Summary/Response--Pathos example

[King’s use of emotional appeal to the readers drives his letter to be influential and bring attention to the inconsiderate prejudice that Birmingham is full of. His letter induces an influence of not only disappointment in Christians but also hope in his audience to get them to act and rise against social norms and change the racial inequality treatment in the city].

With the use of blameworthy language, King accuses the clergymen for not responding to the injustice and questions their faith in Christianity since they should be people who care for and respect others whether they are the same race or not. Furthermore, King uses blame as a technique to gather support for African Americans and convince others that they should not be seen as anything other than human beings as well. He says, “I suppose I should have realized that few members of the oppressor race can understand the deep groans and passionate yearnings of the oppressed race” (King 366). In this statement, he attacks mainly white Christian moderates and leaders because they are the ones who have not responded with support for blacks and have instead created a hostile environment for them to live in. King’s disappointment is evident as he states that he “should have realized” that only a few people will be offering to be so nice as to care and protect the black community (King 366). This is intended to make the Christians feel guilty of their actions because they are now exposed to the rest of the state of their maltreatment toward African Americans. He is grateful for those who *are* willing to stand up for blacks, especially white Christian moderates but is blaming those who do not stand up to the violence and brutality because they do so without feeling responsible for such injustice. He blames them for the destructive society that Birmingham has become because they are not acting against it but making it worse. To emphasize the type of injustice blacks have to face, King states that “Negroes have experienced grossly unjust treatment in the courts [and] there have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in the nation” (King 358). He verifies that African Americans are the most targeted group of people to attack in this city and that the way they are repelled and shamed should not be accepted as normal. Bombings in places where one should feel the safest are especially acts of hate and King tries to make his audience see that the black community is the most affected by it. This statement evokes shock and disappointment in readers and is aimed further to make clergymen regret denying African Americans their right to be free of prejudice and injustice. He wishes to change the treatment of blacks in Birmingham to eventually change the laws in Alabama and reach the goal of racial equality between whites and blacks.