

RE-OPENING CHRISTIANITY:

Am I Open or Closed Off?

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It can be so easy to become click-ish. We have our friends, our cultural sensibilities, and our faith community. The early church struggled with this, too. But Peter and James reminded the early church that the Church should not put up barriers to entry, for it is by grace that we are counted as God's family.

***"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:
The old has gone, the new is here!"
– 2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV***

My Next Step(s):

- I will reflect upon the ways that I discriminate against others—subtly or overtly.
- I will seek to be more open and welcoming to others
- I will lead with Grace because God leads with Grace.
- I will pray for, and do my part to help us all become "one in Christ."

Memory Verse: "No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." - Acts 15:11

(Continues on back.)

(This message uses materials provided The Preaching Project, San Antonio, TX.)



Re-Opening
CHRISTIANITY

**Happy six month
anniversary to
“14 days to flatten the
curve.”**

**I'm not turning my
clock back an hour on
Nov. 1
because seriously
none of us need an
extra hour of 2020.**



Nelson Portland

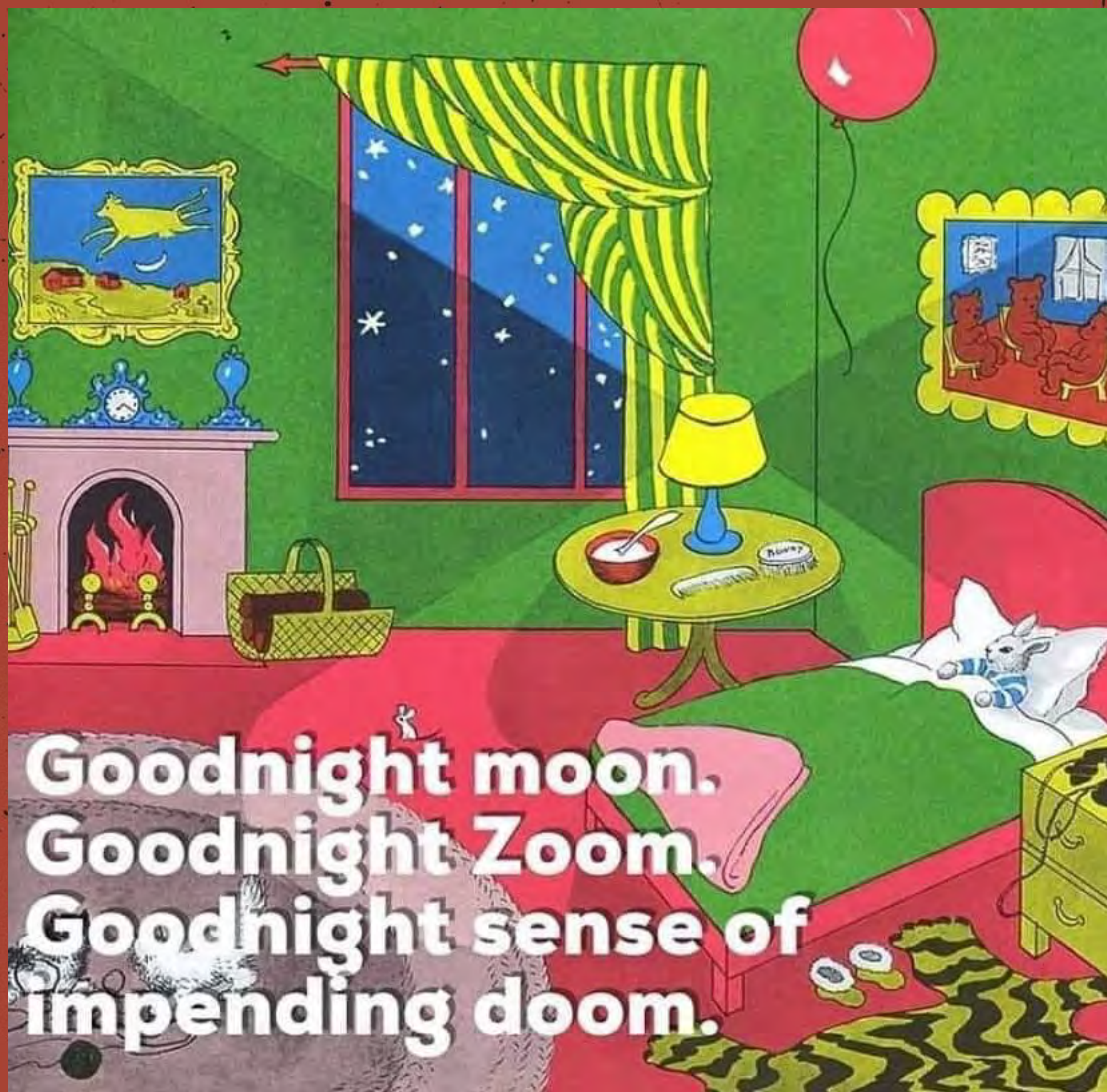


5 hrs ·

Dear 2020,

I am breaking up with you. The pandemic, the riots, civil unrest, fires, it's just too much. You are also a lousy kisser. I want to see other years. I will stop by and get my sweater next week.

Nelson



**Goodnight moon.
Goodnight Zoom.
Goodnight sense of
impending doom.**

I found the guy to blame for 2020



"2020 is almost over. We're in the
homestretch!"

The homestretch...





Re-Opening
CHRISTIANITY

How do we re-open
for the better?

If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the **new** is here!

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Am I **open**
Or am I **closed off**?

Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the **Pharisees** stood up and said, “The **Gentiles** must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses.”

ACTS 15:5

The apostles and elders met to
consider this question.

ACTS 15:6

WHERE'S WALDO?

SOCIAL DISTANCING EDITION







⁷ **After much discussion**, Peter got up and addressed them: “Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. ⁸ God, who knows the heart, showed that He accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as He did to us.

ACTS 15:7-11

⁹ He did not discriminate between us and them, for He purified their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? ¹¹ No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.”

ACTS 15:7-11

#1

God does not
discriminate.

“God did not discriminate between us and them, for He purified their hearts by faith.”

ACTS 15:9

- *Acts 15: “Us” who are circumcised and “them” who are not*
- *“Us” of one political philosophy and “them” of another*
- *“Us” on one side of the tracks and “them” on the other side*
- *“Us” who are Christians” and “them” who are not*

And Christ died for **all**, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:15

There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all **one** in Christ Jesus.

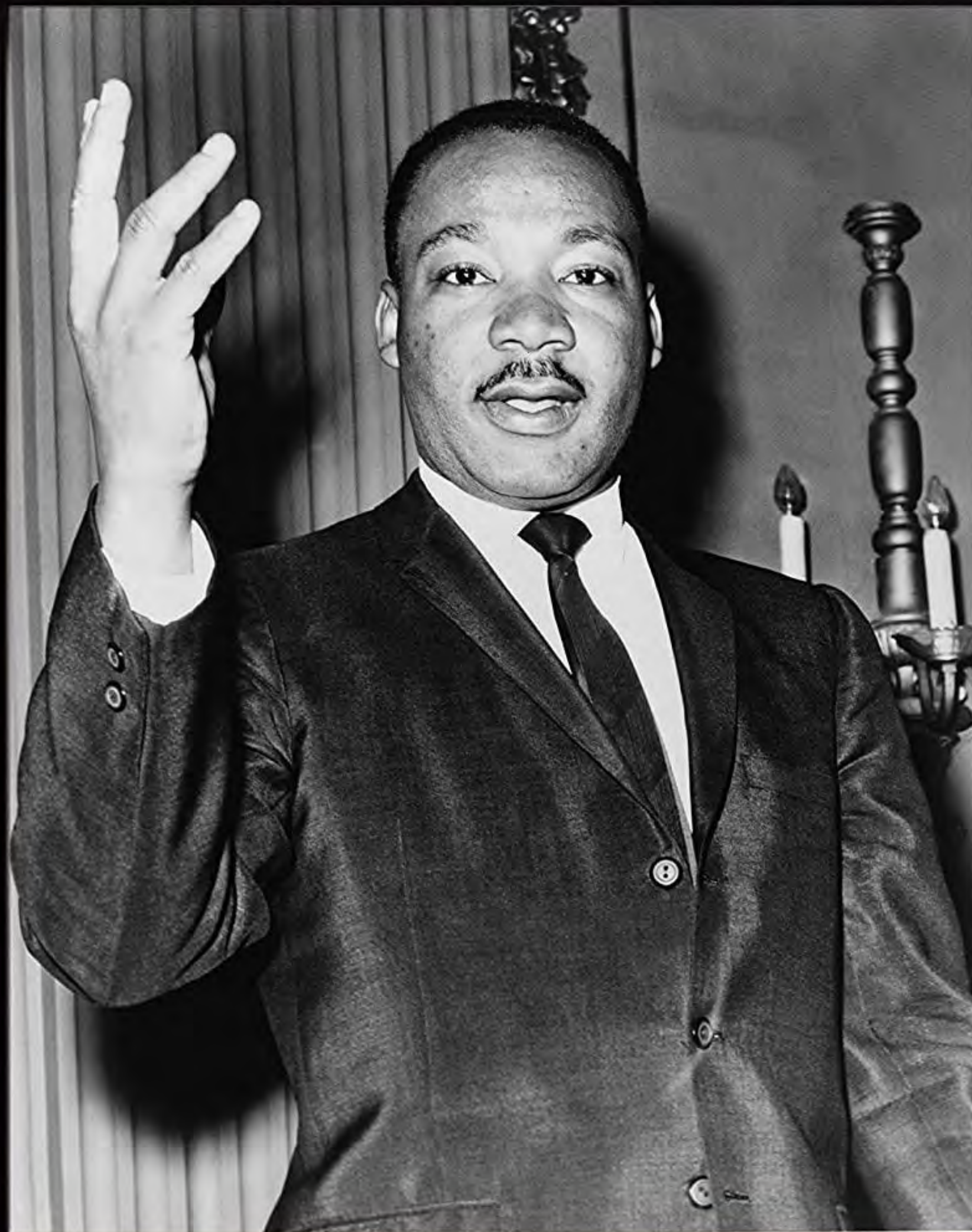
GALATIANS 3:28

#2

Lead with grace.

“Why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been **able to bear**?”

ACTS 15:10



**“WE MAY HAVE
ALL COME ON
DIFFERENT SHIPS,
BUT WE’RE IN THE
SAME BOAT NOW.”**

Martin Luther King Jr.

“We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, **just as they are.**”

ACTS 15:11

Am I **open**
Or am I **closed off**?

*“We are all in the same
boat now!”*