



Episode 066: Understanding Our Sikh Friends and Neighbors

Pat Bhatti was born in India to a family whose ancestors believed in Hinduism for generations. It was through the labors of Christian missionaries that his grandfather came to faith in Christ. Pat's parents followed Christ and raised him to fear God. In 1972, Pat moved to Canada with his wife and four children. In the 1980's Pat was wondering who would share the good news with Punjabis coming to Canada. It was then the Lord called him into ministry. Pat has been serving the Multicultural Alliance Church in Edmonton for 24 years and reaching out to South Asians through marketplace evangelism.

How and when did Sikhism begin?

- In 1469, Guru Nanak was born in a Hindu family. He was a seeker of the truth who built friendships with Christians and Muslims. He came to the realization that there is only one God. The word "Sikh" means "disciple". Guru Nanak believed that we need to be learners.

Were there other gurus who followed Guru Nanak?

- There was a succession of 10 gurus including Guru Nanak. The tenth guru, Guru Gobind Singh declared that there would be no more gurus, and that the teaching of the 10 gurus is embodied in the holy book Guru Granth Sahib.

What are some of the main beliefs of Sikhism?

- The main tenets of Sikhism are:
 - Ik Onkar - there is only one God.
 - Satnaam - eternal truth is his name.
 - Karta Purakh - he is the creator.
 - Nirbhau - he is without fear.
 - Nirvair - he is without hate.
 - Akaal Moorat - he is immortal, without form.
 - Ajooni - he is beyond birth and death.

- Saibhang - he is the enlightener who illuminates himself.
- Gurprasaad - he can be reached through the mercy and grace of the true guru.

What do Sikhs believe about God?

- Sikhs are monotheistic, believing that there is only one God.
- Sikhs believe that:
 - God is inaccessible, omni-present, and is within every human being.
 - God is the creator and is eternal.
 - God's name is a holy name.
 - God is Lord who has full control upon us.
 - God is merciful, and benevolent.
 - God cannot take a human a form and is beyond births and deaths.
- God can be reached through the mercy and grace of the true guru. The true guru is an intermediary between humanity and God.

What do Sikhs believe about salvation?

- For Christ-followers, salvation is forgiveness of sins and eternal life. For Sikhs to attain salvation, one must live an honest life and meditate on God. One must have faith, recite the name of God, and remember him for each possible moment.
- Salvation is mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib many times, but there is no mention of how to obtain salvation.

What are some of the ways that Sikhs practice their religion in day-to-day life?

- There are basically 3 duties that all Sikhs must practice.
 - Nam japna - reciting the name of God and keeping God in mind at all times.
 - Kirt Karna - earning an honest living.
 - Vand Chhakna - sharing one's earnings with others.
- Sikhs also read the Guru Granth Sahib, hear what is being read out of the book at gatherings, and have a fellowship meal.
- Sikhs must get rid of the 5 vices: lust, covetousness, greed, attachment to things of the world, anger, and pride.
- If a person can overcome these vices, the person is on the way to liberation.

Please describe the five K's of Sikhism.

- The tenth guru in 1699 made the Sikh people Khalsa, and wanted to give them a new identity comprised by the five K's.



- The five K's form the external identity and commitment to the Sikh way of life.
- The five K's are:
 - Kesh - uncut hair, growing naturally.
 - Kanga - a wooden comb to keep the hair neat and tidy and knotted. It also symbolizes the importance of cleanliness and discipline.
 - Kara - a steel bracelet worn by males and females, symbolizing attachment to God. It is also a reminder to follow the path of God and carry out the righteousness of God.
 - Kachera (or Kaccha) - undergarments which are a reminder to control one's lust.
 - Kirpan - a ceremonial dagger representing the power of truth to cut through falsehood. This is a 6 inch sword and there is also a 3 foot sword.

What advice do you have for a Christ-follower who wants to befriend a Sikh?

- It is most important the friendships be genuine. Genuinely get to know the family and invite Sikhs for tea or a meal.
- Ask Sikhs questions about their religion.
- Love Sikhs, say hello, and smile!

What advice to you have for a Christ-follower who wants to share his or her faith with a Sikh?

- The first step is to ask Sikhs to share about what they believe.
- An important question to ask is about what happens when a person dies. It is mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib that there will be a time of judgement, and that there is heaven and hell.
- Share the hope that you have in Christ which is not by works, but by the grace of God.

If any of our guests would like to contact you, how can they do that?

- **Email:** bhatti@telusplanet.net
- **Phone:** 780-893-2120

Resources Recommended by Pastor Pat:

- [BBC Summary of Sikhism](#)
- [Sikhs.org](#)
- [Lions, Princesses, Gurus: Reaching Your Sikh Neighbour](#)

