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Civil Rights

How they got out of the Darkness

Civil rights is defined as "the nonpolitical rights of a citizen; especially those guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th amendments to the Constitution and by acts of Congress" (Merriam-Webster Online). The 13th amendment abolished slavery, but it didn't stop segregation. However, the 14th amendment insured African Americans of are legal citizens and are protected under law, but this amendment still does not stop segregation.

The Civil Rights Movement was an decade long movement used for activism for equal rights of African Americans in the United States. People rallied for social, legal, political and cultural changes. Now this, is what helped end segregation.

In 1954, *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka*, was one of the first steps. The Supreme Court ruled that segregation in schools was unconstitutional. The case was presented by Thurgood Marshall, overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson*. It was an important step in initiating integration.

In 1957, the governor of Arkansas tried to prevent nine African American students from entering Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. The president then sent federal troops to enforce the court order.

1957, this civil rights act protected the freedom of African Americans to vote.

1960, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that segregation was illegal on busses and train stations. A group of citizens called Freedom Riders tested this ruling by traveling throughout the southern portion of the country on buses. The Freedom Riders encountered violence in Alabama. President Kennedy intervened to ensure their safety.