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## Mains Practice Questions

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**Q.** Discuss the contributions of Swami Vivekanand's philosophy in the evolution of ethics? (150 words)

17 Jul, 2020 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### **Approach**

- Start your answer by briefly describing the basic principles of Swami Vivekanand's philosophy.
- Discuss the ideas of Swami Vivekanand and their ethical dimensions.
- Conclude by summarizing your answer and highlighting the utility of Swami Vivekanand's philosophy in today's context.

### **Introduction**

- Swami Vivekananda was one of the greatest thinkers of India. His teachings were not only based on the upliftment of humanity but also of the whole world in equal terms.
- He introduced Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world and is credited with raising interfaith awareness, bringing Hinduism to the world stage during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Body**

## Swami Vivekananda's contribution :

- Ethics, according to Swami Vivekananda, is nothing but a **code of conduct** that helps a man to be a good citizen of the world.
- **Morality:** Morality in both individual life and social life is mostly based on fear of societal censure. But Vivekananda gave a new theory of ethics and new principle of morality based on the intrinsic purity and oneness of the Atman.
  - Ethics according to Vivekananda is a value 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.
  - Similarly, we should love and serve our neighbours because we are all one in the Supreme Spirit known as Paramatma or Brahman.
- **Tolerance:** tolerance is the most important attribute that a civil servant must possess.

He preached tolerance and peace for humankind. According to him, If humans are to thrive and prosper, they need to tolerate the diversified views and strive for the prosperity of all.
- **Universalism:** Swami Vivekananda quoted his guru 'Jiva hi Shiva hai'. Therefore, he suggested that god is in every living being and we must respect every individual irrespective of caste, class, gender, religion or ethnicity.
- **Religion:** One of the most significant contributions of Swami Vivekananda to the modern world is his interpretation of religion as a universal experience of transcendent Reality, common to all humanity.

He believed that every religion offered a pathway to the eternal supreme – supreme freedom, supreme knowledge, supreme happiness.
- **Fraternity:** Another aspect of his teaching was **universal brotherhood**.

**Vasudev Kutumbakam** – belief in the world as a family has become necessary in the growing era of protectionism and de-globalisation.
- **Strength:** according to Swami Vivekananda, a person must be fearless to achieve personal or professional goals.
- **Importance of Education:** He stressed on the importance of development of character through education. For him, education was a way to build one's character, intellect, strength, etc.
- **Gender Disparity:** It is impossible to think about the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is impossible for a bird to fly on only one wing.

Considering the sexual crime against women, girl dropouts from school and also reducing female labour force participation, his teachings are still relevant.

## **Conclusion**

- Swami Vivekananda belonged to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, yet his message and his life are more relevant today than in the past and perhaps, will be more relevant in future.
- The ideas of Swami Vivekananda do not cease to exist with physical death. His influence and thoughts, go on gaining momentum as years pass by, and ultimately, reach a fulfilment which was envisaged.