CHAPTER VIII

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Although Mahatma Gandhi was not an academic philosopher, his idea cannot be classed with any of the well-known schools of Indian philosophy, yet in the depth of his writings and speeches, beliefs and actions, we find a consistent world view or philosophy of life. His philosophy is not an abstract system but a comprehensive philosophy connected with ethical, social, political, economic and religious systems.

Gandhi occupies a unique position among the philosophers. His thought was based on Indian religious tradition, because he was intensely religious from childhood. His outlook was moulded mainly by the Hindu religion, though he was influenced by the ethical ideals of Jainism, Christianity and Islam. Sometimes, he called himself an orthodox Hindu, a Sanatani Hindu because he believes in the Hindu scriptures, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the teachings of Bhagavad Gita, avatars and rebirth etc.

Gandhi's philosophy is largely based on morality and religion and his political techniques were only corollaries of his religious and moral principles. Gandhi had a great respect for his own religion which he
had learnt from his parents. To him every religion aims at the same goal that is truth. His view of religion is highly practical. Though Gandhi was deeply religious, yet he was strongly opposed to the concept of state-religion. His view was that there should be a secular institution. It was under his inspiration that India went in for a secular constitution guaranteeing religious freedom to all and keeping the state away from the realm of religion.

God occupies the supreme place in Gandhi's philosophy. God is the basis of his religion and a key to his entire thought and activities. God is Eternal Unborn, the Highest and indescribable entity. Gandhi believed in the absolute oneness of God. Man is born with brute nature but he is born to realise God who is seated in him; that particular privilege has made him man distinguishing him from other lower creatures. The ultimate goal of man is also realisation of the divinity and for realisation, man needs constant Sādhanā both external and internal. According to Gandhi God can never be realised by one who is not pure at heart. Identification with God or man is impossible without self-purification. Gandhi believed in the inherent goodness of human nature. Man's ultimate aim is the realisation of God. All his activities social, political, religious, have to guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God.

Metaphysically speaking the world is an expression of God and as such is both real and finite. The world is real because it is God's creation and finite, because it is not itself God. From the different studies
and researches of different sciences Gandhi came to find out the reality of the Universe in the Law governing every movement.

The emphasis on the reality of the world has a practical implication also. Gandhi was quite sensitive to the charms of Nature. Nature did not merely appear to him as full of poetic charms, he perceived it in a field of action where man could discipline his soul by leading a religious and moral life. Gandhi's deep love for Naturopathy, his recommendation to take plenty of air, water and walk barefooted are some of the evidences of his love for Nature.

Man is the supreme consideration in Gandhi's philosophy. He has a firm belief in the evolution of man from the lower grade of animal to higher levels of humanity, guided by love, peace and harmony etc. Man as a cosmic reality, occupies the summit of the pyramid of existents and contains all their valves. In his physical capacities man is superior to other beings, because his physical nature is better organised and exhibits a great unity. Regarding the nature of man, the account of the origin of man brings two factors- Biological or physical nature and Spiritual nature. Man's spiritual nature within him makes him unique and gives to him some amount of freedom.

Man is a rational animal. Therefore, animality found sometimes in man is not absurd. The degree of animality is progressively reduced among the civilized people. But it is not totally subdued in man.
Both the attributes of good and evil are inherent in man. Though different thinkers have given different conceptions of human nature, according to Gandhi, none of their views about man is adequate, all such accounts of man are partial or superficial analyses of man's external behaviour and conduct. All of them emphasise the physical and material aspects of man. Gandhi represents the true nature of man as a complex being. His body is a part and product of nature and it grows and decays according to the laws of nature. Gandhi accepted man's animal ancestry and said, "in our present state, we are partly men and partly beasts." What distinguishes man from the brute is his ceaseless striving to rise above the brute on the moral plane. Thus the essential difference between man and brute, according to Gandhi, is that the former can respond to the call of the spirit in him and rise above the level of passions that he owes in common with the brute. Since the same spirit resides in all men, the possibility of reforming the meanest of men cannot be ruled out. "Gandhi shares the Hindu belief in the identity of man within his innermost being with transcendent reality. Mere man (Nara) strives to become a cosmic archetype (Narottama) finally merging into the Deity (Narayana)."

A belief in the divinity of all results in having a non-violent attitude to all. Although outwardly man appears to be selfish and even brutish, inwardly and essentially he is good. Man as spirit is essentially non-violent; violence is alien to man's nature. It is true that man as an

1. Young India, 9-3-1920
animal is violent but on the other hand it is also true that as a spirit, man is non-violent. Gandhi is an advocate of the doctrine of non-violence or ahimsa. He glorifies non-violence as one of the most characteristic features in the efflorescence and ascent of man. According to Gandhi non-violence or love is the ultimate principle of life.

From time immemorial there has been a keen desire for peace in human mind. Mahatma Gandhi went to the root cause of the world strife in order to find a solution. According to him, since wars begin in the minds of men, it is there that the defences of peace must be laid. Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve in the godliness of human nature. Gandhi worked simultaneously for both inner transformation and structural transformation. He made an attempt to confront the power of the British with the power of the people, but this power was a spiritual power which could emerge only through moral transformation.

According to Gandhi, man is a religious being. Man without religion is man without roots. Therefore, religion is the basis on which all life structure has to be erected if life is to be real. In Gandhi's view, religion is the expression of the permanent nature of man. It does not mean formal or customary religion but the underlying element of all religions, the religion which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies. He tried to spiritualize the whole society but never lost sight of the material aspect of man's life. He wanted to purify the
entire behaviour of man—be it political, social or religious. Gandhi's fundamental task was the search for truth, he defined God as Truth and was more than convinced that non-violence was the only means of knowing God or reaching Truth. Truth was the end and non-violence the means. Gandhi's Philosophy is concerned with the perennial problem of man's ultimate goal and the way he should live to advance towards his goal.

Man is not only an animal, he is rational. His actions are controlled by reason. The accumulation of knowledge helps man in adapting himself to different situations. Though the origin of the individual human body is a fairly well understood biological process, but for Gandhi, man is a multi-dimensional being and not merely a biological creature. He is man-in-society, a social being who is in search of peace-justice, harmony and happiness throughout the ages. Man is the source, the centre, and the purpose of all economic, political and social life. Gandhi’s views on human nature are bound up with certain metaphysical and moral principles. He takes into account not only man's physical behaviour but also his real nature, his true self, and the spiritual element in him. Man is always superior to the brute creation from the standpoint of his moral instincts and moral institutions. The real individual is an immortal spiritual entity. As an eternal apostle of Truth, Beauty and Goodness in man, Gandhi emphasized upon the efflorescence of inherent divinity in man, because he believed that the essence of man is the
essence of God. He honours man as man embodied in God-'
'Naíranarayana', the Divine.

In the history of the world, for the first time non-violence was tried out at the collective level and it succeeded well due to the skilful leadership of Gandhi. In the realm of political conflicts involving political domination, colonial subjection and repression- Gandhi himself demonstrated the efficacy of Satyagraha primarily through no-co-operation and civil disobedience. He applied this weapon in South Africa for saving the political rights of the Asiatics living there for the first time and then applied this method during the national movement in India and he succeeded in freeing India from the shackles of foreign domination without bloodshed. Gandhi supported a non-violent democracy where the weakest shall have equal opportunities. By using this weapon, all kinds of conflicts could be settled. The bloodless revolution brought about by Vinoba Bhave in the form of Bhūdāna Yajña was entirely based on the principle of non-violence. Bhoodan, later developed into Gramdan which gave the picture of Gramswarjya clear, where people would be makers of their destiny. People are a real power, distinct from state power and this power must be recognised as such in a democracy.

Gandhi applied the weapon of non-violence against the economic oppression of the people. His earliest encounters through non-violent Satyagraha were in the field of economic oppression in Champaran in Bihar and in support of the textile mill workers of Ahmedabad. On both
these cases Gandhi demonstrated the importance of non-violence in the economic field. Gandhi was opposed to promoting large scale industrialization and use of machinery which was responsible for exploitation. Thus he emphasised upon small scale and cottage industries, which preserved harmony and non-co-operation. Exploitation cannot exist in a society in which non-violence does. Therefore, Gandhi, introduced Charkha which facilitated man to find out the life of simplicity, harmony and amity. Gandhi suggested the adoption of non-violent non-co-operation in order to end capitalism. To remove the exploitation of one class by another, Gandhi stressed on the theory of Trusteeship, which provides a permanent solution to class conflict in a very humane, non-violent and peaceful manner.

Gandhi aimed at the establishment of a society in which peace and happiness would reign supreme. His campaigns for improving the conditions of the untouchables and the widows were based upon his sermon of equality. Caste system was as much as evil as untouchability. Exploitation, be it social, political or economic, is violence. For the elimination of all these Gandhi suggested the method of non-violent, non-co-operation. Gandhi wanted a classless society, where in every individual got equal opportunity for his or her all-round development, which he called 'Sarvodaya Samaj', in which love, non-violence, truth and justice and 'service to all' would be ideal of each citizen. His dream was to build on ideal society where every individual should have a feeling of freedom means 'Swaraj'. To Gandhi, a society organised and run on the
basis of complete non-violence would be the purest anarchy. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, inseparable from the conception of truth was applied in every walk of life domestic, institutional, economic and political. In Gandhi's thought non-violence and love were synonymous. Gandhi was the unique personality in the whole world to use non-violence in its positive aspect, although most of his followers could not understand the real implication of non-violence in every walk of life. But when Gandhi saw that it was not easy to persuade majority of the people to adopt non-violence, he, therefore, sponsored minimum application of violence, if necessary. When one is spiritually not strong enough to meet some situation through non-violence, there is no other way but to take a violent method. Thus we can say that Gandhi does not use the word 'ahimsa' in some special sense which is entirely different from its traditional and customary sense, but he emphasized certain aspects of ahimsa which have not been given that importance by others. As a result, Gandhi's use of this word has some distinctive feature of its own.

Gandhi championed the concept of equality on metaphysical grounds. Every man is equal in the eyes of God. As he remarked, "the first condition of non-violence is justice all round in every department of life." He laid emphasis on economic equality, the master key of all types of equalities. As absolute economic equality is not practicable, Gandhi worked for an equitable distribution. To pursue this economic ideal, he put forward his theory of Trusteeship and Non-possession. The present

owners of wealth have to make a choice between class war and voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth. Neither capital nor labour is inferior to the other. Gandhi's aim is not to destroy the capitalist but to destroy the spirit of exploitation in the heart of the capitalist.

Gandhi called himself a socialist. Again he called himself a better communist. He passionately advocated the cause of decentralisation both political and economic and favoured equal distribution of wealth and termed as 'theft' anything beyond and in excess of man's immediate requirements. He followed the communist ideal- To each according to his need, from each according to his capacity- in his Seva-gram Ashram. But his concept of communism is different from that of Marx. As he said, "What does Communism mean in the last analysis? It means a classless society, an ideal that is worth striving for. Only I part company with it when force is called to aid for achieving it .... I do not believe in eradicating evil from the human breast at the point of the bayonet." According to Gandhi, the true principle of democracy can be realized in his non-violent Sarvodaya Samaj which is based on the principle, "the greatest good of all." This principle is quite different from the utilitarian doctrine, "the greatest good of the greatest number". Any governmental action or state action should be based on this principle, "the greatest good of all". Gandhi had no objection to the present democratic form of administration.

government. But if there is no self-rule of the people, there is no democratic government. The state in general represents violence in a concentrated and organized form. So much the force of the state increases, so much the individual freedom decreases. Consequently the state which governs the least is the best. The ideal society, as Gandhi visualized, is the state-less and class-less society. This is an enlightened anarchy in which the individuals rule themselves without giving any hindrance to their fellow beings. So the individuals in such a society would be highly cultured and self-regulated individuals. This is the nature of Rama-Rajya as conceived by Gandhi.

Gandhi was not a social or political theorist in the abstract; he was primarily a practical idealist whose aim was not merely political independence of this country but emancipation of the suffering masses from oppression, injustice, inequality and deprivation. He aimed at the all-round emancipation of man. In the political field he advocated self-government based on the system of Panchayats. In the economic sphere he wanted self-sufficiency for villages and trusteeship of the big industries and commercials. In the social sphere he wanted above all the upliftment of the Harijans and the equality of women. He was as much against concentration of wealth as he was against the concentration of political power and therefore he passionately advocated the principle of decentralization of power, authority and wealth. This is the principle of truth and non-violence translated in the political and economic sphere.
Gandhi was aware that the ideal might never be realized in practice. We may not achieve the ideal but surely we may approximate to it.

Instead of following Gandhi, most people try to criticise him and act contrary to his principle. As M.C.Chagla observed, "Gandhiji has suffered and is suffering the same fate. There is hardly a platform where his name is not uttered and I am afraid, very often in vain. The most dishonest, the most disreputable and the corrupt politicians capitalize on his name and every day he is being assassinated again not in the body but is the spirit."5 Critics charge is that the path shown by Gandhi is the path of asceticism. In this connection Gandhi himself said, "It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at them by gradual evolution. Every step was thought out, well-considered and taken with the greatest deliberation."6 Gandhi did not renounce the world and never asked men to extinguish human passions and desires. He advised men to control and guide them with the help of reason. So he was not an ascetic.

Another charge Levelled against him is that there are many inconsistencies in the actions done in his long journey of life. But critics forget that a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds. As man works on the relative truth and value, there might be inconsistency in a man's life. So Gandhi observed, "Consistency lies in living up to the truth

5. S.Radhakrishnan (ed.) Mahatma Gandhi 100 Years, P.32
6. N.K.Bose, Selections from Gandhi, P.248
as one sees it from moment to moment, even though it may be inconsistent with one's own past conduct. 7 It means that all social values and truths change from time to time, from place to place and from person to person. The search for truth cannot coexist with attachment to a set of finished and final dogmas whether in the field of physical sciences or in social life or the spiritual quest. 8 Therefore consistency with truth under a given circumstance is the principle of Gandhi's action and his latest action is to be judged with reference to the yardstick of truth at a given time and under a given circumstance. He grew from truth to truth. 9 His ideas were therefore existential; they grew as he grew up.

According to Gandhi, in order to maintain social order, social justice and social stability, the individuals ought to train themselves by following a course of long and stern code of disciplines. Every individual ought to be a satyagrahi. He would love even his opponent but hate the evil nature of the latter. Satyagraha means self-discipline, self-sacrifice, self-restraint, fasting, imprisonment and even death. It does not mean submission to the evils. It means the non-violent resistance with the greatest force of love. The code of disciplines which a satyagrahi ought to follow includes the observance of the vows of truth, non-violence, non-possession, non-stealing, bread-labour, non-co-operation with the evil, swadeshi, Brahmacharya, fearlessness etc. the man who follows this code of disciplines to the highest level is the Ideal Man conceived by Gandhi.

7. C.S.Shukla, Gandhi's View of Life, P.9  
8. S.Radakrishnan (ed.) Mahatma 100 Years, P.323  
9. Young India, 25-8-1921
Gandhi's vision of a new social order is based on the principle of non-violence. Before him, non-violence was an individual virtue. But Gandhi used his non-violent technique not only for the redress of individual injustice but for solving social, political and even economic problems that the society faced. As Gandhi observed, "Ahimsa is one of the world's great principles which no earth can wipe out. Thousands like myself may die to vindicate the ideal but ahimsa will never die. And the gospel of Ahimsa can be spread only through those who die for the cause."  

The ideal national polity that Gandhi contemplated was a confederation of self-sufficient, self-defending, non-violent village republics economically based on cultivation by peasant proprietors and cottage-scale production by self-employed artisans. Only such a socio-economic structure could serve as the base on which traditional spiritual values of India could flourish. In such a social order there cannot appear 'ideally' any tension or hostility between people of different regions or of different religions.

The choice before mankind is between non-violence and non-existence. It is precisely in this context that the Gandhian approach to world peace comes to acquire a sharp relevance. Gandhi did not share the diplomatic view of peace. Peace for him meant a positive state of affairs, the precondition being freedom from exploitation. But he said, "It may be long before the law of love will be recognized in international affairs. The

10. Harijan, 19-5-1946
11. Ibid., 28-7-1946
machineries of governments stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another. "12 Sceptics consider Gandhi's plea for disarmament utopian. In fact, it is not so. Human nature is essentially peace loving. Even when man fights violently, he does so out of a desire to live in peace. The way of world peace lies in cultivating the spirit of non-violence in the hearts of men. As the individuals are built, so the world is built. To Gandhi, the moral solidarity of mankind is an ever present fact rather than merely a contrived political ideal that remains to be realized. So he said, "It is a blasphemy to say that non-violence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals."13 Gandhi's thought represented a transcendence not only in the sense that he replaced the power of the sword by the power of the soul, but also in the sense that it was produced in reaction to the problems faced by the entire human civilization on the earth. Truth as an ideal is higher than nationalism. Truth transcends all. The central vision of Gandhi was to relate external freedom to inner freedom, social and political revolution to the inner revolution where man conquers himself.

D.P. Chattopadhyaya aptly observes, "Freedom, according to Gandhi, is to be deserved and achieved and cannot be given as a sort of gift. In genuine freedom there is no place for hatred, anger or ill-will. The struggle for freedom is to explore the possibility of that law which is equally acceptable to the ruler and the ruled. The Swaraj which is

12. Young India, 23-6-1919
13. Harijan, 12-11-1938
achieved through ahimsa is nothing but the realization, by man, of the Law of his own nature. Gandhi's ideal of ahimsa is very lofty indeed, but he takes pains to point out that our journey to this ideal is essentially an inward journey- a ceaseless endeavour to realize the law of truly human, i.e. divine nature."^{14} Highly influenced by Indian philosophy, Gandhi understood the concept of freedom from two levels, namely, spiritual and empirical. From the spiritual standpoint, freedom is viewed as an ultimate goal. This spiritual freedom reveals the essence of God. From the empirical standpoint, freedom as a value is made a means to the realization of the ultimate goal- spiritual freedom. This empirical freedom is of different kinds, namely, personal freedom, political freedom, religious freedom, etc. Gandhi's approach towards the concept of freedom is circular but not linear because he viewed life as a circle, with the individual in the centre. As he said, "Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom but it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual......."^{15}

Freedom to Gandhi is not a licence to the strong to exploit the resources of the weak. It imposes its own conditions. Your freedom ends where your neighbour's begins. It is this recognition of your neighbour's right that constitutes the foundation of non-violence and makes it a positive force, not a mere negation. In Gandhi's view, common good is possible only through individual good. By obeying the moral Law

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15. M.K. Gandhi, Sarvodaya, P.67
one protects not only one's own freedom but also freedom of all. Gandhi's non-violence is a militant programme of group action for social transformation. He placed socialism on the unshakable foundation of spiritualism. In fact he spiritualized socialism. His "enlightened anarchism" is the irrefutable evidence in favour of his commitment to Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

Gandhi's aesthetic humanism was derived from his ethical and metaphysical principles. He saw beauty in truth and ugliness in evil. The harmonious world is the manifestation of God. Gandhi felt admiration for the harmony of Nature and saw the divine beauty in it. He expressed this idea while he was speaking of tree-worship. He said, "I find in it deep pathos and poetic beauty. It symbolises true reverence for the entire vegetable kingdom which with its endless panorama of beautiful shapes and forms, declares to us, as it were, with a million tongues, the greatness and glory of God."\(^\text{16}\) According to Gandhi, the beauty of human art and the beauty of Nature are blended and taken as one constituting a harmonious whole, even though they are distinct from each other. As Gandhi remarked, "You may make the distinction between a creation of Nature and creation of man. I enjoy them both with equal relish and with an equal standard, which is my own, and feel no necessity of judging them by different standards."\(^\text{17}\) These two kinds of beauty constitute the harmonious whole which leads to the state of Truth. This Truth-

\(^{16}\) Quoted, V.T.Patil (ed) Studies on Gandhi, P.258
\(^{17}\) Ibid.
consciousness has again a close relation to the society. He therefore did not accept the idea of 'art for art's sake'. Art has got meaning only when it has some social and moral values. He said, "I do not distinguish between art and truth. I am against 'art for art's sake'. I reject beautiful things, if instead of expressing truth, they express untruth."\textsuperscript{18} Gandhi sought beauty in truth and truth in life. He observed again, "purity of life is the highest and truest art."\textsuperscript{19} To keep life in the purest form is an art which every man should pursue. It naturally follows that the purity of life is the summun bonum of life. Life is the real field for cultivation of the highest values—Truth, Good and Beauty (Satyam, Shivam and Sundaram). Gandhi attributed these true values of life to God who is true, good and beautiful.

Gandhi's aesthetic humanism is, therefore, an aspect of the analysis of life, which leads to self-realization, and provides the real values in life. Life is an art, in which a harmonious adjustment is necessary. To Gandhi, art is the mirror of truth and truth for him is not an abstraction but something concrete and tangible. Beauty manifests itself in the thoughts, feelings and actions of a man. If beauty is truth, it must also be goodness.

Modern civilization attaches too much importance to the material satisfaction and bodily welfare as the real object of life and neglects the importance of religion and morality. Man forgets that the

\textsuperscript{18} B.N.Ganguli, Gandhi's Social Philosophy, P.125
\textsuperscript{19} Quoted, V.T.Patil (ed.) Studies on Gandhi, P.263
secret of happiness lies in renunciation. Gandhi wrote, "Those who are intoxicated by modern civilization are not likely to write against it. Their care will be to find out facts and arguments in support of it, and this they do unconsciously, believing it to be true. A man whilst he is dreaming, believes in his dream; he is undeceived only when he is awakened from his sleep. A man labouring under the bane of civilization is like a dreaming man." Modern man is caught in an awkward predicament. Civilization, in its true sense, does not mean the inordinate material demands and multiplication of wants but signifies the voluntary and deliberate restriction and control of human passions and desires. Gandhi was not pleading for an ascetic life. What is condemned in modern civilization is not the use of machines but the immorality that has crept into it. Modern civilization, as Gandhi termed it, is the factory civilization. He considered it a Satanic civilization. According to Gandhi, the different civilizations of Rome, Greece and Japan etc. had undergone a drastic change. But Indian civilization is still firm in her religious and moral heritage and standing against such a drastic change.

Gandhi, on the basis of the ancient spiritual foundation of India, wanted to reshape the modern civilization. He had no objection to the entry of the Western culture into India, provided it was not detrimental to the healthy development of the Indian cultural and social system. So he incorporated all the good ideas, thought and ideology of the West he

21. Ibid., P.37
22. Ibid., P.61
found, into the indigenous culture and custom of India. He said, "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." Gandhi challenged the Hindu orthodoxy by leading a life-long crusade against the evil of untouchability. Long before the idea of human rights was conceived, Gandhi fought for the rights of humanity. He sought to bridge the gulf between tradition and modernity, secular and profane, science and spirituality. As Devadoss wrote, "Gandhi was a revolutionary thinker. He revolted wherever the status quo offered a challenge to his conscience. He stood for the sanctity and supremacy of the human conscience."

Gandhi was totally opposed to the Western model of economic growth in general. He believed in production by masses instead of mass production by machines. Elimination of mass poverty in the shortest possible period was Gandhi's central concern, because in his view "the supreme consideration is man," not economic man of Adam Smith but a man with soul and therefore Gandhi wrote,"that economics is untrue which ignores moral values." It is not that Gandhi condemned bodily comfort, what he condemned was voluptuousness, overindulgence, the use of the earth's resources in excess of what was necessary for maintaining the body in a fit condition. Gandhi, aptly remarked, "An

23. Quoted, Paul F. Power, Gandhi of World Affairs, P.81
26. Krishna Kripalani (ed) All Men Are Brothers, P.vii
economics that inculcates Mammon worship and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the weak, is a false and dismal science. It spells death. True economics, on the other hand, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life."  

Gandhi rejected fragmentation of life activities and refused to give prominence to a particular aspect, for example, the economic aspect, at the expense of others. As he said, "The whole gamut of man's activities today constitute the indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into water-tight compartments. I do not know my religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would other wise lack, reducing life to a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing."  

According to Gandhi, man is not born to explore avenues to amass worldly riches and pursue ordinary and common means of livelihood. His ultimate ideal is no less than the realization of God. It is on this basis and conviction that Gandhi emphasised more and more on the effort of the individual rather than on his attainment. As he said, "Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory." Gandhi attached more importance to the inward gains than

27. M.K.Gandhi, Sarvodaya, P.33  
29. Young India, 9-3-1922
outward attainments. So he said, "What shall it avail a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?"  

Gandhi's concept of man is the concept of the total man. As he observed, "Man cannot do right in one department of life whilst he is occupied in doing wrong in another department. Life is one indivisible whole." Man is never a compartmental animal. His life cannot be divided into watertight compartments called social, political and religious. The spiritual law does not work in a field of its own. On the contrary it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. Gandhi's approach is integral or holistic like the integral four-fold Hindu ends (purusartha) of life - dharma, artha, kama and moksa. Since Gandhi believed in the presence of God in man, he refused to suspect human nature. He rejected the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature. If we only known how to strike the right chord, we bring out the music. Thus Gandhi believed in the evolutionary progress of man. "History is the saga of man's striving to discover his humanity, which is but a reflection of the Supreme." Man's nature is not essentially evil because he is definitely going higher everyday. Even fallen and debased man is capable of rising to the greatest height ever attained by any human being. Gandhi believed in the inherent goodness of man. Gandhi's philosophy of life is relevant to all humanity. He did not reserve any effort in serving India and humanity and sacrificed even his life. He was a scavenger, a manual scavenger.

30. Harijan, 28-1-1939
31. Young India, 27-1-1927
32. B.G.Gokhale, 'Gandhi and History', Gandhi Marg October 1947, P.228
labourer, an economist, a politician, a religious man, a lover of humanity and above all a Mahatma. His life itself is a message to humanity. So the eminent scientist Albert Einstein rightly observed, "......generation to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."33

33. M.K.Gandhi, My Non-Violence, P.III