

Text-Study

Friendship Across Religions

Sikh sources:

Source(s) 1

- When someone who attaches himself to the God then everyone is his friend (p.238).
- For an enlightened person friend and foe are the same (p.272).
- Saintly persons are tolerant and good natured; friends and foe are the same to them (p.1356).
- Guru Granth Sahib
- 'The Lord lives in the heart of those who consider friend and foe alike'.⁷

Source(s) 2

- Persons whose sight banishes my evil mindedness, they are my true friends (p.520).
- Only those persons are my friends who can walk along with me (p.729).
- I long for such a friend who can unite me with the God (p.749).

Source(s) 3:

- Friendship with a fool never works out right (p.474).
- O sinner! No one will be your friend at the end (p.474).
- Thieves, adulterous, prostitutes and pimps make friendship with the unrighteous and eat with the unrighteous (p.790).

Source(s) 4:

- Those are false friends who do not go with you for even one step (p.238).
- O Farid! There are dozens who say they are friends; but I cannot find a true one (p.1382).
- I have grown weary of making many friends hoping that someone might be able to end my sufferings (p.37).

Questions for Sikh Sources:

Source(s) 1:

1. *In these sources, Sikhism is promoting universal friendship. Do you think that a virtuous person can learn to love all human beings?*

⁷ Guru Arjan Dev, Gauri Rag, AG 236.

2. *What is required of oneself to see everyone as a friend?*

Source(s) 2:

1. *In these sources, a friend has a role to play in the friend's spiritual development. Can someone be a friend if they do not contribute to their fellow's spiritual development?*
2. *Do real friends have to be travelling the same spiritual path?*

Source(s) 3:

1. *Is it your observation that people tend to make friends with those like themselves? What are the positive and negative sides of that?*
2. *How do these sources relate to the first sources? Is there a way of reconciling these sources with the idea that a virtuous person will make friends with everyone?*

Source(s) 4:

Here, the author seems to be deeply saddened and disillusioned, either by false friendships or the failure to make friendships.

Are there any clues in the verses themselves as to why the author might have failed to find friends?

What do people need to do in order to make true friends?