



Indian Thinker: Swami Vivekanand (1863-1902)

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1. About Swami Vivekananda

- Born as Narendra Nath Datta on 12th January, 1863.
- Raised interfaith awareness & brought Hinduism to the world stage during the late 19th century.
- Introduced Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world.
- Established Ramakrishna Mission in 1897.
- A monk and chief disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa.
- Represented India in the first Parliament of Religion in Chicago (U.S.) in 1893.

2. Core Values of Swami Vivekanand's Philosophy

Ethics

- Vivekananda's theory of ethics and principle of morality was based on the intrinsic purity & oneness of the Atman.
- Ethics was nothing but a code of conduct that helps a man to be a good citizen.
- We should be pure because purity is our real nature, our true divine Self or Atman.
- We should love & serve our neighbours because we are all one in the Supreme Spirit (Paramatma).

Religion

- Interpreted religion as a universal experience of transcendent Reality, common to all humanity.
- Freed religion from the hold of superstitions, dogmatism, priest craft and intolerance.
- Every religion offered a pathway to the eternal supreme - freedom, knowledge & happiness.

Education

- Laid greatest emphasis on education for the regeneration of motherland.
- A nation is advanced in proportion as education is spread among the masses.
- Education should help students to manifest their innate knowledge & power.
- Advocated a man-making character-building education.
- Education must make the students self-reliant & help them face the challenges of life.

Rationality

- He was in complete agreement with the methods & results of modern science.
- He did not discard reason in favor of faith.
- Recognized intuition as a higher faculty than reason.
- But truth derived from intuition had to be explained & systematized by reason.

Nationalism

- Swami Vivekananda's nationalism is deeply rooted in Indian spirituality & morality.
- His nationalism is based on Humanism and Universalism.
- His nationalism is based on religion which is life blood of the Indian people.
- The basis of his nationalism are:
 1. Deep concern for masses, freedom and equality.
 2. "Karmyoga"

Youth

- If youth is determined, there can be nothing impossible for them to achieve.
- Youth should have dedication to the cause to attain success.
- Called upon the youth to not only build up their mental energies, but their physical ones as well.
- He wanted 'muscles of iron' as well as 'nerves of steel'.
- His birthday on January 12 is celebrated as National Youth Day.
- Week commencing from that day is known as the National Youth Week.
- During the National Youth Week celebrations, the National Youth Festival is held every year.

3. Conclusion

Swami Vivekananda belonged to the 19th century, yet his message and his life are more relevant today than in the past and perhaps, will be more relevant in future.



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