### Obligation to Obey

**Why should we obey the laws?**
- People’s lives thrive on development.
- Breaking the law wastes community resources.
- Obedience fosters respect for the law.
- Not sufficient for always obeying the law.

These reasons can be outweighed by other obligations:

**Morals ◊ Justice ◊ Fairness**

### What is Civil Disobedience?

The act illegal but committed publicly. Committed conscientiously (for moral reasons, not self-interested reasons). Committed with purpose of frustrating and/or protesting some (unjust) law or governmental action or policy. The act must be non-violent. The actor must be willing to accept legal punishment.

### Unjust Law vs. Just Law

**Just Law**
- Squares with moral law
- Uplifts human personality
- Applies impartiality (sameness made legal)
- Just enforcement of law
- Unites persons
- Emphasizes due process, participation and democratization, fairness

**Unjust Law**
- Does not square with moral law
- Degrades human personality
- Does not apply impartiality (difference made legal)
- Enforcement of law is selective
- Separates persons
- Emphasizes unfairness

### Socrates vs. King

**Socrates** Believed:

“...one should never do wrong in return, nor do any man harm, no matter what he may have done to you.” *(Crito)*

**KING** Believed:

“...one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.”

*(An unjust law is no law at all)*

(St. Augustine, quoted in *Letter from Birmingham Jail*)