

# SIKHS IN CANADA

History, Beliefs and Practices





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2
Origins of Sikhism .....	3
10 Sikh Gurus .....	4
The Eternal Guru: The Holy Book .....	5
The Five Ks .....	6
Recent History .....	8
Sikhism Today .....	10
Sikhs in Canada .....	12
Overview of Beliefs .....	14
Religion Comparison Chart .....	15
Sharing Your Faith .....	16
Sikhs and the Gospel of Christ .....	18
Glossary .....	20
Helpful Resources .....	21

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**The vision of Christar is to cultivate  
Christ-honoring transformation  
in communities where He is yet  
to be worshiped.**

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# INTRODUCTION



Sikhism, being over 500 years old, started from very humble beginnings in India. But now its current standing, is as one of the major world religions having over 27 million adherents. Though often mistaken as Muslims, Sikhs practice a distinct religion that differs from both Islam and Hinduism.

Even though the people of India are known for their vibrant use of colours, Sikhs are well-known for their love of colour, vivacious personalities and unmatched hospitality. Their work ethic, business savvy and fierce loyalty have earned them the respect and prestige in communities, militaries and governments worldwide, in the countries Sikhs now call home.

As this booklet reveals the story of Sikh history, their beliefs and religious practices, it is our hope that you will join in a movement of prayer for this precious people group. Among whom there are very few who have found true salvation in the name of Jesus Christ.

# ORIGINS OF SIKHISM

**Guru Nanak** (pronounced *Goo-roo Nah-nuk*, lived 1469-1539 AD) was the founder of Sikhism and the first of the 10 Sikh Gurus. He was born in the Punjab area of South Asia to Hindu parents. At approximately 30 years old, Nanak went down to the river in the morning to bathe and meditate. According to tradition, he disappeared for three days and when he reappeared, he had been spiritually enlightened. It was then that he began his missionary work of traveling and teaching a number of revolutionary ideas, and the religion of Sikhism began.

The word **“Sikh”** (pronounced *Seek* or *Sik*) means learner or disciple. Nanak travelled extensively to teach these new ideas, visiting all parts of India, and even journeyed as far away as Arabia and Persia. Wherever he went, Guru Nanak spoke against polytheism (the worship of many gods), problems within the Hindu priesthood, idol worship, the caste system, superstition and blind religious rituals. Instead, he taught that there is one God, and that men and women are equal in the eyes of God. He stressed the importance of honest, hard work and the necessity of giving to those in need.

He eventually settled back in the Punjab area of modern India and his followers grew in number. One of the key things he established and reinforced, was the common meal where Muslims and Hindus of all castes ate together. In a culture and religion in which people of high and low caste were rigidly segregated to avoid becoming unclean, this was a revolutionary idea and practice.



**GURU  
NANAK**

# 10 SIKH GURUS



Guru Gobind Singh and the Panj Pyare are initiated through the Amrit ceremony.

Before his death, Guru Nanak appointed a successor who would carry on the leadership of his growing group of followers. This began a succession of Gurus, that would continue for the next 200 years. The Sikh religion has had a total of 10 living Gurus, each one making notable contributions to the emerging Sikh faith.

The followers of the Gurus were met with increasing hostility from the Muslim conquerors that ruled the area. So in order to protect themselves, the Sikh community began to adopt martial arts and develop weapons, establishing their identity as "saint soldiers." Many prominent Sikhs were brutally martyred for resisting Muslim authorities, and for refusing to convert to Islam. Martyrdom became an important element of the Sikh faith, and martyrs are revered as examples of dedication to this faith and willingness to sacrifice for it.

**Guru Gobind Singh**, the 10th Guru, was instrumental in establishing Sikhism as it currently practiced today. In 1699, he called for volunteers willing to give up their lives. Five men came forward to and became known as the Panj Pyare (pun-j pee-yaar-eh, the five beloved ones). With these five men, Guru Gobind Singh performed the Amrit (ahm-rit) ceremony for the first time, an initiation rite that involves drinking sugar water stirred with a dagger from an iron bowl. This initiation made these men the nucleus of the Khalsa (kull-sa, "the pure ones"), in the community of initiated and dedicated Sikhs. These men were given the last name "Singh" and were now forever required to wear the Five K's (see page 6) and follow a specific code of conduct.

# THE ETERNAL GURU: THE HOLY BOOK

on his deathbed, rather than naming the next living Guru successor, Gobind Singh decreed that the 11th and eternal Guru would be the Guru Granth Sahib (goo-roo grunt sa-hib,) which is the Sikh holy book. It contains the writings of Sikh Gurus and other Sikh saints. The holy book is written in the script called Gurmukhi (goor-mooki,) meaning "from the mouth of the Guru", which is the written form of the Punjabi language used in India. From that time, copies of the holy book have been treated like an actual holy man, given honour with the utmost respect. In Sikh temples today, there are rituals surrounding the care of the book, including putting it to bed, in its own room in the temple each evening. Then each morning, it is carried from its room back to the platform in the worship hall. Also, when the holy book is being read in the temple, a special fan is waved over the pages,

In 2004, 150 copies of the Guru Granth Sahib were flown from India to Canada to be distributed to families and temples across the country. On the chartered plane, each copy was placed on a linen-covered seat with its own pillow, guarded by five devout Canadian Sikhs who accompanied them on the flight.

Reading from a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib. Tukaram Karve/Shutterstock.com



# THE FIVE Ks

The **Amrit ceremony**, as established by Guru Gobind Singh, is still used today as the initiation rite, for Sikh men and women to commit themselves to following the Sikh teachings. Initiated Sikhs are often referred to as baptised Sikhs, but the ceremony does not resemble that of a Christian baptism. Once a Sikh has been initiated, they become members of the **Khalsa** and must always wear five symbols, referred to as the Five Ks. These serve to identify a Sikh and symbolize important aspects of their faith.

- **Kesh** (*kay-sh*) — uncut hair and beard, covered by a turban. By allowing the hair to grow as God intended, the Sikh is showing his devotion to God. Boys and young men who are too young to wear a turban will have their uncut hair wrapped in a bun on top of their head and covered with a piece of cloth. Though most women with uncut hair will braid it or wrap it in a bun, there are some women who choose to wear a turban.
- **Kangha** (*kung-gah*) — a wooden comb used to keep the hair tidy, worn as a symbol of cleanliness and discipline.
- **Kachhera** (*kuh-chay-ra*) — a specially made cotton undergarment, worn as a reminder of their commitment to purity.
- **Kara** (*kuh-ra*) — a steel bangle, worn on the right wrist. The steel is a symbol of strength, and the circular shape is a symbol of unity and eternity.
- **Kirpan** (*kir-paan*) — a small sword, with which the Sikh is committed to righteously defending the weak and oppressed, as well as defending their own faith.



Though not one of the 5 Ks, the **Khanda** (*kunn-duh*) symbol is often seen on the kirpan, temples, vehicles and jewelry. This symbol is the combination of four items, all traditional Sikh weapons. Its meaning can be interpreted symbolically in a number of ways, such as representing the unity of God (the ring of steel), truth and justice (the two-edged sword) and God's spiritual power (the two crossed swords).





Only initiated Sikhs will wear all five items, so many Sikhs you meet in Canada will wear some, or even none, based on their own level of commitment to Sikh traditions.

Wearing the Five K's have been the source of a number of controversies in Canada. Many occupations require head protection or a clean shaven face because of safety regulations. While carrying the Kirpan on airplanes or in schools has caused concerns about security. We need to understand the genuine tension felt by many Sikhs who are loyal, hard-working Canadians, but who also want to be faithful to orthodox Sikh tradition, that requires initiated Sikhs to wear the Five K's.

# RECENT HISTORY



Since Guru Gobind Singh's death in 1708, the Sikh faith has continued to grow and develop, despite persecution and great hardship. The Punjab region was the location of horrific violence during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. The western half of the Punjab became part of Pakistan and the Eastern half became part of India. As a result, Muslims in India were forced to move to Pakistan, Sikhs and Hindus on the Pakistani side, were forced to move to India. Violence erupted between communities and as many as 500,000 people lost their lives. In all, more than 14 million people moved to another country altogether, which has been considered the greatest migration in human history.

Most followers of the Sikh religion are still found in the Punjab State of India, and remain distinct in their religion and language. However, they have struggled to defend their identity and desire for greater autonomy, in a predominantly Hindu nation. After the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, some Sikhs in the Punjab region, began a separatist movement advocating for the formation of an independent nation named Khalistan, meaning "The Land of the Pure." In the 1970s and 1980s, the Khalistan movement gained momentum, reaching its violent pinnacle in 1984. Led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a large number of Sikh militants occupied the Golden Temple in Amritsar, where they stockpiled powerful weapons for their defence.

As the situation in the Punjab deteriorated, violence and murders became increasingly common, and the Indian government decided to take action. Indira Gandhi, then the Prime Minister of India, ordered the start of Operation Blue Star in June 1984, to remove Bhindranwale and his followers from the temple. The temple sustained significant damage during the operation, and both military personnel and large numbers of civilians caught in the temple lost their lives. Bhindranwale was among those killed. Many Sikhs felt that their holiest shrine had been desecrated by the military during the invasion and, in retaliation for the operation, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984.

This assassination inflamed anger toward the Sikh population, resulting in anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and surrounding areas. Official government reports stated that 2,800 Sikhs were murdered by Hindu mobs. Unofficial numbers are drastically higher and eyewitness accounts tell of brutal attacks on innocent, unarmed Sikhs. Many Sikhs accused the government leaders and the police of assisting in and even organizing the ruthless violence. Since 1984, numerous committees were formed to investigate the attacks, yet most of those implicated were acquitted, never charged or simply left unnamed.

In addition to the majority of Sikhs living in Punjab, migration has led to the establishment of Sikh communities elsewhere in India, and in many countries throughout the world. Some continue to speak out against the Indian government, and raise awareness about the abuses the Sikh community has endured in recent decades. Despite the objections of the Indian government, in 2017 the Ontario Legislature passed a motion labeling the anti-Sikh riots of 1984 a genocide. The complex, violent and traumatic history of the Sikh community in India over the past century, has undoubtedly left its mark on lives and families. The healing and peace that only Christ can bring in hearts and communities, is desperately needed among Sikhs throughout the world.

# SIKHISM TODAY



Sikhism today revolves around the Sikh temple, known as a **Gurudwara** (*goo-roo-dwah-rah*), which means “doorway to God.” They are the center of Sikh worship and community life and can be found in almost every city in Canada. Few Sikh families have a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib in their home because of the difficulty of showing it proper care and respect, and must go to the temple to hear it read.

The Golden Temple, located in the city of Amritsar in India, is the holiest gurudwara for Sikhs. It is an important pilgrimage site for Sikhs and is open to visitors of all faiths.

Gurudwaras have three main functions: **Kirtan** (*keer-tun*, singing of hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib), **Katha** (*kah-tah*, reading from and explanations of the Guru Granth Sahib) and **Langar** (*lun-gahr*, a free community kitchen for Sikhs who come to worship and visitors of all religions). Along with these main functions, Gurudwaras may also have libraries of Sikh literature and schools to teach children Sikh religion and Punjabi language, and may serve to promote charitable work in the community.

When a person enters a Gurudwara, it is required that they remove their shoes and cover their head with a headscarf provided, if they are not already wearing a turban. After washing their hands, they will enter the temple sanctuary and walk down the middle of the room toward the platform where the Guru Granth Sahib is placed during the day. Sikhs are expected to bow down and touch their forehead to the floor in front of the book as a sign of respect. Though giving an offering of money or food at this time is common, it is not required. The person will then walk clockwise around the Guru Granth

Sahib, being careful to never turn their back toward it. Seating in the temple sanctuary is on the floor, with women on one side and men on the other.

Toward the end of a Sikh service, everyone will be offered a small amount of karah prasad, a sweet vegetarian food that has been blessed. Then, in the separate kitchen and eating area, the free meal called langar is served. It will always be a vegetarian meal so that people of all faiths and convictions can eat, regardless of religious dietary restrictions. Though Sikhs do not consider one day of the week more holy than others, Sunday is a common day for them to visit the temple as it works well with the typical Canadian work week.

As with any religion, there is a huge variance in actual practice within Sikhism. Initiated Sikhs devoutly wear the 5 Ks and regularly study and recite the scriptures; but, you may also meet Sikhs who cut their hair, do not regularly attend the Gurudwara and who may wear none of the 5 Ks. There are debates about how the Sikh faith should be practised, particularly among the younger generation as they balance their devotion with modern life. Disputes about cutting hair, eating non-vegetarian food and practices within the Gurudwaras are common.

Gurudwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi. The Guru Granth Sahib is under the gold canopy. Nowak Lukasz/Shutterstock.com



# SIKHS IN CANADA



The first Sikhs came to Canada in the early 1900s. By 1908, they had established the first Sikh temple in Vancouver and by that same year, more than 5,000 South Asians had arrived in British Columbia. They were almost all men, working in the forestry industry or in agriculture. They often faced discrimination and when an immigration ban and a number of restrictions on Indian immigrants were imposed in 1908, nearly half of the Indians living in British Columbia returned to India.

The discrimination reached a climax in 1914 when a boat called the Komagata Maru, carrying passengers from India, was refused permission to dock in Vancouver. Government officials claimed that those on board were not allowed in Canada because of certain immigration policies. Eventually, over 350 Indian passengers on board were forced to return to India. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued an official apology for the Komagata Maru incident in 2016.

Changes to immigration policies in the 1950s and 1960s eventually allowed South Asian immigrants the right to vote, as well as the ability to sponsor family members to join them in Canada. Recent decades have seen a huge increase in emigration from India. There are significant numbers of Sikhs in Alberta, British Columbia and the Greater Toronto Area, particularly Brampton, with growing populations in many smaller cities as well. Canada is often considered to have the largest number of Sikhs of any country outside of India.

1988 – Baltej Singh Dhillon applied to join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), but was told he could not wear his turban. After a two-year battle, he was finally granted permission to wear his turban on duty, paving the way for many other Sikh police officers.

1993 – Gurbax Singh Malhi was the first turbaned Sikh to be elected anywhere in the Western world when he became a member of the Parliament of Canada. The law that prohibited headgear from being worn in the Parliament of Canada was changed shortly after he was elected.

Since 2013, the popular *Hockey Night in Canada: Punjabi Edition* has provided regular coverage of NHL games, featuring Punjabi commentators.

2015 – Harjit Sajjan was appointed Minister of National Defense. During his years in the Canadian military, he designed and patented a gas mask that would fit over his unshorn beard, enabling more devout Sikhs to have active roles in the military.

2017 – Jagmeet Singh was elected leader of Canada's federal New Democratic Party (NDP). He is the first visible minority to be the leader of a major federal party.

2017 – Palbinder Kaur Shergill was appointed a judge in the Supreme Court of British Columbia. She is the first turbaned judge in Canada.

Canadian Sikhs celebrate Team Canada's gold medal win in hockey at the 2010 Winter Olympics. Sergei Bachlakov/Shutterstock.com



# OVERVIEW OF BELIEFS

Though it contains some teachings from both Islam and Hinduism, the Sikh faith is a unique religion with a distinct set of beliefs. Here are just a few significant Sikh teachings.

**MUL MANTAR** (*mool munter*) is the first composition in the Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh holy book) and considered the first teaching of Guru Nanak after his enlightenment. It is repeated during morning prayers and forms an outline of Sikh beliefs about God. The first symbol is called Ik Onkar. It is seen in Sikh temples and homes, as a reminder that there is one God.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

“One Universal Creator God. The Name Is Truth. Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred. Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-Existent. By Guru’s Grace.”

## Pray, Work, Give

The three duties that a Sikh must carry out can be summed up in three phrases:

- **Nam Japna** (meditate on God’s name at all times).
- **Kirt Karna** (earn an honest living).
- **Vand Chhakna** (share one’s earnings with others).

## Equality

Sikhism preaches that all people are equal in the eyes of God, regardless of race, religion or gender. All Sikh males share the surname “Singh,” which means “lion,” and women use the surname “Kaur,” which means “princess.” These may be used as a legal surname, or often just as a middle name. In Hinduism, a person’s last name identifies the individual’s caste, so the common use of “Singh” and “Kaur” exemplifies the Sikh belief that all people are equal.





# Biblical Faith and Sikhism

	SIKHISM	CHRISTIANITY
<b>GOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creator of the universe.</li> <li>• Not personal. God is the “True One” or “Ik Onkar.” He does not have a personal name.</li> <li>• Known through devotion and human effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creator of the universe.</li> <li>• A personal God.</li> <li>• Known through Jesus Christ.</li> </ul>
<b>SIN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaches karma, the belief that the quality of this and future lives is determined by behaviour in this life and previous lives.</li> <li>• Sikh Gurus admitted their sins.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sin is our acts of disobedience to God and not living up to His standard of holiness.</li> <li>• Jesus was without sin.</li> </ul>
<b>JESUS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus was an enlightened teacher, but not God incarnate.</li> <li>• Most believe He is not written about in their holy book.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus is God’s only Son, God incarnate as a man.</li> <li>• He is the only means for salvation because of His life, death and resurrection.</li> </ul>
<b>SALVATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained by devotion to God through good works (meditating on God’s name, reciting hymns, hard work).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gained through faith and trust in the saving work of Jesus Christ, who died for our sins.</li> <li>• Salvation is a gift from God.</li> </ul>
<b>GOD’S WORD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripture was written by Guru Nanak, Kabir and other gurus and saints.</li> <li>• Considered to be the last Guru, treated like a holy living Guru.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scripture is God-breathed. God inspired over 40 writers to write His words.</li> <li>• Authoritative for human life.</li> <li>• It is without error.</li> </ul>
<b>WORLD RELIGIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All religions worship the same God.</li> <li>• All are different paths to the same God.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salvation is found in no one except Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12).</li> </ul>

# SHARING YOUR FAITH *with a Sikh Friend*



## **Friendship**

In many places in Canada, we have the unique opportunity to work with and befriend Sikhs. Develop genuine, long-term friendships with those to whom the Lord leads you, caring for them and accepting their care in return. Many Sikhs live with extended family, so seek to build relationships with their family if possible.

Developing an understanding of one another's cultures can take a long time, so be patient as you earn trust and learn about their worldview. Let love and humility be the core of your friendship. Try to understand how being Sikh affects their life. Some Sikhs may not be very religious and it will affect how you share your faith.

Hospitality is a key value in Indian culture. Invite your Sikh friends into your home and be prepared for them to honor you with matchless hospitality in return! Many Sikhs are vegetarians (no meat or eggs), so ask about and honor their religious dietary restrictions.

## **Respect for Their Faith**

Sikhs deeply respect their Gurus and history, and generally have a strong allegiance to the Sikh community and a fervent commitment to defending their faith. Perceived disrespect, especially toward the Gurus, could close the door to friendship and to further opportunities for dialogue. Focus instead on speaking about the beauty of Jesus Christ as Saviour.

## Respect for the Book

Sikhs treat their holy book with great reverence, so be mindful of how you handle your Bible in front of them. Putting your Bible on the floor, near your feet or underneath other books would be considered disrespectful. If showing a Sikh a passage from the Bible, use a copy that has not been highlighted or written in. The greatest respect we can give our Holy Book is to read and obey it, so be open in sharing how God's truth has impacted your life. After you earn trust, offer a copy of the Gospel of John or another portion of Scripture (in English or Punjabi, depending on their language abilities) and invite them to read it daily.

## Prayer

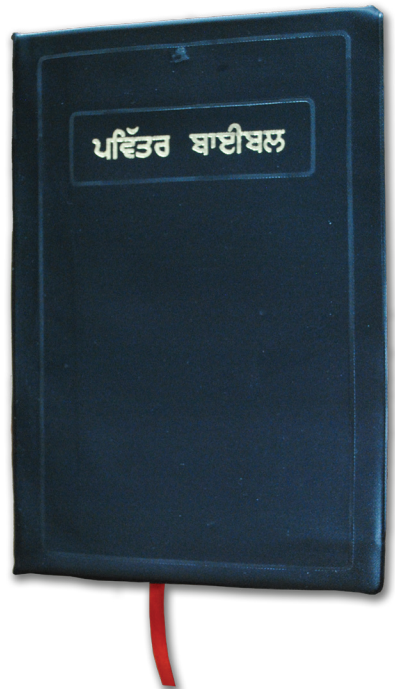
God is the One who changes hearts, and we depend on Him to do His supernatural work. Family and community pressure, misconceptions about Christianity, legalism and demonic influences all make the task of sharing Christ with Sikhs a challenge. Pray daily, and encourage others to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ to your Sikh friends and the others in their family and community.

## Storytelling

Though almost all Sikhs you meet in Canada are literate and able to read the Bible for themselves, hearing a story from Scripture will often be very interesting and meaningful for them. Choose a relevant story or parable from the Gospels and ask your Sikh friend if you can share it with them. Ask questions about what was interesting or significant and be prepared for a great discussion.

## Culture vs. Religion

Coming from India, where religion and culture are inseparable, many new immigrants equate Canadian culture and morals with Christianity. Issues such as sexual promiscuity, immodest clothing, racism, disrespect of parents and drug and alcohol abuse are deeply disturbing to many Asians. Distinguishing between secular Canadian culture and Christian teachings will be important for some immigrants to understand.



# SIKHS AND THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST



## Similarities

When beginning discussions of faith with a Sikh friend, there are a number of points of connection between our faiths. We both believe that there is one God, and that He is sovereign over the world He created. Scripture is immensely important to both faiths, and we are encouraged to read it daily. Fellowship with others from our religious community is a part of practicing our faith. Generosity and service to others in need is an expression of our faith. Both faiths acknowledge the value of obeying God and sacrificing for Him.

## Stumbling Blocks

Despite the similarities, it quickly becomes evident that there are core points of Christian teaching that a Sikh will have difficulty agreeing with. The belief that Christ is the only way to God is offensive to a Sikh, who believes that every religion is a valid path to God. The thought of a Sikh person leaving the Sikh path that they were born into to follow the Christian path is seen as a betrayal of their family and rich religious heritage.

The concept of the incarnation, God becoming man, is inconsistent with Sikh theology, which teaches that God cannot become human. Christians believe that we are born with a sinful nature and our guilt must be atoned for; Sikhs teach that people are essentially good. In Sikh teaching, meditation on the holy book is a means of cleansing a person from sin. In contrast, Christians value meditating on God's Word, but know it cannot cleanse from sin. It quickly becomes evident that, despite the similarities between our faiths, there are foundational truths that we do not agree on.

## The Uniqueness of Christ

Though similarities do exist between Sikhism and Christianity, it is important not to dwell on them. Sikhs believe that there are many paths to God and, if the Christian message is not presented as offering something unique, there is no reason for them to even consider following it. Emphasize how unique Jesus Christ is, that He gave His perfect life and rose from the dead to be our Saviour (not just dying like a Sikh martyr) so we can have a relationship based on God's grace. Christianity's uniqueness is not in giving a list of rules to follow, but in the offer of a changed heart through Christ's resurrection power. We can never do enough good deeds. He lived the perfect life for us.

## Counting the Cost

The process of a Sikh person going from hearing about Christ to choosing to follow Him can take months or even years. Those who become followers of Jesus Christ will almost invariably encounter deep resistance and even hostility from their families. Choosing to follow Christ carries a cost that may involve being cast out of their families and losing employment and the support of the Punjabi community. Our friendship must continue and deepen to care for them in the midst of the deep relational, financial and even physical cost that they may pay. Are we as Christ followers prepared to support them as they risk losing everything to gain Christ?

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**He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep  
to gain what he cannot lose.** - Jim Elliot

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# GLOSSARY



**Amrit ceremony (*ahm-rit*)** – the Sikh initiation ceremony.

**Guru (*goo-roo*)** – A spiritual teacher.

**Guru Granth Sahib (*goo-roo grunt sa-hib*)** – The Sikh holy book.

**Gurmukhi (*goor-moo-ki*)** – The written Punjabi script used in the Sikh holy book (the Guru Granth Sahib).

**Gurudwara (*goo-roo-dwah-rah*)** – A Sikh temple.

**Guru Nanak (*Goo-roo Nah-nuk*)** – The founder of Sikhism and the first of the 10 living Sikh Gurus.

**Khalsa (*Kull-sa*)** – The community of initiated Sikhs, literally “the pure ones.”

**Mul Mantar (*mool munter*)** – Considered the first teaching by Guru Nanak after his enlightenment. It is a summary of Sikh beliefs about God.

**Panj Pyare (*Pun-j pee-yaar-eh*)** – Literally the “five beloved ones,” the first five men to commit themselves to the Sikh faith through the initiation rite performed by Guru Gobind Singh. They are revered as examples of steadfastness and devotion.

**Punjabi (*pun-ja-bee*)** – A person from the state of Punjab in northern India. Also the language spoken by those in the state of Punjab.

**Sikh (*Seek or Sik*)** – Means learner or disciple. A follower of the Sikh religion.

**The 5 K’s** – Five physical items that are worn to identify Sikhs who have taken the initiation rite. Non-initiated Sikhs may still wear some of them.

# Helpful Resources

## From a Christian Perspective

**“Lions, Princesses and Gurus: Reaching Your Sikh Neighbour”** by Ram Gidoomal and Margaret Wardell: Published in 1996 about Sikhs in the United Kingdom, much of this thorough book is applicable to Sikhs in Canada.

**Sadhu Sundar Singh**; a devout Sikh who became a follower of Jesus in the early 1900s. There are numerous articles and biographies about him available in print and online.

**www.brotherbakhtsingh.org**: Bakht Singh came from a Sikh family, but became a follower of Jesus after he came to Canada as a university student in the 1920s. He had a profound impact on the Indian church through his preaching and leadership. His testimony, “How I Got Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory” can be found online.

## From a Secular Perspective

[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/)

## From a Sikh Perspective

The internet has a wealth of information written by Sikhs about their culture and religion. A couple helpful websites to start with:

[www.sikhnet.com](http://www.sikhnet.com)

[www.sikhs.org](http://www.sikhs.org)

## Punjabi Bibles

The Canadian Bible Society ([www.biblesociety.ca](http://www.biblesociety.ca), 1-800-465-2425) is currently working on revising the Punjabi Common Language Bible. Please contact them if you would like copies of what has been completed thus far.

## Sikh Seminar

If your church is interested in hosting a seminar about Sikhs and how to share the gospel with them, please contact Christar Canada with the information on the back cover.



### **Christar Canada**

P.O. Box 20164  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2M 7W7  
905-646-0228 | 800-295-4158 | [info@christar.ca](mailto:info@christar.ca)  
[www.christar.ca](http://www.christar.ca)

### **Christar US**

1500 International Pkwy., Ste. 300 Richardson, TX 75081  
214-838-3800 | [info@christar.org](mailto:info@christar.org) | [christar.org](http://christar.org)



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