



The Four Vision Quests of Jesus

Steven Charleston

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- Christian theology as seen through the lens of Native American tradition

A unique look at Christian biblical interpretation and theology from the perspective of Native American tradition, this book focuses on four specific experiences of Jesus as portrayed in the synoptic gospels. It examines each story as a “vision quest,” a universal spiritual phenomenon, but one of particular importance within North American indigenous communities.

Jesus’ experience in the wilderness is the first quest. It speaks to a foundational Native American value: the need to enter into the “we” rather than the “I.” The Transfiguration is the second quest, describing the Native theology of transcendent spirituality that impacts reality and shapes mission. Gethsemane is the third quest. It embodies the Native tradition of the holy men or women, who find their freedom through discipline and concerns for justice, compassion, and human dignity. Golgotha is the final quest. It represents the Native sacrament of sacrifice (e.g., the Sun Dance). The chapter on Golgotha is a discussion of kinship, balance, and harmony: all primary to Native tradition and integral to Christian thought.

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