
MAHATMA GANDHIJI'S PRINCIPLES, VALUE SYSTEM AND IDEALS - A BEACON OF LIGHT.

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Abstract: Mahatma Gandhiji is famous for his Philosophy of Truth and Non- violence. Born on October 2nd 1869, Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi, the father of the Nation learned tolerance and non-injury to living beings from an early age. In this world of corruption, violence and conflict, Gandhiji's love for peace and Non-Violence takes a prime place and even finds meaning and significance. The whole world looks and yearns for peace, concord, brotherhood and unity. Therefore feeling love for Gandhiji is very much revered and his ideals are most relevant and welcomed in this tumultuous and hatred filled humanity. It is not that Gandhiji had no limitations or weaknesses which, of course he did have. But in his real humility, he confessed his short comings in his autobiography, 'The Story of my Experiments with Truth'. He is indeed a man of integrity. Gandhiji had a great affiliation to John Ruskin. John Ruskin's "Book Unto this Last" had a deep influence on Gandhiji's thoughts on prevailing the economy and helped him first to develop 'Antyoday' and later the Sarvoday' ideas. Gandhiji mainly accepted three tenets of Ruskin.: 1. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all. 2. A lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, because all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work and 3. A life of labour, that is the life of a tiller of a soil and the handicrafts man is the life worth living. These ideas are classic combination of economics and ethics. In 1920 Gandhiji started the Non-Co-operation movement in India. In 1922 Gandhiji decided that the Non-Co-operation movement had to transform into an open civil disobedience movement. Gandhiji supported village Industry. His economics is based on ethics and self-sufficiency. He always talked about 'moral Progress and material progress' as real progress. Mahatma Gandhi was a charismatic, deliberate, analytical and visionary leader. He practised non-violence and the passive resistance style using peace, love and integrity as methods to bring change in people. He could feel the needs of his followers and develop tools and methods to achieve the goal of freedom for the country. Gandhiji as very much convinced that Non-violence was a strong weapon through which freedom could be brought. He believed that the Ahimsa and Satya were two sides of the same coin. In 1938 he distinguished between Non-violence and passivity. Gandhiji's philosophy of education is something unique. It is more revealed in his principles regarding Truth, Non-Violence, Fearlessness and Satyagraha. He believed that education was only the dynamic force leading to a definite destination. He stressed on life-long education and self-realization as the highest aims in education. Gandhiji was a man of self discipline. He stressed on self-discipline and empathetic service. In March 12 to April 6, 1930, Gandhi made the famous Satyagraha ("Satya - truth, Agraaha" - persuasion),. The Salt March to Dandi. He walked on foot to the ocean in protest against the British salt monopoly and salt tax. Gandhiji believed that physical activity resulting in social good was the duty of every individual.

Gandhiji's ideas have also had a profound influence outside India, where they inspired Non-violent activism and movements in favour of small-scale, self-sufficient communities living closer to nature and with greater sensitivity to their environment.

May this great personality continue to live in our vision and enable us to live our life in truth, justice and love.

Keywords: Truth, Non -Violence, Non- Cooperation, Unity, Self discipline, Empathetic service, Honesty, Compassion, brotherhood, Swadeshi, Morality, Dignity of labour and Justice.

**Introduction: “Live as if you were to die tomorrow
Learn as if you were to live forever”**

2nd October 2019 is not only a date that India but the whole world remembers Gandhiji (1869-1949) and acknowledges him as one of the great leaders who ever lived. He is the father of the Nation. In this world of corruption, violence and conflict, Gandhiji's love for peace and Non-Violence takes a prime place and even finds meaning and significance. The whole world looks and yearns for peace, concord, brotherhood and unity. Therefore feeling love for Gandhiji is very much revered and his ideals are most relevant and welcomed in this tumultuous and hatred filled humanity. It is not that Gandhiji had no limitations or weaknesses which, of course he did have. But in his real humility, he confessed his short comings in his autobiography 'The Story of my Experiments with Truth'. He is indeed a man of integrity. In his book he described, how through his exercise of the WILL and appeal of the moral conscience, he could 'reform' himself. If we glance through his Autobiography, we can understand that he had a strong desire for truth even as a child. He constantly and gradually grew into this beautiful ideal of Truth which helped him in later . From 1915 after he returned to India from South Africa as a Lawyer, he kept himself involving in various programmes and activities fighting for freedom. Gandhiji had a great affiliation to John Ruskin. John Ruskin's "Book Unto this Last" had a deep influence on Gandhiji's thoughts on prevailing the economy and helped him first to develop 'Antyoday' and later the 'Sarvoday' ideas. Gandhiji mainly accepted three tenets of Ruski.: 1. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all. 2. A lawyers work has the same value as the barber's, because all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work and 3. A life of labour, that is the life of a tiller of a soil and the handicrafts man is the life worth living. These ideas are classic combination of economics and ethics.

In 1920 Gandhiji started the Non-Co-operation movement in India. During this period people were encouraged to boycott foreign goods and use the goods made in India. At this period 'Khadi' was propagated in order to attain the 'Swadeshi' feelings among the Indian masses. In 1922 Gandhiji decided that the Non-Co-operation movement had to transform into an open civil disobedience movement. Gandhiji was arrested after a crowd in the city of Chauri Chaura attacked and killed the local representatives of British authority. Gandhiji had neither encouraged nor approved this kind of killing, as he strongly condemned this violent behavior .He got into prayer and fasting as a response to this painful incident. Gandhiji supported village Industry. His Economic is based on ethics and self – sufficiency. He always talked about 'Moral Progress and Material Progress' as real progress. And said "By economic progress I mean material progress without limit and by real progress, we mean moral progress, which again is the same thing as progress of the permanent – element in us" (collected works of Mahatma Gandhi Vol 15, pg 274).

Gandhiji 's style of Leadership is something unique. Mahatma Gandhiji was a charismatic, deliberate, analytical and visionary leader. He practiced Non-violence and passive resistance style using peace, love and integrity as methods to bring change in people. He could feel the needs of the his followers and develop tools and methods to achieve the goal of freedom for the country. Although there are many traits and behaviors that caused success of Gandhiji as a leader, the most relevant for today's world are –

Leadership by Example
Humanistic approach towards people
Persistence in achieving goals
Conflict resolution through passionate approach
Power of love stronger than muscular power
An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind
Role model leadership
Oneness of the whole universe
Strategic and visionary leadership
Disciplined life with an attitude of sacrifice.

The above styles of leadership truly explain the philosophy for which Mahatma Gandhi lived. He could win freedom for the country using these styles. This kind of leadership style brought immense goodness and through them he could win over all and bring freedom for the country. Gandhiji strongly believed in Non-Violence. He was very much convinced that Non-violence is a strong weapon through which freedom could be brought. He believed that the Ahimsa and Satya were 2 sides of the same coin. In 1938 he distinguished between Non-violence and passivity. He said " In my opinion non-violence is not passivity in any shape or form. Non-violence as I understand it, is the active force in the world. Therefore whether it is materialism or anything else, if Non-violence does not provide an answer, it is not an active force of my conception...During my half a century of experience I have not yet come across a situation when I had to say that I was helpless, that I had to remedy in terms of non-violence. Non-violence is the supreme law."

Gandhiji's philosophy of Education is something unique. It is more revealed in his principles regarding Truth, Non-Violence, Fearlessness and Satyagraha. He believed that education only as a dynamic force leading to a definite destination. He stressed on life long education and self realization as the highest aims in Education. In 1937, he started the Basic Education Scheme, He said "By education I mean an all round drawing out of the best in the child and man-body, mind and spirit". His saying has a lot of deep meaning. He said " Every one of us has good inherent in the soul, it needs to be drawn out by the teachers and only those teachers can perform their sacred function whose own character is unsullied, who are always ready to learn and to grow from perfection to perfection". Gandhiji was a man of self discipline. He stressed on self-discipline and empathetic service. "Enmity vanishes before love, is a great aphorism....Why can we not see that if the sum total of the world's activities was destructive, it would have come to an end long ago. Love, otherwise ahimsa, sustains this planet of ours A large majority of us being undisciplined, our daily experience is that of fighting or searing at on another on the slightest pretext. The richest grace of ahimsa will descend easily upon the owner of hard discipline. In March 12 to April 6, 1930, Gandhi made the famous Satyagraha ("Satya - truth, Agra" - persuasion),. The Salt March to Dandi. He walked on foot to the ocean in protest against the British salt monopoly and salt tax. He led thousands of Indians on a 240 mile (400 Km) march from Ashram Ahmadabad to the village of Dandi on the ocean to make their own salt. For 23 days the two-mile long procession was watched by every resident along the journey. On April 6, Gandhi raised a grain of salt and declared, "With this, I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire". Gandhi's plan worked because it appealed to people in every region, class, religion and ethnicity. The successful campaign led to the re action of the British government in the imprisonment of over 60,000 people for making or selling salt without a tax. Gandhi campaigned to improve the lives of the untouchables, whom he called Harijans (the children of God). He promoted equitable rights, including the right to vote in the same electorates as other castes. In 1934 Gandhi survived three attempts on his life. In 1936, he briefly resigned from the party, because his popularity was stifling the diversity of membership; ranging from communists and socialists to religious conservatives and pro-business groups. He returned to being the head of the party with the Jawaharlal Nehru presidency. Gandhiji believed that physical activity resulting in social good was the duty of every individual. He called it bread labour, where a person was called to perform self test labour for the benefit of humankind for the community one lived within. The great personality, the father of our Nation was assassinated in Delhi on January 30th 1948. It was indeed a sad and unfortunate event which left India in the ocean of deep sorrow and grief. The entire mankind was bereaved by his death. His intellectual influence on Indians has been considerate. Some were attracted by his emphasis on political and economic decentralization, others by his insistence on individual freedom, moral integrity, unity of means and ends and social service, still others by his Satyagraha and political activism.

Gandhiji is indeed a great noble person to be admired by one and all. He is a symbol of justice and fair play. He saw any Indian irrespective of caste and creed, worthy of respect and entitled to human dignity. He upheld women, encouraged them. to participate in the freedom fight. He empowered them, by giving them different roles and positions in the field of politics. Gandhiji was very much influenced by the poem, '**Lead kindly light**' by Cardinal Newman,.

This poem made a tremendous impact on Gandhi. This poem held a unique role in Satyagraha movement.

**“Lead kindly light”,
Amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou m on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home
Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet , I do not ask to see,
The different scene – one step enough for me!”**

Let us inculcate and imbibe in us the spirit of Gandhi to have courage to stand up for truth.

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