

Unreached Peoples: The Sikhs of India

by Paul Hattaway

The speaker shares their experience meeting upper caste Sikhs in India and explores the similarities and differences between Sikhism and Christianity, ultimately longing to see the Sikhs come to know Jesus and worship him as Lord.

Scripture: Matthew 9:37-38, John 14:6, Acts 10:34-35, Romans 10:12, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:28, Ephesians 4:4-6, 1 Timothy 2:5, Revelation 7:9

Topics: "Missions Outreach", "Cultural Evangelism"

Description

This sermon explores the unique culture and beliefs of the Sikh community, focusing on their identity, symbols, and values. It delves into the question of how Sikhs can come to know Jesus while maintaining their cultural heritage. The sermon emphasizes the importance of actions over symbols and rituals, drawing parallels between Sikhism and the teachings of the Bible. It highlights the need to share the message of Jesus with love and acceptance, trusting in the unity of all believers from diverse backgrounds before God.

Transcript

On the train ride from New Delhi, it's easy to see why the Punjab is called the bread basket of India. Endless fields of grain crops stretch as far as you can see. The Punjab is the most prosperous state in India and is the homeland of the Sikhs.

We've come to meet upper caste Sikhs, to learn about them, to love them, and to ask God some questions. How can Sikhs come to know Jesus and worship him in a way that lifts him up as Lord and yet is an expression of the unique culture of the Sikhs? It's an odd phrase, but we've heard it a number of times. Where there are potatoes, there are Sikhs.

Basically, the Sikhs are proud of the success they've had at establishing themselves all over the world. There are about 24 million Sikhs worldwide, 15 million here in the Punjab. The largest population of Sikhs in the world, outside of the Punjab, is in Vancouver, Canada.

Sikhs are easy to spot on the street. Their turbans and beards give them instant recognition wherever they live. In fact, many of us in the West confuse Sikhs with Muslims, much to the dismay of the Sikhs.

The symbols of Sikhism are called the five Ks. They are worn by both men and women. Keshas, long, uncut hair that is kept under a turban or scarf when out in public.

Kanga, a wooden comb kept in the hair. Kara, a steel bracelet. Kachera, special shorts worn under the clothes.

And Kirpan, a short sword. Our friends also told us that while the five Ks are important symbols for the Sikhs, what really matter are a person's actions. I look like a Jat Sikh.

It's my appearance. It's my physical appearance. But I'll be labelled like that after my actions are being assessed by somebody else.

He's like a Jat Sikh. He's not. At some points on the surface, Sikhism seems compatible with the teachings of the Bible.

They say there's only one God, the Creator. The gurus preach the equality of everyone before God in service to your fellow man. Different religions have different shapes, different forms, different rituals.

But still, if the doctrine, the essence, the message is the same, we are devoted to that message, to that word. With the God and was God in your Christianity. It's startling to hear the Bible quoted, but reinterpreted like that.

They don't want to convert us, but they'd strongly disagree with our belief in Jesus as the way, the truth and the life. It's somewhat of a cliché to see these wheat fields and remember Jesus telling his disciples that the fields are ripe for harvest. But that's what we believe.

Day after day, as we spent time with our friends, heard their hopes, dreams, fears, felt their love and acceptance, we couldn't help but have our hearts break for them. We can't look down on the Sikhs, but we can hold up Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and mankind. Our only hope for an eternity that does exist.

An eternity that will someday include representatives from the Sikhs, if we trust the testimony of Scripture. After this, I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.

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