desperate attempt to defeat our car pool the city has sought an injunction through the court. This means that for several days next week we will

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1. Richard H. Dixon, Jr. (1923–), received his B.A. from Bishop College, his B.Th. from American Baptist Theological Seminary, and his B.D. from Colgate Seminary. He served as pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Pontiac, Michigan, before being called to Macedonia Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, New York. He later headed the Westchester Urban League, the United Black Clergy of Westchester, and the Westchester Christian Leadership Conference. In 1964 Dixon accompanied King and his family to the Nobel Peace Prize ceremonies in Oslo, Norway.