

# Swami Vivekananda's Views on Philosophy of Education

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**Abstract**—12th January 1863 was the day, Narendranath was born. Swamiji would have had the same message if he was alive today, he would have used a different language but am sure his tonality and his enthusiasm would have been the same. He propagated Karma Yoga as the best Yoga for the youth. Today's youth wants quick buck. Vivekananda's politics and economics are all to be found in his social philosophy. And in this domain we encounter Vivekananda as the messenger of modern materialism. Kant is the father of modern materialism for the west. Vivekananda is the father of modern materialism for India. India, like Europe, was in need of a man who could say with all honesty he could command that Prakriti was no less sacred than Purusa and that the pursuit of material science and material prosperity was as godly as that of the science and activities bearing on the soul. Vivekananda had been a rationalist and a deist, though he fancied that he was a theist. His early religious associations were with the Brahmo-Samaj. Ramkrishna Paramahasa attracted; however; many members of the Brahmo-Samaj by his great psychic powers and more particularly by his passionate love of God. Real freedom is achieved not through war, but through peace. War or renunciation or isolation has a place no doubt in the scheme of life, but only a temporary place as a means to the attainment of the ultimate end which is not perpetuation of the inevitable conflict of evolution. Freedom, again, is one. Freedom from the domination of our passions and appetites is the first step in the realization of the ideal. Freedom from the fear of brother-man is the next step. Freedom from the domination of any external authority must follow next. In this way from personal freedom, through social freedom including political freedom, man must attain his real freedom. And when he attains it, he realizes, finally, that he and his God are one. This is really the message of his Master to the modern world. I think that Vivekananda greatest service is the development in his teaching of the finest features of Indian culture. Vivekananda said that there was the power of Brahman in every man that Narayana (i.e. God) wanted to have our service through the poor. Gospel showed the path of infinite freedom from man's tiny egocentric self beyond the limits of all selfishness. This was no sermon relating to a particular ritual, nor was it a narrow injunction to be imposed upon one's external life. This naturally contained in it protest against untouchability-not because that would make for political freedom, but because that would do away with the humiliation of man-a curse which in fact puts to shame the self of us all. Vivekananda's gospel marked the awakening of man in his fullness and that is why it inspired our youth to the diverse courses of liberation through work and sacrifice.

**Index Terms**— Swami Vivekanand, Spiritual.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Swami Vivekananda was one the greatest spiritual leaders of the modern of world, a great lover of humanity whose unconditional love extended to all people without any distinctions of caste, class, creed race, region or religion. Vedanta takes in not only the truths preached in the Vedas but also in the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Puranas to the extent they constitute an exposition of Bhakti or devotion as a way of reaching God-consciousness. Vedanta includes the concepts of both the impersonal and the personal God.

## II. RELIGION

Vivekananda, while discussing the universality of religion and the existence of many religions with the following words, our watch word will be acceptance and not exclusion, not only toleration, but acceptance. Toleration means that I think that you are wrong and I am just allowing you to live. I believe in acceptance. I accept all religions that were in the past and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the Mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian's Church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall take refuge in a Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the hearts of every one.

His profound belief in the acceptance of all religions rested on the intellectual side on the Advaita interpretation of the Vedanta and recognition of the legitimacy of all kinds of Yoga prescribed by the Hindu scriptures for the attainment of God. And on the emotional side it rested on love of God which transcends all human differences and includes all human beings in its scope. His great contribution was of course practical Vedanta which led to the same ethos and conduct for all human beings, irrespective of the nature of the belief in God and the kind of Yoga which was preferred for reaching Him.

## III. MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious education is a vital part of a sound curriculum. Vivekananda considered the Gita, the Upanishads and the Vedas as the most important curriculum for religious education. For him, religion is self realization. It is not only for the individual's development but also for the transformation of total mankind. The true religion cannot be limited to a particular place of time. He pleaded for unity of world religion. To Vivekananda, ethics and religion are one and the same. God is always on the side of goodness. To fight for goodness is to serve to God. The moral and religious

educations develop the self-confidence among the young men and women.

The essential characteristic of the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda are idealism, naturalism and pragmatism. Swami Vivekananda an idealist at heart.

#### IV. HUMANISM

Swami Vivekananda's Neo-Vedantism is the call for us to be first Gods, and then help others to be Gods. We should look upon every man, woman and everyone as God. As a Vedantic Swami Vivekananda firmly believes that all life is one. The life and existence of an individual is not separate, distinct and independent from that of others.

Swami Vivekananda showed that no man is inferior to the other; no class has got special qualification over the other. The Vedantic spirit of oneness makes the individual identify with the community and serve it with a service motive without any personal gain. The individual's life is in the life of the whole, the individual's happiness is in the happiness of the whole, apart from the whole, the individual's existence is inconceivable-this is an eternal truth and is the bed-rock on which the universe is built. Swami Vivekananda maintained that individual liberation is incomplete without the total liberation of mankind. He declared, I believe in God, and I believe in man. I believe in helping the miserable. I believe in going even to hell to save others. I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the windows tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphans' mouth.

For Swami Vivekananda the welfare of all is based on promoting freedom and equality of all. Thus his concept of equality fosters fellowship and unity among individuals and nations. Swami Vivekananda laid emphasis on social unity for social-economic upliftment of the people. He was of the view that mere unity in society is fictitious unless it is accompanied by the desire to uplift the down-trodden.

#### V. A BUILDER OF MODERN INDIA

Vivekananda held the view that the purity of India's ancient philosophic and religious truths had been divested of their basic values and made to support an exploitative social, economic and power system, and the system had to be changed to bring it in line with the original values of the Vedanta with its ethic of basic human identity and service of all human beings, who were handicapped, whether economically or socially or culturally, by those who were better off, whether by inheritance or by natural ability. To him the country meant the people and the people meant the masses.

Vivekananda's influence on modern India can be seen in its development of socialist ideas, its new emphasis on mass-uplift and mass participation, and its growing identification of mass welfare with genuine patriotism. He believed in building on the foundations of the past, out shown of its short-comings and its irrelevant and anti-social accretions, and restored to its original purity of Vedanta and its identification of all human beings with the universal reality. Vivekananda also had the same firm belief in Hindus and Muslims working together for the development of the Indian nation. Vivekananda wanted Hindu-Muslim unity based not only on the religion of Hindu Vedanta and Islamic democracy; he also wanted it to be built upon his basis of common interests.

Vivekananda recognized the difficulty of poor children in rural areas in attending primary schools even if they were available and in their vicinity, as they would be required to help their parents in their work and enable them to earn their miserable livelihoods. He therefore talked of the need for taking education to where the children could conveniently gather and at the same time which would not cut into their work.

Vivekananda believed that education should aim at developing the mind rather than stuff it with bookish knowledge and that it would be easier for a stimulated mind to acquire knowledge on its own and digest it properly.

Today of course, everyone is for women's education and giving them their rightful place, but in actual fact, women's education in rural India is still at a low level, while as regards the inclusion of spirituality in their education, it is still to be accomplished. Secularism, socialism, mass uplift and mass power, women's liberation, abolition of untouchability, inclusion of social service as a part of religious worship, Hindu-Muslim unity, universal literacy and informal education-all these constitute the contribution of swami Vivekananda to the building of Modern India.

#### VI. VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

The main essence of his philosophy of life is to become fearless through struggle and serve humanity with peace. He wants to make a individual without fear from enemies face all the challenges boldly and confidently without any suppression.

The real education according to Swami Vivekananda is that which prepares the individual for struggle for existence. Education prepares a man for social service, to develop his character and finally imbibe him with the spirit and courage of a lion. Education is a tool of liberation from the darkness and ignorance. Teaching and learning are part of the process. The teacher only guides, suggests, points out and helps the student. The teacher only motivates and encourages the students to find out the hidden treasure of knowledge.

Indian nationalism was the basic foundation of his philosophy of education and the philosophy of Vedanta and Upanishads. He was against the system of the contemporary education system which turned men into slaves, capable of slavery and nothing else. He emphasized that the aim of education being life-building, man-making character-building. He said that knowledge without culture was only skin-deep. Real education is that which prepares a man for struggle of existence. It prepares man for social service and develops his character. He has emphasized that an education which develops character, mental powers and intelligence gives self-confidence and self-reliance among the individuals. Swami Vivekananda stressed education for democracy and national development. Education was a powerful instrument to achieve these development qualities in the people.

#### VII. VIVEKANANDA'S MEANS OF EDUCATION

According to Vivekananda the means for education is love. Love and character buildings are the best means for education. Love is the best inspiration in character building. Love in the minds of the educator is the real source of his influence upon the education. The true education, gives the growth and expansion of personality. He wanted that the

education for total human development was the main vision. Vivekananda strongly pleaded that development of character through the service of his fellowmen, the utilization of his talents for ensuring the happiness and welfare of the millions of his less fortunate fellow-citizens should be the aim of the education. The child should be taught through love, fellow feelings and love for human beings. Education must help the individual to recognize his cultural heritage and to use it in his struggle of life. Education is a life-long process towards the fullest development of human personality, self-discovery, self-perfection, self-awareness and self manifestation.

#### VIII. VIVEKANANDA'S AIMS OF EDUCATION

Vivekananda wanted all-round development of education to heart and mind, to strengthen character and national consciousness, to help in the cultivation of strength and energy, nurture the brain and intellect and stir feelings of kindness and sympathy.

According to Vivekananda, education is a process in which the young minds, will receive strength, energy and vigorous character. Through this process, the individual will mould them self into a complete and perfect human being of their life. All knowledge and all powers are within. All knowledge comes from the human soul. Man manifests knowledge, discovers it with himself, which is pre-existing through eternity. Education is a man-making and nation-making process. The prime aim of education is to achieve the full perfection already present in a child. According to Vivekananda, all the materials and spiritual knowledge are already present in the individuals mind, but it is covered by certain ignorance.

Education is the character development of the child. He emphasizes the child should practice Brahmacharya which fosters development of mental, moral and spiritual powers leading to purity of thought, words and deeds.

#### IX. WOMEN EDUCATION

Vivekananda considered women to be the incarnation of power and asked men to respect them in every way possible. He insists that men and women are equally competent not only in the academic matters but also must have an equal companion in the home and family. The ideal woman in Indian is the mother, the mother first, and the mother last.

#### X. CONCLUSION

Education should spread to every household in the country, to factories, playing grounds and agricultural fields. If the children do not come to the school the teacher should reach them. Vivekananda favored education for different sections of society, rich and poor, young and old, Male and Female. From the analysis of Vivekananda's scheme of education, the uplift of the masses is possible only through education. His views on education bring to light his constructive, practical and comprehensive character. Through education, he tries to materialize the moral and spiritual welfare and upliftment, irrespective of caste, creed, nationality or time. Swami Vivekananda suggested giving up jealousy and conceit and learning to work united for others. He said, purity, patience and perseverance can help overcome all obstacles.

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