

**Evaluating Nonviolence as a Method of Social Change  
Student Worksheet 3-5**

**Video Clip Transcripts**

**This document includes the following transcripts:**

- **Clip 3-1: Rev. Wyatt T. Walker talks about the nonviolent activism that led to the Voting Rights Act.**
- **Clip 3-2: Rev. CT Vivian describes how his training in the methodology of nonviolence was tested while he was in prison.**

**Clip 3-1: Rev. Wyatt T. Walker - Nonviolent Activism**

MS. POUSSAINT:                   And you were the author, or the organizer/creator of what was called Project C.

REV. WALKER:                   Project C. Yes. And the C stood for confrontation. Our strategy, or my strategy, was to create a crisis so severe that something had to be done. And I remember in the later days of the Birmingham movement they said that some of the White power structure, when they watch D Plus 2, the children's march walking through downtown, we had affected a boycott that cut out 90% of the Black trade but the addition was White men told their wives "don't go downtown" and that caused a withdrawal of some more economic importance. So that things like that happened which helped us in our efforts. And these men who were on the second floor who had said they would never meet with Shuttlesworth or King, they said "we need to meet." Birmingham couldn't stand this kind of civil disorder.

MS. POUSSAINT:                   And economic disorder.

REV. WALKER:                   And economic withdrawal.

MS. POUSSAINT:                   Yes. Do you consider that to be your finest hour?

REV. WALKER:                   I consider Project C, the Birmingham campaign was perhaps my finest organizational task, second only to the funeral of Dr. King. Mrs. King asked me to come down and take care of the logistics for his funeral but I think Birmingham outweighed that in importance because of what it led to.

See, Birmingham led to Selma, so you really had two civil rights bills that came as a result of the Birmingham campaign. And they were the strongest civil rights bills since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The first in a hundred years. So I guess I consider that my finest hour.

### Clip 3-2: Rev. CT Vivian – Effectiveness of Nonviolence Training

**REV. VIVIAN:** Well after I go back to my cell and I'm lying there that was the test of nonviolence. Because this little guy that – that he would – that was there, not the two big guys but this little guy that was there and he would sit over there and he was near me and so – and every now and then he'd reach over and hit me and jump back. And then he'd grin at the other guys as though "aren't I something?" You know what I mean?

**MS. POUSSAINT:** This is one of the guards?

**REV. VIVIAN:** Yeah. Right. Is that he was trying to show them that boy, he's quite a man. This guy that you know, you're questioning and all that kind of stuff and then "I can hit him" hm? And jump back. And I was lookin' at this little fella and you know, isn't this pitiful. See you can't help but, right. And the uh – but when I go in and lie down, right, I am – I start thinking about these guys. And I start thinking very negative things not only about them but what ought to be done to them, right. And then I say, "Vivian, you know, what's wrong with you?" You know what I mean. Is that these guys are captured by their society. These guys are just you know, they're you know, is that they are no real consequence. They couldn't help themselves. They don't know what they're doing. And it gets back to Jesus' great line [?]. You know, forgive them Father for they know not what they're doing. Right. And let it go at that. They – they have no idea. They're ignorant of what real freedom and justice and truth really is. And so you know, how can you just set there and want them to get beat up for some nonsense so they can know what it feels like and all that? It's just crazy. So you begin to understand at another level and you know your job is far more important. You're not there for that kind of nonsense.

**MS. POUSSAINT:** And you mentioned the role of the media in terms of following the buses and Look Magazine getting a totally wrong perception of what the agenda was and what was important. But you clearly were able on different occasions to manipulate, to use the media for the message that you wanted to get out.

**REV. VIVIAN:** My point is if they're there, you do. But they're secondary to you. It's just like – we're getting back to where you want to be.