In his seminal Transcendentalist essay “Self-Reliance,” Ralph Waldo Emerson argues that truth only comes from within – that the only thing that matters is oneself. Opponents would describe his philosophy as selfish and he would likely agree with that sentiment. In our society, especially one governed by Judeo-Christian philosophies, selfishness is abhorred while charity and sacrifice are honored. Emerson points out, however, that “good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this…”. Even if one has the desire to be just, he argues that the definition of justice is so susceptible to change - it would be a fool’s errand to abide by the law, hoping that the laws are virtuous and noble. For most proponents of civil disobedience, their argument often hinges on the idea their chose is “right” and the law is “wrong.” Emerson sees it differently – your beliefs are right because they are your beliefs.