

Native American Religion and Christianity

Sacred - not common; a special gift, possession or practice that is honored

Deity - supernatural power or force with God like qualities

Spiritism - polytheistic or pantheistic, non separation of mans spirit, animals spirit and Gods spirit when it comes to salvation, modified behavior (works) are required for enlightenment.

The Shaman and Native American Indian beliefs

Shamanism is not a [specific](#) religion but a doctrine based on a belief that physical nature might be brought under the control of man, in the person of a Shaman. The Shaman is believed to have a spiritual connection with animals, supernatural creatures and all elements of nature. The Shaman helps members of the tribe to identify personal [Animal Totems](#) that are spirit guides who walk through life with them and sometimes appear in dreams or [Vision Quests](#) or on a [Spiritual Journey](#) in the form of an animal. Shamanism is mixed with other beliefs such as [Animism](#), [Totemism](#), Ritualism, and [Fetishism](#) and these beliefs, taken as a whole, have strong religious connotations. A shaman holy man is an educator, healer, prophet, and mystic seer who communicates with the spirits by leaving their physical body and entering a supernatural world.

Worship - revered, honored, esteemed higher than anything else often expressed in singing, dancing, and telling of ancient stories for validation.

Ritual - a religious rite that is practiced over and over the same way

Culture - a group of people who dress, talk, eat, recreated and worship in a similar manner. Oklahoma means “home of the red man”.

Compatibility - Overall we believe “Spiritism” is NOT compatible with Christianity. Tribes often took on different specific rituals or beliefs as do different denominations.

1492 Columbus European White Christianity -

1. many denominations represented
2. cultured (modern) or "civilized" lifestyles confused for a "faith" issue (considered "Heathen" if you don't sit at a table with a fork and knife)
3. technology and sanitation were often esteemed over respect for all life.

Whatever differences there were between denominations were insignificant when compared to the differences between the white European Christianity and their counterparts on the continent, the resident Native Americans. This fact, along with the desire and need for land, turned Native Americans into a convenient enemy for most groups of European settlers. The result was genocide. Genocide has to be one of the most anti-christ behaviors of humanity.

Various Tribal practices and beliefs -

Dakota aka Sioux- around N and S Dakota and Minnesota. Nomadic buffalo hunters characterized by oneness and unity with the natural world. They did not concentrate on strict religious doctrine or structure due to the ambiguous nature of their holy men. In essence, they believed that every object was spirit. For this reason, the Dakota held a docetic view of the universe in which nothing was real. Everything in the material world had only the appearance of being real. Spirits would interact with the material world and control the lives of men. These characters were often the objects of worship and praise.

Iroquois - one of the most highly organized tribes. around New York and Canada. their religion is characterized by a monotheistic belief in an all-powerful creator known as the "Great Spirit", or "Ha-wen-ne-yu." "The Iroquois believed in the constant superintending care of the Great Spirit. Lesser spirits like He-no, one of the more important spirits, who was given the thunderbolt and controlled the weather. According to some, he had the form of man and wore the costume of a warrior Apache -

Evil is represented by the brother of the Great Spirit, "Ha-ne-go-ate-geh", or "the Evil-minded". This evil spirit exists independently and controls its own inferior spiritual beings. These agents of evil also exist in the material world

and are placed there in an attempt to bring about evil. According to Morgan, the Great Spirit does not have any type of positive authority over the Evil-minded, except for the power to overcome him when necessary (1954,148). The red race is left to choose either obedience to the Great Spirit or submission to the Evil-minded. It is important to note that the Iroquois developed the idea of an immortal soul. This soul was judged by the Great Spirit upon the death of the body. The threat of punishment in the afterlife increased morality concerns, which aided in the success of the Iroquois Nation.

The Apache tribes of the southwestern desert region of the United States remain as one of the more elusive civilizations in American history. Little is known about this nomadic group of Native Americans that lived a somewhat isolated existence in the harsh environment of the arid southwest. Their territory encompassed the modern states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and extended into parts of Mexico. They were generally nomadic gatherers who relied on scarce resources found in their desert environment for survival. Survival under these conditions was difficult and there was little time for speculating in detail on matters of religion. For this reason, the belief system of the Apache tribes is less developed than the other two tribes mentioned earlier. Apache religion did not recognize a "large pantheon of gods and goddesses." Instead, their belief system concentrated on supernatural cultural figures that are responsible for the Apache way of life. These "supernaturals" interfered little in the daily activities of the people unless called upon to help an individual.

Over 680 Broken Covenants -

Senator Dan Inouye, a World War II Medal of Honor winner and Hero of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, said:

"In our early days as a nation, we entered into treaties with Native Americans pursuant to the provisions of the U.S. Constitution that recognize them as sovereigns. But later, we abandoned the path of an honorable course of dealings, and turned to war. Thousands lost their lives through these battles and horrific massacres. The native population everywhere was decimated.

"Forced marches to relocate the native people from their traditional homelands to areas west of the Mississippi in the dead of winter cost thousands of more

lives... The treaties could have signaled a return to a course of honorable dealings ... had the United States not proceeded to break provisions in every single one of the treaties....”

“Indian tribes aided George Washington and his troops during the American Revolution, and through more than 370 original treaties, our Nation pledged to protect Indian tribes and Indian lands. Yet as a Nation, we later ... engaged in warfare to seize Indian lands, destroyed Indian villages, and thousands lost their lives through battles and horrific massacres, at places like Sand Creek and Wounded Knee. Many Indian leaders, Osceola, Mangus Colorado, Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull and many others died at the hands of, or in the custody of, Federal officers and agents. Thousands died on forced marches from their homelands....”