

Six Important Points about Nonviolent Resistance

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First, he argued that even though nonviolence may be perceived as cowardly, it was not. In fact, it was a method that did resist. According to King, a nonviolent protester was as passionate as a violent protester. Despite not being physically aggressive, "his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade the opponent that he is mistaken."

Second, the point of nonviolent resistance is not to humiliate the opponent, but instead to gain his friendship and understanding. Further, the use of boycotts and methods of non-cooperation, were the "means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent." The result was redemption and reconciliation instead of the bitterness and chaos that came from violent resistance.

The third point King advanced was that the battle was against the forces of evil and not individuals. Tension was not between the races, but was "between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory it will be a victory not merely for fifty thousand Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light." Thus, tension only existed between good and evil and not between people.

Fourth, nonviolent resistance required the willingness to suffer. One must accept violence without retaliating with violence and must go to jail if necessary. Accordingly, the end was more important than safety, and retaliatory violence would distract from the main fight. King believed that by accepting suffering, it led to "tremendous educational and transforming possibilities" and would be a powerful tool in changing the minds of the opponents.

King's fifth point about nonviolent resistance was that the "universe was on the side of justice." Accordingly, people have a "cosmic companionship" with God who is on the side of truth. Therefore, the activist has faith that justice will occur in the future.

King's sixth point was central to the method of nonviolent resistance. **He believed the importance of nonviolence rested in the fact that it prevented physical violence and the "internal violence of spirit."** Bitterness and hate were absent from the resisters mind, and replaced with love.