

EPIPHANY- Martin Luther King

Set in the USA in the sixties, this true story illustrates the news behind the news, the way that God is often acting without getting the credit from the cameras.

At the age of 26, Martin Luther King was chosen as civil rights leader for a bus boycott led by the black community. King was a middle class boy with a faith inherited from his preacher father. The day King's leadership of the movement was announced, threats began. He was jailed simply for driving 30kph in a 25kph zone, and received death threat phone calls for him and his family.

That night King sat staring at an untouched cup of coffee and tried to think of a way out, a way to quietly surrender leadership and resume the serene life of scholarship he had planned for. In the next room lay Coretta, already asleep along with their newborn daughter Yolanda. Here is how King remembers it:

I sat at the table thinking about that little girl and thinking about the fact that she could be taken away from me any minute. And I started thinking about a dedicated, devoted and loyal wife, who was over there asleep. And I got to the point where I couldn't take it anymore. I was weak.

And I discovered then that religion had to become real to me, that I had to know God for myself. And I bowed down over that cup of coffee. I will never forget it... I prayed a prayer and I prayed out loud that night. I said 'Lord I'm down here trying to do what's right. I think I'm right. I think the cause that we represent is right. But Lord, I must confess that I'm weak now. I'm faltering. I'm losing my courage.'

And it seemed at that moment that I could hear an inner voice saying to me, 'Martin Luther, stand up for righteousness, stand up for justice. Stand up for Truth. And I will be with you, even until the end of the world.'... I heard the voice of Jesus saying still to fight on. He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone.'

Three nights later a bomb exploded, as promised, on the front porch of King's home, filling the house with smoke and broken glass but injuring no one. King took it calmly: 'My religious experience a few nights before had given me the strength to face it.'

From *Soul Survivor*, by Philip Yancey, Hodder and Stoughton, 2001