Ethics & Morality · GS - IV

“The simplest acts of kindness are by far more powerful than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.”
— Mahatma Gandhi

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2023	GS - IV	Ethics & Morality

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

The quotation contrasts ritualistic spirituality with lived compassion. It conveys that genuine morality is demonstrated through concrete acts that reduce another person's suffering, making kindness a practical expression of humanity, empathy and service.

Model Answer

Introduction:

Gandhi's quotation places **ethical action above ritualistic expression**. Prayer may cultivate inner goodness, but its moral worth becomes meaningful when it translates into compassion and service.

Contemporary Relevance:

A small act such as helping an elderly person, feeding someone in distress or supporting a vulnerable colleague may immediately alleviate suffering. Such actions reflect empathy, humility and respect for human dignity.

The quotation also reminds institutions that welfare cannot remain confined to declarations. A compassionate civil servant who ensures that a pension reaches a neglected beneficiary demonstrates greater ethical commitment than merely expressing concern for the poor.

In contemporary society, where individualism and social divisions can weaken empathy, everyday kindness strengthens **social trust and solidarity**. It also transforms ethics from an abstract ideal into lived conduct.

However, kindness should not become paternalistic charity; it should respect the dignity and agency of the recipient.

Conclusion:

Gandhi's message is that **true spirituality is manifested through service**. A compassionate action that changes someone's life can possess greater ethical significance than outward displays of devotion without corresponding conduct.

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