

Gandhi's Contribution to Modern Spirituality

1. **Nonviolence.** “For Gandhi, the Sermon on the Mount was nothing less than a clarion call to active nonviolence, in Jesus’ words, not to offer violent resistance to evil but to love one’s enemies.
2. **“Noncooperation with evil** is as much a duty as cooperation with good.”
3. **Need for risk and sacrifice.** Gandhi revived the deep wisdom held by every ancient religious tradition that the way to positive, nonviolent social change for peace is through risk and sacrifice.
4. “Nonviolence in its dynamic condition means **conscious suffering.**” We need to accept suffering if we want personal transformation, political revolution, and a vision of God.
5. **Prayer.** Gandhi came to believe in the presence and nearness of God in day-to-day life.
6. Gandhi held that radical **purity of heart** bears enormous positive ramifications for the entire world. If people want to be of any help to others, they must get their own hearts in order, to let God disarm their hearts.
7. **Living solidarity with the poor.** Ask yourself if the next step you contemplate, Gandhi taught a friend, is of any use to the poorest person on the planet. Do whatever is most helpful for that person, and you will do God’s will.
8. **Powerlessness** as a path to God. He saw how power corrupts and blinds even the best people. He realized too that it sets us against the God of the poor.
9. **Each of the world’s religions has a piece of the truth and deserves our respect.**
10. Gandhi held that the spiritual life, as well as all political and social work, requires a **fearless pursuit of truth.**
11. Gandhi urged that we let go of results and simply trust in the **goodness of the struggle for peace** itself.
12. Gandhi understood these basic principles of **truth and nonviolence as actual laws of the universe**, as binding as the law of gravity.

Adapted from *Mohandas Gandhi: Essential Writings*; John Dear, Orbis books, 2005