

Letter from birmingham jail critique essay

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



“ Dr. King’s Call to Action” In Dr. King’s “ Letter from Birmingham Jail,” he shows that nonviolence is the way to get the positive attention that his plight deserved. He believed that to use violence was negative on a couple of points. First, violence always gets negative attention. Second, violence was the way the Klu Klux Klan went about their business. He wanted to expose unjust laws and do it in a fashion that conveyed his beliefs without causing other problems. In Dr.

King’s “ Letter from Birmingham Jail,” he is trying to convince his “ fellow clergymen” (566) that his fight for the civil liberties is a just one, and that the march was a nonviolent one and one that was surely needed. Dr. King stated, “ we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny” (566). King is saying that it’s something that can no longer be ignored, that he can no longer sit on the sideline and be an idle observer. The black man has to take it to the streets. In this letter, Dr. King showed that nonviolence, direct action, and the ability to stand by one’s convictions are the right path.

In his quest for racial equality, Martin Luther King came to the conclusion that nonviolent resistance was the only way to achieve this goal. It was his belief that social justice could be achieved only by changing the hearts and minds of the oppressors. Violence would only distract from the main goal, cause bitterness between the opposing groups and shut down any possibility of reconciliation. His theory of nonviolent resistance meant that a protester could be as passionate as a violent one, but in rejecting physical aggression, the nonviolent protester leaves open the possibility of a transformation.

The absence of violence lets the other person see issues from a clearer perspective, one that isn't clouded by the aftermath of a violent confrontation. Nonviolent resistance was the first step. Dr. King also stressed that direct action was needed for racial equality to exist. Dr. King and his followers would have no alternative but to “ present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community” (567). Dr.

King felt that direct action “ is to create a situation so crisis packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation” (568). King felt that direct action was the only course to take because his hand had been forced this way by the unwillingness of southern society to take any action at all. Finally, Dr. King said that before anyone takes direct action, the protester first needs to “ purify” (567) their soul so that he or she will have no regrets going forward. Taking direct action is the right path but, it needs to be understood that there will be consequences for those actions.

Taking a stand has never been easy and can be extremely difficult, but for the future progress of the African American, it was necessary. The protester needed to possess a firm moral conviction that their cause was a righteous and just cause. By combining nonviolent resistance, direct action, and a firm conviction of their cause, King was confident that the oppressors would come to join him in the quest for equality. All other issues would fade away and the only thing left to see would be the true issue, a “ good versus evil” perspective.

The Letter from Birmingham Jail” was written at a time when America had little room for blacks and their customs. It was a white man’s country, and <https://assignbuster.com/letter-from-birmingham-jail-critique-essay/>

the white man wanted it to stay that way. If not for the courage of King's convictions it might have remained that way. Dr. King should be seen as an American hero that had the where-with-all to follow through with what he saw as a total injustice. He accomplished this by adopting a plan of action that consisted of nonviolence, direct action, and the convictions of his beliefs.