



---

# **The Importance of *Selfless* Moral Courage in the Civil Rights Movement**

By Yahli Kotler



---



---

**Moral Courage (Thomas and Chaleff)**

**Selflessness (Cambridge Dictionary)**

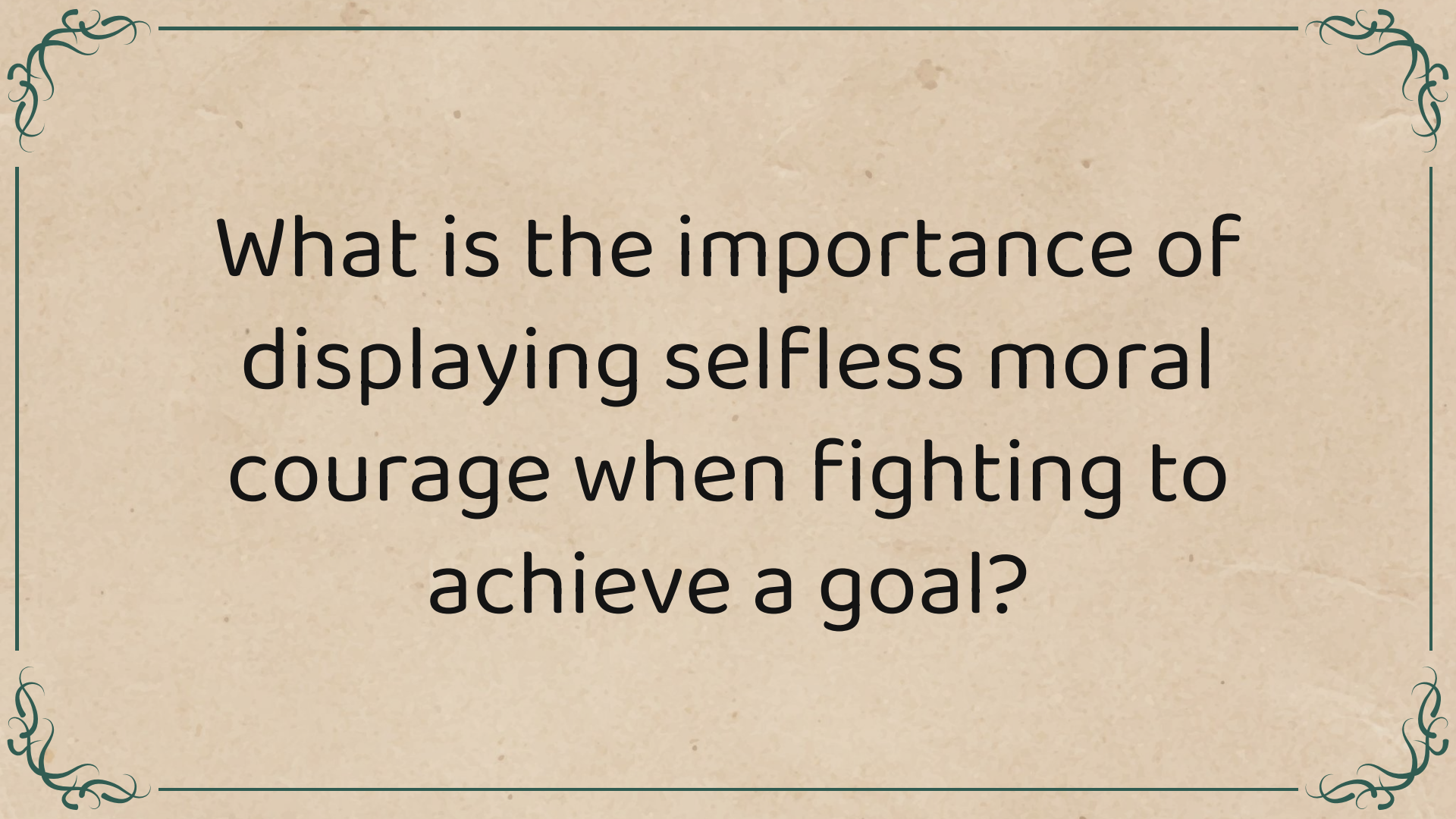


---



18,356 Protests  
(Korhonen 2024)

(Rozsa 2020)



What is the importance of displaying selfless moral courage when fighting to achieve a goal?

# Table of contents

**Influential Figures**



**White People**

(Hippkins and Menkart 2024)

**African Americans**

# Influential figures - Martin Luther King



(Robinson 2024)

“My hope is that it will be **nonviolent**. I would hope that we can **avoid riots** because riots are self-defeating and socially destructive” (Abdurraqib 2017).

# Influential figures - Martin Luther King



(MADEO 2019)

**“He refused to allow prison, violence or the threat of death** sway his end mission. Instead, he stood beside his goal of achieving rights for all” (National Civil Rights Museum 2024).

# Influential Figures - Rosa Parks



(Bryne 2022)

“The life of Rosa Parks is a **testament to the true power of selflessness** and being willing to sacrifice yourself for the greater good” (Richard 2020).

# Influential Figures - Overall Impact

**13 Months**  
(Stanford  
University)



(Black Mail Trivia 2015)

# African American Protesters - Jimmie Lee Jackson



("The X on the Map : White Lies")

Shot twice in the abdomen,  
leading to his **death**  
(Adegbile 2015).



(Adegbile 2015)

# African American Protesters - Selma to Montgomery Marches



(Lawrence 1975)

# African American Protesters - Selma to Montgomery Marches

“Police used **billy clubs, whips, and tear gas** to attack hundreds of **civil rights activists** beginning a march” (“Bloody Sunday” 2015).



(Glass 2015)

# African American Protesters - Impact

“The Selma Marches would become a **watershed moment** that led to the passing of the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**” (National Archives 2020).



((Alabama Department of History and Archives 2024)

# White Protesters - Sacrifice

“White citizens were viewed as **traitors** by their southern communities, and many times **distrusted** by the Black communities they sought to assist” (Clark 2009).



(Thompson 2013)

# White Protesters - James Keeb

After Reeb's death, President Lyndon B. Johnson passed the Voting Rights Bill to Congress. He stated that the fight against segregation was **no longer an issue in Selma, but for equality throughout the country** ("James Reeb" 2016).

Boost Wyoming  
Beef & Lamb Week

## CASPER MORNING STAR

Vol. 17, No. 68  
Casper, Wyoming, Friday, March 12, 1965  
PRICE TEN CENTS 18 PAGES

Boost Wyoming  
Beef & Lamb Week

---

### Rev. Reeb Dies from Savage Beating in Selma

#### Demonstrators Sob in Rain as Word of Reeb's Death Spreads

SELEMA, Ala. (UPI)—A crowd of 500-600 demonstrators stood in a rain-soaked street before the "Boston store" Thursday night and cried when they learned the first had been demonstrated in Selma.

Reeb, after the marathon demonstration in Selma, was pelted to the ground and was brought to the Rev. James J. Reeb, already known here Thursday night, had died in a Birmingham hospital.

Reeb, 35, was the first of a group of demonstrators who were arrested in Selma, Ala. (UPI)—

Reeb, a white minister from Boston, who "wouldn't stay home and do nothing," died Thursday night from a beating by segregationists in Selma.

Word of his death spread through Negro meetings in the state, the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth marched through Birmingham bearing signs saying "God hates our brother Reeb."

Three Attached  
Negro men were charged with murdering him.

Reeb, 35, was father of four young children, and at 1:30 p.m. at the University of Alabama Hospital, the Christian minister suffered a skull fracture from a single blow of a club when he and two friends were attacked on a dark street in Selma Thursday night after a civil rights demonstration.

When on their way to the church, a speed night assassin's bullet struck in the head, he was away, in charge of the march with 500 men, previously charged with death with a bullet.

Reeb was released on \$25,000 bond.

Negro in Selma, demonstrating in Reeb's honor for more than 10 hours in a cold, rain-filled street, when they heard he was shot.

Reeb's secretary, when he was in Birmingham, Ala. (UPI)—

In Birmingham, the Negro, who covered more than 200 miles and 100 letters, among them yellow rain from President Johnson and a Negro minister who was expressing the President's concern.

He who expressed a room in the hospital and was on the ground and went to see him frequently, but he never got general consciousness.

A spokesman for the family and President Johnson called to express his and the nation's sympathy. "I think he will be

### Skull Fracture Proves Fatal To Former Casper Minister

By AL BERN  
BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (UPI)—

Reeb was brought to the hospital as a result of violence here in Selma.

Demonstrators of sympathy moved over the nation and into Canada. A few hours before Reeb died, 400 Negroes led by the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth marched through Birmingham bearing signs saying "God hates our brother Reeb."

Three Attached  
Negro men were charged with murdering him.

Reeb, 35, was father of four young children, and at 1:30 p.m. at the University of Alabama Hospital, the Christian minister suffered a skull fracture from a single blow of a club when he and two friends were attacked on a dark street in Selma Thursday night after a civil rights demonstration.

When on their way to the church, a speed night assassin's bullet struck in the head, he was away, in charge of the march with 500 men, previously charged with death with a bullet.

Reeb was released on \$25,000 bond.

Negro in Selma, demonstrating in Reeb's honor for more than 10 hours in a cold, rain-filled street, when they heard he was shot.

Reeb's secretary, when he was in Birmingham, Ala. (UPI)—

In Birmingham, the Negro, who covered more than 200 miles and 100 letters, among them yellow rain from President Johnson and a Negro minister who was expressing the President's concern.

He who expressed a room in the hospital and was on the ground and went to see him frequently, but he never got general consciousness.

A spokesman for the family and President Johnson called to express his and the nation's sympathy. "I think he will be

---

### Friends in Casper Stunned

The community of Casper, Thursday night was shocked, shocked and surprised when it was told that James J. Reeb, former pastor here and now a minister at the University of Alabama here.

The Rev. Reeb had been in Selma for a few days in connection with the march for voting rights.

Dr. A. N. Nix, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church here, said he had been in Selma for a few days in connection with the march for voting rights.

Reeb, 35, was the first of a group of demonstrators who were arrested in Selma, Ala. (UPI)—

Reeb, a white minister from Boston, who "wouldn't stay home and do nothing," died Thursday night from a beating by segregationists in Selma.

Word of his death spread through Negro meetings in the state, the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth marched through Birmingham bearing signs saying "God hates our brother Reeb."

Three Attached  
Negro men were charged with murdering him.

Reeb, 35, was father of four young children, and at 1:30 p.m. at the University of Alabama Hospital, the Christian minister suffered a skull fracture from a single blow of a club when he and two friends were attacked on a dark street in Selma Thursday night after a civil rights demonstration.

When on their way to the church, a speed night assassin's bullet struck in the head, he was away, in charge of the march with 500 men, previously charged with death with a bullet.

Reeb was released on \$25,000 bond.

Negro in Selma, demonstrating in Reeb's honor for more than 10 hours in a cold, rain-filled street, when they heard he was shot.

Reeb's secretary, when he was in Birmingham, Ala. (UPI)—

In Birmingham, the Negro, who covered more than 200 miles and 100 letters, among them yellow rain from President Johnson and a Negro minister who was expressing the President's concern.

He who expressed a room in the hospital and was on the ground and went to see him frequently, but he never got general consciousness.

A spokesman for the family and President Johnson called to express his and the nation's sympathy. "I think he will be

### MARTYR TO CAUSE—Rev. James J. Reeb, former Casper minister, who was savagely beaten by five white men in Selma, Tuesday, died at the University of Alabama Hospital in Birmingham last night. He was 35 and the father of four children.—UPI Telephoto.

### Governor, Mayor, Head Memorial Fund for Reeb

A fund to aid the family of the late Rev. James J. Reeb, who died in Selma, Ala., Thursday night, at a meeting of interested persons in Selma, Ala., was announced by Gov. George Wallace.

The Rev. Peter Pogson, pastor of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Birmingham, was elected chairman of a committee of

MARTYR TO CAUSE—Rev. James J. Reeb, former Casper minister, who was savagely beaten by five white men in Selma, Tuesday, died at the University of Alabama Hospital in Birmingham last night. He was 35 and the father of four children.—UPI Telephoto.

### Governor, Mayor, Head Memorial Fund for Reeb

A fund to aid the family of the late Rev. James J. Reeb, who died in Selma, Ala., Thursday night, at a meeting of interested persons in Selma, Ala., was announced by Gov. George Wallace.

The Rev. Peter Pogson, pastor of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Birmingham, was elected chairman of a committee of

### Civil Rights Raised In Murder Case Here

Reeb was brought to the hospital as a result of violence here in Selma.

Demonstrators of sympathy moved over the nation and into Canada. A few hours before Reeb died, 400 Negroes led by the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth marched through Birmingham bearing signs saying "God hates our brother Reeb."

Three Attached  
Negro men were charged with murdering him.

Reeb, 35, was father of four young children, and at 1:30 p.m. at the University of Alabama Hospital, the Christian minister suffered a skull fracture from a single blow of a club when he and two friends were attacked on a dark street in Selma Thursday night after a civil rights demonstration.

When on their way to the church, a speed night assassin's bullet struck in the head, he was away, in charge of the march with 500 men, previously charged with death with a bullet.

Reeb was released on \$25,000 bond.

Negro in Selma, demonstrating in Reeb's honor for more than 10 hours in a cold, rain-filled street, when they heard he was shot.

Reeb's secretary, when he was in Birmingham, Ala. (UPI)—

In Birmingham, the Negro, who covered more than 200 miles and 100 letters, among them yellow rain from President Johnson and a Negro minister who was expressing the President's concern.

He who expressed a room in the hospital and was on the ground and went to see him frequently, but he never got general consciousness.

A spokesman for the family and President Johnson called to express his and the nation's sympathy. "I think he will be

(White 2015)

# White Protesters - Joachim Prinz

"The march was **successful** in pressuring the administration of John F. Kennedy to initiate a **strong federal civil rights bill**" (Stanford University 2023).



(Fischer and Pasternak 2014)

# Counter Argument



(Stewart 2018)

# Solution

- Sacrifice
- Putting the group over oneself


# Limitation

- Does not ensure the success of the movement
- Risking one's future



# Conclusion

Throughout history  
selflessness and moral  
courage have been  
displayed to help achieve  
goals, such as civil rights  
movement



# Works Cited

- Abdurraqib, Hanif. "By the End of His Life, Martin Luther King Realized the Validity of Violence." *Timeline*, 16 June 2017, [medium.com/timeline/by-the-end-of-his-life-martin-luther-king-realized-the-validity-of-violence-4de177a8c87b](https://medium.com/timeline/by-the-end-of-his-life-martin-luther-king-realized-the-validity-of-violence-4de177a8c87b). Accessed 2 Dec. 2024.
- Alabama Department of History and Archives. "Contentdm." *Digital.archives.alabama.gov*, digital.archives.alabama.gov/digital/collection/photo/id/300/. Accessed 26 Nov. 2024.
- Black Mail Trivia. "Black Mail Trivia: How Long Was the Montgomery Bus Boycott Originally Expected to Last?" *Black Mail Blog*, 7 Dec. 2015, [blackmail4u.com/2015/12/07/black-mail-trivia-how-long-was-the-montgomery-bus-boycott-originally-expected-to-last/](https://blackmail4u.com/2015/12/07/black-mail-trivia-how-long-was-the-montgomery-bus-boycott-originally-expected-to-last/). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- Byrne, Kerry. "On This Day in History, Dec. 1, 1955, Rosa Parks Refuses to Give up Her Bus Seat to a White Passenger." *Fox News*, 30 Nov. 2022, [www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/this-day-history-dec-1-1955-rosa-parks-refuses-give-bus-seat-white-passenger](https://www.foxnews.com/lifestyle/this-day-history-dec-1-1955-rosa-parks-refuses-give-bus-seat-white-passenger). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- Debo Adegbile. "The Killing of Jimmie Lee Jackson." *The Marshall Project*, The Marshall Project, 27 Feb. 2015, [www.themarshallproject.org/2015/02/27/the-killing-of-jimmie-lee-jackson](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2015/02/27/the-killing-of-jimmie-lee-jackson). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- Fischer, Rachel, and Rachel Pasternak. "Joachim Prinz: I Shall Not Be Silent | Menemsha." *Menemsha*, 2014, [www.menemshafilms.com/joachim-prinz-i-shall-not-be-silent](http://www.menemshafilms.com/joachim-prinz-i-shall-not-be-silent). Accessed 27 Nov. 2024.
- Glass, Andrew. "Civil Rights March Ends as "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965." *Politico*, 7 Mar. 2018, [www.politico.com/story/2018/03/07/this-day-in-politics-march-7-1965-437394](https://www.politico.com/story/2018/03/07/this-day-in-politics-march-7-1965-437394).
- Hippkins, Julian, and Deborah Menkart. "Key Events in 1963 History." *Civil Rights Teaching*, [www.civilrightsteaching.org/resource/key-events-1963](http://www.civilrightsteaching.org/resource/key-events-1963). Accessed 23 Nov. 2024.
- Korhonen, Veera. "U.S. Riots and Protests by State 2024 | Statista." *Statista*, Statista, 2024, [www.statista.com/statistics/1484654/us-riots-and-protests-by-state/](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1484654/us-riots-and-protests-by-state/). Accessed 23 Nov. 2024.
- Krissah Thompson. "In March on Washington, White Activists Were Largely Overlooked but Strategically Essential." *The Washington Post*, 25 Aug. 2013, [www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/in-march-on-washington-white-activists-were-largely-overlooked-but-strategically-essential/2013/08/25/f2738c2a-eb27-11e2-8023-b7f07811d98e\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/in-march-on-washington-white-activists-were-largely-overlooked-but-strategically-essential/2013/08/25/f2738c2a-eb27-11e2-8023-b7f07811d98e_story.html). Accessed 26 Nov. 2024.
- Lawrence, Jacob. "Confrontation at the Bridge." *ArtsWA*, 1975, [www.arts.wa.gov/artwork/?request=record](http://www.arts.wa.gov/artwork/?request=record).
- MADEO. "Apr. 12, 1861 | Confederate Forces Attack Fort Sumter, Begin Civil War to Preserve Slavery." *Eji.org*, 2019, [calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/apr/12](http://calendar.eji.org/racial-injustice/apr/12). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- National Archives. "Selma Marches." *National Archives*, 27 Oct. 2020, [www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/vote/selma-marches](http://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/vote/selma-marches). Accessed 2 Dec. 2024.
- Robinson, Rashad. "Color of Change: "Dr. King's Work to Build Power and Change the Rules Is the Legacy We Honor" – Color of Change." *Colorofchange.org*, 2024, [colorofchange.org/press\\_release/color-change-dr-kings-work-build-power-and-change/](https://colorofchange.org/press_release/color-change-dr-kings-work-build-power-and-change/). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- Rozsa, Matthew. "The Psychology of Protesters — and the Psychology of People Who Hate Them." *Salon*, 2 June 2020, [www.salon.com/2020/06/02/the-psychology-of-protesters--and-the-psychology-of-people-who-hate-them/](https://www.salon.com/2020/06/02/the-psychology-of-protesters--and-the-psychology-of-people-who-hate-them/). Accessed 23 Nov. 2024.
- Stewart, Nikita. "50 Years after Dr. King's Death, Remembering the Women Who Steered the Movement." *The New York Times*, 2 Apr. 2018, [www.nytimes.com/2018/04/02/us/women-civil-rights.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/02/us/women-civil-rights.html). Accessed 26 Nov. 2024.
- "The X on the Map : White Lies." *NPR.org*, 11 June 2019, [www.npr.org/2019/06/05/729955756/the-x-on-the-map](http://www.npr.org/2019/06/05/729955756/the-x-on-the-map). Accessed 25 Nov. 2024.
- White, Phil. "James Reeb of Casper, Martyr to Civil Rights | WyoHistory.org." *Wyohistory.org*, 2015, [www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/james-reeb-casper-martyr-civil-rights](http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/james-reeb-casper-martyr-civil-rights). Accessed 26 Nov. 2024.