



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH

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GREAT IDEAS appear in life silently. 'The beginnings of such things are never conspicuous. Great move-ments come unnoticed, then suddenly are discovered to be powerful and world-wide.'And so did the Ramakrishna movement, proclaiming the fundamental unity of all religions, thanks to the pioneering work of 'a colossal figure,' one in whom there was a marvellous combination of sweetness and irresistible force, of a child and a prophet' that was Swami Vivekananda.

It fell upon Swami Vivekananda - the chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, his most beloved pupil, his greatest heir and his right interpreter to institutionalize the Master's vision and gives it the right momentum.

I. Swami Vivekananda and Modern Indian Renaissance:

- ❖ Whether one's aim is individual betterment, or social amelioration or national service or spiritual unfoldment, the safe guide for him is Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda was a symphony of many melodies. He was a scholar, a poet and an ora-tor; a mystic, a devotee, a worker and a yogi; a nation-maker and a world-builder; a patriot and an internationalist; a worthy disciple and a compassionate master; a divine dreamer and a man of action-he was all these and many more. His doings and sayings are the spiritual legacy he has left behind for the modern India. He aroused enthusiasm and inspiration among the masses.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda was not even forty when he entered into mahasamadhi. But his age is not to be calculated in solar years. For, in just ten years of public work he had

implanted into human consciousness ideas which may need one thousand and five hundred years to get worked out in full.

- ❖ He was a man of versatile genius - a multi-faceted personality. In him we find the great heart of Lord Buddha, the penetrating intellect and dynamism of Shri Shankara, the love of Shri Chaitanya, the burning renunciation of Lord Jesus Christ, - all harmoniously blended in his magnificent personality.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda has inspired people to envision high and lifted up all that is great, good and heroic in our common human life.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda reminded our countrymen of the Indian national ideals of renunciation and service and since aroused them to a sense of privilege in being Indians and showed them how spiritual culture was the secret of India's immortal existence.
- ❖ Twin Ideals: Do good to the world with a spirit of worship and thus pave the path for one's own salvation are the twin mottos. For the first time, Swamiji showed that steadfast genuine devotion and loving service are complementary ideals of the Vedanta. In yoking Monasticism to Social Service Swami Vivekananda made his history. This was the starting point of the Modern Indian Renaissance.
- ❖ India had high idealism which he wanted her to cherish by all means, but idealism was meaningless where millions starved. So coming back home, he talked more about social problems than about high philosophy.
- ❖ Swamiji made substantial contribution to restore the real glory of India and gave a spiritual foundation to the national movement and is therefore called a "Patriot Saint." Many have contributed to the making of modern India, but no one has contributed so significantly as Swami Vivekananda. His soul-stirring message is modern, rational and profound. What is important is that his message is still relevant.
- ❖ It was Swamiji's hope that India shall combine her best spiritual Tradition with the latest advancements in Science and Technology and Administration and good organizing capability, and Management practices of the West. In Swamiji's integral vision of truth there was no cleavage between Science and Religion, the East and the West, secular and spiritual, work and worship.
- ❖ He was looked upon as a great champion of nationalism, awakening the national consciousness.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda's relevance depends not on the nature of the problems we face, but on the spirit with which those problems have to be tackled.
- ❖ Swamiji emphasized that we should have the love of independence, the spirit of self-reliance, the immovable fortitude, that dexterity in action, the bond of unity of purpose, and the thirst for self improvement.
- ❖ Swamiji was known nationally and internationally as a gifted orator, spreading the message of Vedanta and Spiritual Ideals and Values embedded in the heritage of India.

- ❖ Swamiji's every waking moment and every ounce of energy have been spent in bringing a modern scientific perspective to spread the-eternal message of Sanatana Dharma, Vedanta, Upanishads and the GITA.
- ❖ Swamiji attained the pinnacle of glory as a Great son of India.

II. What some Great People Said About Swami Vivekananda

- ❖ If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative – Tagore.
- ❖ I cannot touch these sayings of his... without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock... what transports must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero, decades ago.. Romain Rolland
- ❖ I have gone through his words very thoroughly, and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand - fold ... Mahatma Gandhi.
- ❖ If you read Swami Vivekananda's writings and speeches, the curious thing you will find is that they are not old.. they are fresh and relevant even today... and I think that our younger generation will take advantage of this fountain of wisdom, of spirit and fire... Jawaharlal Nehru.

III. Swamiji's Call to the Youth

ESSENTIAL REQUISITES:

- i) The first requisite - Faith in yourself and faith in God. ... can develop this faith in oneself by relentless hardwork, determination, persistence and positive thinking.
- ii) The second requisite - need for feelings for the poor and willingness to be useful to fellow beings. Even the least work done for others will instill into one's heart the strength of a lion.
- iii) The third requisite - Have the will to surmount the mountain high obstructions. All great things are achieved through mighty obstacles. It is the constant struggle against the nature and not conformity to nature, that makes a man what he is.

➤ CHARACTER:

- i) Character is to be inculcated first and foremost in the youth.
- ii) They should assiduously cultivate their health and strength of body and mind through physical exercises and yoga, pranayama and meditation.
- iii) It is ideas that make men. Hence our youth should first strive to acquire a good knowledge of the time-honoured and noble ideas from the lives, doings and teachings of our great people. This endows them with conviction and inspiration. In general, men of character possess some virtues, traits and conduct and above all, they are unselfish to the core and ceaselessly work for the good of others.

- iv) They should develop the powers of concentration and will power, and motivation for a good and socially useful life.

➤ **PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES:**

India's present problems are many : poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, casteism, lack of cohesion. But these are not new problems. They existed even in Swamiji's time. He gave much thought to them and expressed views about their solution which are as valid as ever. He was not for ready-made solutions, but for solutions determined with due regard to history and the circumstances. Life without problems need prove intractable. His emphasis was on the Will, the right approach and character of the people.

➤ **DIGNITY OF LABOUR:**

We should give importance to the dignity of labour. In the western countries. nobody thinks it is beneath his dignity to work with his own hands. Hence, the youth should seriously think of learning some of these trades even as a hobby. Swamiji thought the solution of the problem lay in science and technology. India must make wide use of western science and technology to create an industrial revolution in the country. The West and Japan had won their battle against poverty through science and technology.

➤ **EDUCATION:**

Education is not the amount of information that is put into once brain and runs riot there undigested, all through life. We must have life-giving, man-making, character-building, assimilation of ideas. We should combine our ideals with western efficiency. Every nation, every man, and every woman must workout their own salvation. Give them ideas - that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest.

➤ **TEAMWORK, OBEDIENCE AND ORGANISATION :**

- i) Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking of the least good, of others gradually instills into the heart the strength of a lion.
- ii) Give up jealousy and conceit. Learn to work unitedly for others. This is the great need of our country.
- iii) Trees do not eat their own fruits. Rivers do not drink their own water. In other words, every aspect of nature contributes something to the cosmic well-being in a selfless way. Hence, we can make our lives useful, by being useful to other fellow-beings. "Bahujana-hitaya, bahujana-sukhaya, 'for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many" should be our ideal.
- iv) Our motto should be - Rendering service and doing good to the world with a spirit of workship and thus paving the path for one's own salvation.
- v) Our nation needs substantial improvement in the faculty of organization. The first requisite for organization is obedience. Three men cannot act in concert together

in India for five minutes. We must change this and increase our team spirit and team synergy.

- vi) We have to learn from the western world the idea of discipline and commitment and prompt obedience to leaders, the absence of jealousy, the indomitable perseverance and the undying faith in oneself.

IV. Swamiji's Thoughts and Sayings of Inspiration:

It would be worthwhile to have a look at some sayings and thoughts of Swamiji which re as much relevant today as they were a hundred years ago.

- ❖ Let positive, strong, helpful thoughts come to our minds from all sides.
- ❖ Faith in ourselves and faith in God - this is the secret of success and greatness.
- ❖ Be bold, be strong, have the will to surmount mountain high obstructions. All the strength and succor you want is within you.
- ❖ All great undertakings are achieved through mighty obstacles.
- ❖ He only lives who lives for others. Even the least work done for others will instill in your heart the strength of a lion. Give love, give help, give service, give any little thing you can, but keep out barter.
- ❖ Be good and do good. This is the gist of all worship - To be pure and to do good to others.
- ❖ Devotion to duty is the highest kind of worship of God.
- ❖ If a man with an idea / goal makes 1000 mistakes, a man without an ideal / goal will make 50000 mistakes, so it is better to have an ideal or goal, which can be reassessed / reviewed periodically, if required.
- ❖ Work - work incessantly. Do your very best and leave the results to God. Be unattached - karmanyevavadhikaraste Maaphaleshu Kadachana.
- ❖ Uddhare datmanatmanam (The Sloka from Bhagavadgita says-one should elevate oneself by determined self effort only) and have the will to surmount mountain high obstructions.
- ❖ Feel, my children, feel; feel for the poor, the ignorant, the downtrodden, feel till the heart stops and the brain reels - then pour the soul out at the feet of the Lord and then will come power, help and indomitable energy.
- ❖ Be humble, be big in mind and soul, be kind ; you will like yourself that way and so will other people.
- ❖ We want great spirit, tremendous energy and boundless enthusiasm.
- ❖ Live in harmony with all. Love the poor, the miserable, the downtrodden, and the Lord will bless you. Be fearless, be unselfish.

- ❖ Choose the highest ideal and live your life up to that. Become a dynamo of spirituality. It is love that pays, it is character that cleaves its way through adamantine walls of difficulties.
- ❖ Learn to work unitedly for others. Team work is the great need of our country. Him I call a Mahatman whose heart bleeds for the poor. Give love, give help, give-service, give any little thing you can, but keep out barter.
- ❖ Doing good to others out of compassion is good, but the seva (service) of all beings in the spirit of the Lord is better. This is the gist of all worship - To be pure and to do good to others.
- ❖ We have got something loftier to achieve. To wipe out the tears of our weaker sections and to make them happy, must be our motto in life. That fellow feeling, that humanistic awareness must come to all of us. They alone live who live for others.
- ❖ Devote your lives for the cause of redemption of millions and millions going down and down every day. Have tremendous faith in yourselves. All of us will die one day. But have a great ideal to die for.
- ❖ Work is the key to happiness,- happiness comes from keeping constructively busy.

V. **General Inspirational Quotes:**

- ❖ Even a journey of thousand miles begins with a single step.
- ❖ Anything which the human mind can conceive and believe it can achieve.
- ❖ Life's battle, do not always go to the stronger or faster man, but sooner or later the man who wins, is the one who thinks he can.
- ❖ The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight
But they while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night.
- ❖ Happiness comes from liking from what we have to do and not from doing what we like.
- ❖ Man is the architect of his own destiny.
- ❖ Quest for excellence and self-improvement will depend upon what you do after you do what you are supposed to do.
- ❖ Willpower is self-discipline in action to make yourself do what you should do, when you should do, whether you feel like doing it or not."
- ❖ A thing worth doing is worth doing well.
- ❖ Pray as if everything depended on God, and work as if everything depended. upon you.
- ❖ Will power and enthusiasm make ordinary people do extraordinary things.
- ❖ Flood your mind with positive words, images, books, tapes and conversations.

- ❖ Scrupulously avoid living in the past or future. Avoid like poison anything that makes you weak physically, mentally or spiritually.
- ❖ Develop the reputation of being the hardest-working person in your organisation. This will guarantee your success / put you on fast track. Develop the reputation for speed and dependability to get into the "fast tract" in your career.
- ❖ To get more done, start a little earlier, work a little harder, stay a little longer.
- ❖ Resolve to get into the top 10% in your field.
- ❖ Every minute you spend in planning saves 10 minutes in execution. This gives you a 1000 percent return on energy !
- ❖ Read 30 443 60 minutes each morning to upgrade your skills aid sharpen your intellect.
- ❖ Effective and efficient people do the right things and do them right the first time. They never compare themselves with other people, but only with themselves of the past. few weeks months / years.
- ❖ Count your blessings and not your troubles. (Think of the less fortunate and less privileged millions of brothers and sisters.)
- ❖ Keep your mental / spiritual contact points clean, so that God can operate through your mind.
- ❖ Persistent, positive thinking and efforts can undo any condition and free you from the chains of poverty, ill-health, unhappiness and fear.
- ❖ Be useful and helpful to others. Remain flexible, adaptable, open-minded and dependable, be friendly, considerate, thoughtful and generous and make special endeavours to develop kind-heartedness, simplicity and humility.
- ❖ Enlarge your view of your own God given capacities, and within the limitations of humility, develop a strong and good opinion of yourself and your strengths.

VI. Inspirational quotes from Swamiji

- ❖ Inculcate good value systems.
- ❖ Faith in oneself and faith in God, relentless hard work, determination, persistence and positive thinking and enthusiasm are absolutely necessary for both material and spiritual progress.
- ❖ Be useful and helpful to others. Inculcate a strong character and qualities of sympathy, understanding, kindness, encouragement, simplicity and humility - SUKESH
- ❖ Read to increase your knowledge, .your background, your awareness, your insight. Read to lead and grow.

- ❖ Be kind and gentle. Kindness is a thing, which "the blind can see" and "the deaf can hear"
- ❖ Organise and prioritise your work. Do First things First, Do one thing at a time. Concentration and focus lead to peak performance.
- ❖ Put the problem in God's hands; let go and let God take it over. He will bring it out better than you think. God chooses better than we do. Do the very best you can and leave the results to God. Be unattached.
- ❖ "Three things are necessary to make every individual great, every nation great : a) Conviction of the powers of goodness; b) Absence of jealousy and suspicion; c) Helping all who are trying to be good and do good.
- ❖ The great secret is absence of jealousy and working as a Good Team. Be always ready to concede to the opinions of your brethren and try always to conciliate. Improve team work and team synergy. Submerge the individual opinions and interests for the common good and cause of the team / organisation / nation.

VII. Conclusion

- ❖ We can certainly improve ourselves by constant efforts and constant prayers. By God's grace everything is possible.
- ❖ Faith can be a magic light in your heart to illumine your way.
- ❖ Remember / you are in the top few percent in our country / think of the less fortunate millions / 40 to 60% of our country men do not have a second square meal a day, do not have sufficient, food, shelter and clothing and there is no clear hope of education for their children. God has put us in a far better position compared to millions / Give a meaningful purpose to your life. Be of some service to others / Make others happy / He only lives who lives for others. / Even the least work done for others instills into your heart the strength of a lion.
- ❖ Do your best and leave the results to God. Surrender completely to God. / Karmanyevadhikarastee Maa Phaleshu Kadachanaa.
- ❖ Accept Life's Problems as life's challenges. Pray for the will to surmount mountain high obstructions / pray for powers equal to your tasks and not tasks equal to your power.
- ❖ May the youth grow to be useful and good citizens of the country and become nice men and women who will be of some service to the society and blessings to the country we are born in.

Youth

Swami Vivekananda's hope and confidence lay in the youth of the country. As far as today's youth is concerned, the greatest service they can do is to absorb the teachings of Swami

Vivekananda in their own lives and to persuade their friends also in this direction by carrying the message to them.

Re-dedication

Let us re-dedicate ourselves for the cause of redemption of millions of our less privileged brothers and sisters, as Swami Vivekananda said. In continuing its service and improving upon it, we should lend our hands and strengthen the Ramakrishna movement, so that the benefits may flow to every one without any discrimination whatsoever of caste, creed or colour.

Swamiji's clarion call has always been

Glory to our Motherland !

Uttishtata ! jagrata ! Prapyaharaan Nirodhita

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED!

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