

Branko Alavanja
C & T 202-D
Dr. Glen Helman

**Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1963)
&
video documentary, *Eyes on the Prize* (1986)**

Discussion Note
Friday April 22, 2005

Main Ideas from “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

- Waiting, blacks couldn't wait any longer
 - JJ-6- “We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed towards gaining political independence, but we still creep horse-and-buggy pace towards gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter.”
 - This paragraph then continues with vivid effective imagery, which opens the eyes of the reader and gives him/her an understanding of the situation.
- Church, segregation in the church
 - If the leaders of churches that did not believe in segregation would have stepped up and voiced their opinion the fight to end segregation and bring equality to all races might have moved along more quickly.
 - Is segregation still in churches today? Why?
 - Tradition/Practice in worship vs. Racial based division
 - Instead of referring to the Christian Church in general, Martin Luther King, Jr. uses terms such as the white church... why?

Main Ideas from *Eyes on the Prize*

- Stokely Carmichael vs. Martin Luther King, Jr.
aggression non-violence
- Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael believed in the I'm not going to mess with you but if you hit me, I'll hit you back. However, Martin Luther King, Jr. was completely for non-violence. King used a strength in numbers to protect his followers.
 - Was King more Christian in his practice when compared to the other two leaders, because of this non-violent attitude that he adopted from Gandhi?
 - This method probably helped to prevent riots from breaking out.
 - Was this method more beneficial?
 - Was it more effective?
- Stokely Carmichael-> Black Panthers- political party established to win economic, social, political, etc. equality for blacks

- “Black Power”
 - term sounds militant
- Was the tension between Stokely Carmichael and Martin Luther King, Jr. a hindrance the movement?
 - They walked together.
- How did the world view the movement and the actions of the government towards active members of the Civil Rights movement?
 - Dehumanization
- “Little Rock 9”-nine black students allowed to attend Little Rock’s Central High School. Cause major controversy.
- Freedom Rides- Blacks and Whites rode together in protest of conditions. Whites in back, Blacks in front.
- Nation of Islam- Built temples, established businesses, and setup schools for blacks. Anti-white sentiment
 - Elijah Mohammed- leader
 - Malcolm X was important member
- James Meredith- Shot in protest walk. Walked alone.