

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD + -

MLK: THE MARCH FOR VOTES

(You may want to do the lesson on '[MLK: Power and non-violence](https://cpx.video/mlk1schools)' before this lesson, or use some material from that lesson as background information.)

This segment comes from **EPISODE 1: WAR + PEACE.**

From Jesus' command to "love your enemies" to the idea of "holy war" is a giant leap. Yet from the Old Testament through to the Crusades and the inquisitions, Christian history is full of violence. Has Christianity been a major contributor to war? How have the followers of a crucified leader managed to get things so wrong? And what difference has it made when they have followed his example of peace-making and non-violence? This segment looks at how Martin Luther King Jr and others followed this example of non-violence in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches in Alabama.



THEME QUESTION

Which of the following responses do you believe to be **most** accurate? Explain your response.

- a. Christianity is more violent than peaceful
- b. Christianity is equally violent and peaceful
- c. Christianity is more peaceful than violent




ENGAGE

1. Can you think of a cause that is important to you that you would march for?
 - a. Why would you march for this cause?
 - b. Would you still march if there was a very real possibility of injury or death? Why or why not?

2. What observations can you make about the following images related to the 1965 Selma to Montgomery Marches?



3. What is your reaction to this quote from Martin Luther King Jr?



“RETURNING HATE FOR HATE MULTIPLIES HATE, ADDING DEEPER DARKNESS TO A NIGHT ALREADY DEVOID OF STARS. DARKNESS CANNOT DRIVE OUT DARKNESS; ONLY LIGHT CAN DO THAT. HATE CANNOT DRIVE OUT HATE; ONLY LOVE CAN DO THAT.”

UNDERSTAND AND EVALUATE



WATCH the segment: “MLK: The march for votes” (cpx.video/mlk2)

Context: Read [this timeline \(cpx.video/civilrightstimeline\)](https://cpx.video/civilrightstimeline) of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States to see where the Selma to Montgomery marches fit in.

1. Find a one-sentence definition of the following terms.

Term	Definition
Civil Rights Act of 1964	
Ku Klux Klan	
Grand Dragon	
American exceptionalism	

2. Draw an image that represents the kind of discrimination African-Americans faced in Selma, Alabama in the early 1960s.
3. Why did Martin Luther King Jr and his followers choose Selma as the place to begin their march for voting rights?
4. What role did television play in creating an outcry against the brutality on the Edmund Pettus Bridge?
5. What is striking about the actions of the protestors in the face of extreme opposition?
6. Maria J. Stephan says that the “combination of the spiritual and the practical/strategic” resources enabled the protestors to maintain non-violent discipline. Explain what she means by this.

7. William Cavanaugh explains what happened in the Selma-Montgomery march as “a kind of enactment of the story of Christ”. What parallels do you see between the treatment and response of protestors during this march, and the treatment and response of Jesus just before his death? (You may want to read Mark 14:44-15:20 to help you.)

	How they were treated	How they responded
Protestors		
Jesus		

8. What did the march ultimately achieve?
9. Explain what motivated and sustained Martin Luther King Jr.

BIBLE FOCUS

READ Luke 9:51-56.

1. How did people in the Samaritan village react to news that Jesus would be passing through?
2. How did James and John react to this?
3. How did Jesus respond to James and John’s question? What might this show us about Jesus’ attitude towards violence?

READ Matthew 12:14-21.

5. What did Jesus’ enemies want to do to him?
6. What overall picture do we get of Jesus from Isaiah’s prophecy?
7. What might this prophecy tell us about how Jesus would respond to violence (in particular v.19)?

APPLY

1. Imagine you have been asked to run a basement training session in non-violent resistance. Write an outline of the structure of your training session, drawing on themes from today's lesson.
2. Think of a potential situation in your life where you could either choose to respond to someone with hostility and anger, or with love. In pairs or small groups, role-play these two potential responses - including what might happen next in each case!
3. Listen to CPX's podcast episode "[The long shadow of slavery](https://cpx.video/slaverypodcast)" (cpx.video/slaverypodcast) from 17.29-19.13. What difference does it make when those who are not directly affected by injustice stand alongside those who are? How might you be able to do this in your own life?

EXTEND

1. Read [the speech](https://cpx.video/montgomeryspeech) (cpx.video/montgomeryspeech) Martin Luther King Jr gave upon arriving in Montgomery at the end of the Selma-Montgomery march. Make a list of all the biblical references and allusions you can find.