

Views of Swami Vivekananda for a better parameter of Human life

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ABSTRACT

This article deals with the inspirational views of Swami Vivekananda through which he wanted to remove the evils of the society by giving re-orientation to politics, sociology, economics and education. It also deals with his philosophical and social thought and epic patriotism as well as the universalism, tolerance and the active identification with humanity as a whole. It stressed on different aspects of religion, youth, education, faith, character building as well as social issues pertaining to the world.

Key Words: Views of Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda [1863, 12 January–1902, 4 July], was a great Vedic-Hindu thinker-philosopher, reformer and revolutionary scholar and saint of contemporary-modern times. He was one of the best elucidators and propagators of the Vedanta. The views of Vivekananda, though delivered in the term of the popular Vedantic speculation, was really the message of his Master to the modern man. The message of Vivekananda was really the message of modern humanity. In contemporary Indian literature I have more than once had the opportunity to see what great influence the humanistic ideals of Vivekananda have exercised on the works of many writers. Commitment of Swami Vivekananda towards universalism and tolerance, his active identification with humanity as a whole. His philosophical and social thought and epic patriotism not only inspired the growth of nationalist movement in India, but also made a great impact in abroad. Swamiji has taught us that we are the inheritors of a glorious and sublime culture. The world today is going through a challenging period of transition. As we witnessed many evils by the enormous increase in broken homes, immorality, violence, crime, racism and inter-ethnic and religious conflict returning among us with

renewed force etc. The concept of Vivekananda's potential divinity of the soul prevents this degradation, divinizes human relationships, and makes life meaningful and worth living as he laid the foundation for 'spiritual humanism'.

To Swami Vivekananda religion was not only talk or doctrine or theory, to him religion was realization, as he said, "it is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging; it is the whole soul becoming changed into what it believes." Swami Vivekananda gave a new terminology of Religion which is in fact the most significant contributions of Swami Vivekananda to the modern world is his interpretation of religion as a universal experience of transcendent Reality, common to all humanity. Swami Vivekananda told, we must not only tolerate other religions, but positively embrace them, and that the truth is the basis of all religions. He met the challenge of modern science by showing that religion is as scientific as science itself; religion is the 'science of consciousness. This universal conception frees religion from the hold of superstitions, dogmatism, priest craft and intolerance, and makes religion the highest and noblest pursuit of Freedom, Knowledge and Happiness. According to Swami

Vivekananda, religion is the idea which is raising the brute into man, and man into God. According to him, man is potentially Divine, so, service to man is indeed service to God.

Demographically, the India of today is at its youngest best. Nearly 78% of our country's population is less than 40 years old. Swami Vivekananda believed that highest value of youth period is immeasurable and inexpressible. Youth is that wonderful time in life when energy is limitless, human creativity is at its best and the 'never say die' spirit is at its peak. It is the most precious time of life and the best time of life.. Happiness, success, honour, good name depend on the way a person lives in this period as it the first state of their entire life. The way one utilizes this period will decide his or her future years. He wanted the youth to know that this youth period is a privilege and an adventure. He made National reconstruction with the ideals of 'Tyaga' and 'Seva' the most important purpose of living for the young. What he attempted to do was to show us a higher reason to live, a higher ideal to live for and a higher state to reach within the limitations and boundaries of a human existence. All that he wanted our youth to have was an ability to 'feel'. To those who wanted to go beyond just feeling and take to concrete action – he gave this potent mantra. The power of the Purity, Patience and Perseverance. Purity in thought word and deed. Patience to understand the dynamics of any community development activity and the fact that Society is always slow to understand and quick to label all such efforts. One also needs great perseverance to work in the complex settings of Indian society. Working with the realities of social, economic and political diversity needs enormous perseverance. Otherwise one could easily get fatigued and demotivated. Quoting him : 'All good work has to go through three stages. First comes ridicule, then the stage of opposition and finally comes acceptance.'

As modern education has lost much of its connection with the values of human life. We must have eyesight over the views of Vivekananda in which he suggested that education should not be for stuffing some facts into the brain, but should aim at reforming the human mind. Swami Vivekananda's teachings were focused on various aspects of religion, education, social issue, character building, etc. As Rabindranath Tagore commented about Swami Vivekananda and his teachings, "If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative."⁽¹⁾ He realized and taught that a country's future depends on its people. He stressed how important man-making was. His real ideals were to preach divinity and how to manifest it in our life. Quoted to him: "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man."⁽⁶⁾ We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one's own feet.

He considered education to be character-building and life shaping phase. To him education wasn't just a compilation of information, but it was rather something meaningful. As he said:

"Education is not the amount of information that we put into your brain and runs riot there, undigested, all your life. We must have life building, man making, character making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library..."⁽⁴⁾⁽⁵⁾

To him education was an assimilation of noble ideas. Swami Vivekananda stressed on giving the public only positive education, because negative thoughts weaken men. Swami Vivekananda told, if young boys and girls are encouraged and are not unnecessarily criticized all the time, they are bound to improve in time. According to Swami

Vivekananda the ultimate aim of all education and all training is man-making and also he recommends the following major aims of education. Such as Confidence and Self-Realization because he believes that man has an immortal soul which is the treasure –house of infinite power. In Vivekananda's own words: "Faith in us and faith in God – this is the secret of greatness."⁽¹⁰⁾ Education of the right type should aim at removing the veil ignorance from our mind and make us understand that what actually we are. He also said that if you have faith in all the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, ... and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Have faith in yourselves, and stand up on that faith and be strong; that is what we need. According to him Whatever you think, that you will be. If you think yourselves weak, weak you will be; if you think yourselves strong, strong you will be.

As quoted above Education must build up character and manifest our real nature. Swami Vivekananda realized three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great:⁽³⁾ Conviction of the powers of goodness, absence of jealousy and suspicion, and helping all who are trying to be and do good. We are what our thoughts have made us. And therefore education should aim at sublimating the evil tendencies of our mind. Swamiji also insist on religious, moral, spiritual, mental, and physical development of a person as the aim of education. Moreover he emphasis on the promotion of universal brotherhood, development of personality, searching unity in diversity through education. Education should foster this development. His love for mankind knew no geographical boundaries. He always pleaded for the harmony and good relationship of all nations. He said, ' through education, we should gradually reach the idea of universal brotherhood by flinging down the walls of separation and inequality.' But the greatness

of citizens is possible only through their moral and spiritual development which education should foster. Vivekananda said: "It will not do merely to listen to great principles. You must apply them in the practical field, turn into constant practice." So he has emphasized the importance of education in practical arts.

Swami Vivekananda compared human mind with a monkey who is always restless and incessantly active by his own nature.⁽⁷⁾ According to him an uncontrolled mind leads to all the negativities in life and a controlled mind saves us and frees us from such thoughts. The teachings of Swami Vivekananda on meditation, its values and practice, reveals the profundity and span of the mystic traditions of India and his own internal realizations. So, he stressed on practice of concentration. But to keep the mind under control you have practice and repeat the same over and over again. Controlling mind is not a one day's job but it needs a regular and systematic practice. It comes under control when there is feeling of oneness with God. To control one's mind Self awareness is also one of the best way and one can also make it through will power and strong determination. It was also noticed by his point of view that moral value as pure mind is easy to control than impure one. As he felt there is no limit to the power of the human mind, the more concentrated it is, the more powerful it becomes. The power of concentration makes one man different from another. Swami Vivekananda suggested not to do anything which disturbs the mind or makes it restless. So one should do good things whole heartedly by giving his or her mind and soul to it.

Vivekananda considered men and women as two wings of a bird, and it is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing. So, according to him, there is no chance for welfare of the world unless the condition of woman is improved. According to

Vivekananda, the ideal of womanhood in India is motherhood – that marvelous, unselfish, all-suffering, ever-forgiving mother.⁽²⁾ Swami Vivekananda warned it is completely unfair to discriminate between sexes, as there is not any sex distinction in *atman* (soul), the soul has neither sex, nor caste nor imperfection. Swami Vivekananda felt, The best thermometer to the progress of a nation is its treatment of its women⁽⁸⁾ and it is impossible to get back India's lost pride and honor unless they try to better the condition of women.⁽⁹⁾ Swami Vivekananda suggested that the women should be provided better chances to be educated. So that she can made a strong appeal for raising the status of women along with that of man.

Swami Vivekananda was a true patriotic saint and the greatest synthesizer of ever time who through his very inspirational lectures wanted to remove the evils of the society by giving re-orientation to politics, sociology, economics and education. The novelty about the Swamiji's presentation of Hinduism was its modern outlook and his application of Vedantic principles to the solution of modern, social and educational problems. Swami Vivekananda laid stress on education as a powerful weapon for this change. Hence, the goal of life could be achieved by self-realization and soul-force. Further, dedication to the welfare of humanity could be ascertained. This is the message of the *Vedanta*, which Swami Vivekananda put forth beautifully in the prevailing circumstances in his lifetime. The awakening and liberation of modern India as viewed by

him was a stage for the realization of universal love and brotherhood. Thus Swami Vivekananda addressed different issues by simplifying the whole problem of existence.

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