

20 Dec
1956

To Daniel G. Hill

20 December 1956
[Montgomery, Ala.]

On 10 December Hill, dean of Howard University's Rankin Chapel, had commended King for his talks at the university on 6 December, when King delivered a morning sermon, "Remember Who You Are?" followed by a dinner address, "The Three Dimensions of a Complete Life." "It is difficult for us to estimate the tremendous amount of inspiration and good which [accrued] to the students of Howard University as a result of your visit," Hill commented.¹ On the evening of his Howard visit, King also spoke at an NAACP mass meeting; over the course of the day, one newspaper reported, more than four thousand people heard King's words.²

Dean Daniel G. Hill
Howard University
Washington 1, D.C.

Dear Dean Hill:

Thanks for your very kind letter of December 10. Absence from the city has delayed my reply.

Let me thank you again for your kind hospitality on my visit to the campus of Howard University. I will long remember the rich fellowship we had together and the total experience. My only regret is that an extremely busy schedule made it necessary for me to rush in at the last moment and leave immediately after my presentation.

After returning to Montgomery I became aware of the fact that our Institute on Non-Violence and Social Change will be an annual event. It will take place around the fifth of December of each year. In the light of this I find it necessary to make some changes in the tentative commitment that I made with you in Washington for the Annual Day of Prayer on Thursday, December 5, 1957. I am

1. Daniel G. Hill, Jr. (1896–1979), a native of Annapolis, Maryland, received an undergraduate degree (1917) from the Lincoln University, a B.D. from the University of Denver, an M.A. (1932) from the University of Oregon, an M.S.T. at Pacific School of Religion, and a Th.D. (1946) from Hill School of Religion. Ordained in 1921, he served AME churches in Denver; Portland, Oregon; and Oakland, California, before beginning teaching at Howard University in 1945. A year later he was appointed dean of the chapel. He was dean of its school of religion from 1958 until retiring in 1964.

2. The NAACP address is "Facing the Challenge of a New Age" (see p. 451 in this volume). During one of his three speeches that day King reportedly said: "There is a danger we will talk so much about the Christian gospel we will forget that man is an animal and a product of nature. . . . I have heard about the silver slippers and long white robes in heaven, but I am more concerned about shoes for thousands of barefoot children and millions of people who go to bed hungry at night. I want to see the golden streets up yonder, but I want to do something about the slums in Washington and Montgomery. I know about the new Jerusalem, but I want to know about the new Washington, the new Montgomery and the new New York City" ("4,000 D.C. Citizens Hear Rev. M. L. King," *Baltimore Afro-American*, 15 December 1956).

more than sorry that this conflict has arisen. I look forward with great anticipation to being able to come back to Howard University. If there is any other date available in the Fall of 1957, I will be more than happy to consider it. Please feel free to contact me concerning the possibility of such.

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I have enjoyed very much reading "Well-Springs of Life."³ You certainly did a masterful job of editorship. You have my prayers and best wishes for continued success in the noble work that you are doing.

With warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,
M. L. King Jr.,
President

MLK:mlb

TLC. MLKP-MBU: Box 82.

3. Daniel G. Hill, ed., *Wellsprings of Life, and Other Addresses to College Youth* (Washington, D.C.: Howard University, 1956). Hill had given the book to King, suggesting that he could include King's 6 December 1956 sermon in a similar publication: Box 1.