**John F. Kennedy's Civil Rights Address**

June 11, 1963

**Timeline**

* 1954—Brown v. Board of Education
  + Segregation in schools ruled unconstitutional
* 1962—James Meredith prohibited from entering the University of Mississippi
  + Kennedy sent 400 U.S. Marshals and 3,000 troops after protests turned violent
* June 11, 1963—Alabama Governor George Wallace stood at the door to block two students, Vivian Malone and James Hood, from entering the University of Alabama
  + Kennedy federalized Alabama National Guard
  + That evening, gave his **Civil Rights Address**
* 1964—Passage of Civil Rights Act
  + Outlawed segregation in public facilities, voter registration, etc.

**Discussion Questions**

1. What is the main problem that Kennedy addresses with this speech? What are some examples of this problem?
2. What is Kennedy’s goal with this speech? How does he think Americans can help meet that goal?
3. What are some of the ways Kennedy tries to persuade Americans to work towards this goal?
4. What images, analogies, comparisons, etc. does President Kennedy draw, and why?
5. What does Kennedy mean when he says this issue is neither “sectional” nor “partisan,” but rather a moral issue?
6. Did you find the speech to be persuasive? Why or why not? (What parts are more/less persuasive in your mind?)
7. Overall, how effective do you think Kennedy’s message was in meeting his goal?
8. Have we met this goal today? In what ways do we see this issue arise?
9. Do you think a president can lead effectively without the power to persuade? Why or why not?