“Other Mountains,”
Baccalaureate Sermon at Alabama State College

Delivered at Alabama State College for baccalaureate sermon on May 15, 1955

1 Rugged Individualism and national isolationism
2 the mountain of mediocrity in our various fields of endeavor
3 The mountain of hate and bitterness

AD CSKC Sermon file, folder 78, “Keep Moving From This Mountain”

1 In a 2 May 1955 letter, Alabama State College president H. Council Trenholm invited King to serve as the baccalaureate minister for the college’s May commencement (in Papers 2 550–551) and also asked Martin and Coretta King to be dinner guests at his home prior to the ceremony. The day after the event, King’s father boasted in a letter to J. Raymond Henderson, “They tell me he swept. He is already in great demand” (in Papers 2 556–557).
2 In his 1960 Founder’s Day address at Atlanta’s Spelman College, King spoke of four symbolic mountains that must be surmounted if civilization is to survive. He described “the mountain of hatred and violence” that could be overcome with the use of “nonviolent resistance” and “the love ethic of Jesus Christ” (King, “Keep Moving from This Mountain,” Address at Spelman College on 10 April 1960, in Papers 5 411–417).

“The Peril of Superficial Optimism in the Area of Race Relations”

[19 June 1955?]

In this outline for a speech before an afternoon meeting of the Montgomery National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) King warns against complacency in the fight against prejudice in the United States and around the world for “so long as one spark of prejudice lies latent in the heart of any white American, there is a possibility for it to develop into a flame of intolerance.”

1 Montgomery NAACP secretary Rosa Parks’s notes about the meeting mirrored the points made in this outline. According to Parks’s notes, Dexter church clerk Robert D. Nesbitt introduced King, commenting, “He is a great asset to Montg” by activity in everything for the betterment of the community. He has launched an intensive campaign in the church for NAACP membership and voters” (Rosa Parks, Minutes, Mass meeting at First C M E Church, 19 June 1955).