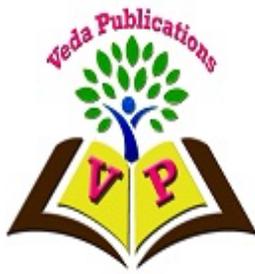




RESEARCH ARTICLE

**VIVEKANANDA'S INSPIRING MESSAGE TO THE YOUTH-A GLANCE THROUGH HIS "AWAKENING INDIA"**

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*(Lecturer in English, HOD, D.K. Government College for Women (A), Nellore.)*Doi: <https://doi.org/10.54513/JOELL.2025.12309>**ABSTRACT**

"Let us all work hard, my brethren; this is no time for sleep. On our work depends the coming of the India of the future. She is there ready waiting. She is only sleeping. Arise and awake, and see her seated here, on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was – this motherland of ours."

--Vivekananda

Vivekananda, a renowned Indian Hindu monk, philosopher, religious teacher, author and the chief disciple of the Indian mystic Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, introduced Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world, through his much impactful speeches at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. He holds a pride of place among the makers of modern India. Besides being the founder of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission, organizations dedicated to the spiritual and social upliftment, Swami is remembered for his powerful oratory and his emphasis on service to humanity. These institutions not only provide education, healthcare and social service, but also aim to uplift the poor and marginalized. His teachings are never fading. Even after 120 years of his death, his powerful words are still ringing in the ears of the youth. His words are the mantras chanted through his penance. We now boast of a very high percentage of youth population among the nations of the world. In order to channelize their ebullient energies, we are badly in need of Swamiji's teachings now-a-days. They act as the beacon of knowledge to direct them towards the right path. This paper clearly explains how he influenced the youth through his dynamic speeches and powerful actions to shake off their slumber and make ready to perfect action.

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INTRODUCTION

Born on 12th January 1863 to Bengali parents, Vishwanath Datta and Bhubaneswari Devi, Swami Vivekananda rose to great spiritual heights. His association with his spiritual guru Sri Ramakrishna totally changed his outlook on life. His personality is well shaped by his guru through his divine influence. His teachings mainly emphasize the divine nature within every person, the importance of selfless service, the power of self-belief, and the need for a positive attitude. His rigorous disciplined spiritual practices to achieve spiritual goals, acts of austerity, self-control etc, shaped him into an unparalleled personality. We know that a positive mindset can lead to better energy levels and an overall greater sense of happiness and fulfilment. It helps people navigate challenges and setbacks with greater strength and determination. It also helps individuals cope with and manage negative emotions more effectively. We can see energizing words of Swami Vivekananda in all his speeches.

WORK FOR IDEALS

Swamiji asks the youth to believe that eternal power is lodged in each soul and they can revive the whole of India. He recites the Vedic words that, "It is the young, the strong, and healthy, of sharp intellect that will reach the Lord" (Vivekananda 3,4). He was sometimes disappointed by the nonaction of the youth, yet he hoped for the best. He strongly hopes that by the will of God, some of the boys may arise in time great heroes of action and spirituality who will work out his ideas in the future. In one of his speeches he affirms, "If I get ten or twelve boys with

the faith of Nachiketa, I can turn the thoughts and pursuits of this country in a new channel" (Vivekananda, 4) He advises the youth to take up an ideal and give their whole life to it. He asks the youth to decide their future while they possess the energy, vigour and freshness of youth. He urges them not to involve in petty things but to focus on the welfare of humanity. While reminding the shortness of lifespan and the immortality of the soul, he says that one should not waste one's time and energy in the useless pursuits, but to put heart and soul to the human upliftment, not moving an inch from the way of truth.

SATISFYING MATERIAL WANTS

Swamiji says that the youth should stand on their own feet, living not like slaves but like masters. He sneers at people who act like asses of burden under the foreigners, carrying their goods and importing the manufactured goods by shelling out the raw materials. He advises Indians not to lock up their intelligence and throw away their inherited wealth to others, and roam about crying for food. The goal of education is not to get a clerical post and serve as a clerk, but to do experiments as westerners do to produce food and clothing for the growing millions by using science. Swamiji says that unless the material wants are removed, none will listen to the words of spirituality. As no one knows when death will overtake them, they must not sit idle, but work and work always.

AWAKENING THE SPIRIT

Swamiji compares the lethargic life of Indians with the industrious life of the westerners. He calls these



lazy Indians as lumps of dead matter. They should know that infinite power resides within them and in fact they are the sharers of immortal Bliss. Indians now need expansive vision infinitely projected forward. They must need "that intense spirit of activity (Rajas) which will flow through our every vein, from head to foot" (Vivekananda, 13). He mentions the name of Sister Nivedita, a British lady, who came to India to serve the Indian poor. He then asks Indian youth why they hesitate to serve their fellow- countrymen. He tells the youth that it is better to die with a great ideal in life, because on them lie the future hopes of the country. He feels pain to see the inactive youth who just while away their precious time doing nothing fruitful.

BELIEVING IN ONE'S SELF & HAVING SRADDHA

Swamiji says that occultism and mysticism have nearly destroyed people though there may be great truths in them. What we want is faith in ourselves, man-making religion and man-making education. What we want is muscles of iron and nerves of steel. Shraddha is what we need. It differentiates man from man. He who thinks himself weak will become weak and who thinks himself strong will become strong. It is our mind that makes or mars. Our infinite soul has infinite power. Everybody will have Atman and let people hear of the Atman. People should know that Atman is everlasting, and they are the sparks of the infinite, divine fire. They should first have faith in themselves. Swami asserts that "Good is our nature, perfection is our nature, not imperfection and impurity" (Vivekananda,18). He complains that Indians have negative education all along from boyhood. Nothing positive has been taught to them.

They are sadly unmindful about their own facts and figures. Thereby they have learnt only weakness. So, Swami says that the idea of Shraddha must be brought back once more.

GIVING POSITIVE IDEAS & BEING BOLD

If parents call their children as useless fellows, they will become useless fellows only. On the other hand, if they speak to them kind, positive and encouraging words, they grow immensely. That is the power of words according to Swamiji. He gives the example of a baby lion that grows with the sheep, and acquires the quality of timidity for lack of awareness about its race. In this way, people grow like sheep as they fail to understand that they are the potential beings. He praises them saying that "Thou art the Pure One, the Stainless, the Sinless, the Mighty One, the Great One." (Vivekananda, 23)

EXPAND YOUR HEART

Swamiji says that love opens the most impossible gates, and it is the gate to all secrets of the universe. There are millions and millions of people who need help in their helpless condition. So, he asks the youth to expand their hearts, as wide as the world. He asks them to think that there lie infinite power, knowledge and indomitable energy within them. Every boy and girl should rejoice that they have done so much without fear and without selfishness. "Let not the barks of puppies frighten you –no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven – but stand up and work" (Vivekananda, 30). He encourages them saying that they should not even be afraid of death as death is inevitable.



BE OPEN TO LEARNING FROM ANYONE & DEVELOP A GIGANTIC WILL

Swamiji says that the youth should receive good knowledge even from the low-born. The will is stronger than anything else, because it comes from God Himself. He says that actions are important rather than words. By putting the shoulders to the wheel, the youth have to leave some mark behind. To succeed in life one should have tremendous will power and perseverance. "At my will mountains will crumble up" is the sort of will power one requires, according to Swamiji. (Vivekananda,34)

CONCLUSION

Swami Vivekananda was one of the greatest patriots to have ever been born in India. His messages act as a wonderful remedy to the modern youth to grow as enlightened citizens and also for the regeneration of our motherland. He strongly believed that the youth can do miracles and transform this nation in a big way. They must not lose hope. If a man thinks he is nobody, he will really become nobody, and nothing in this world. It is the will power that is required to undertake adventurous actions. Through his wonderful speeches, he made people think about their duties and responsibilities. Thus he focused mainly on their inherent powers that lie idle for their non-recognition and non-action.

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