

Native american religion

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When the Euro-Americans started to settle America they forced the Native Americans to adapt their culture and religion. The settlers were very serious about their Christian religion. They thought it was the one true faith and all people should believe in it. Euro-Americans actually feared the Native Americans because they felt that Native Americans were evil because they didn't have a religion. What the Euro-Americans didn't understand was that the Native Americans did have a religion and their own beliefs. Their religion and beliefs may have been very different from Christianity, but they did have one.

The Native Americans didn't understand why they should start believing in Christianity when they had their own strong beliefs. Native Americans believed in the supernatural, souls that exist in all people and animals. This may not be considered an actual " religion", but they see their beliefs and practices as an important part of their lives and culture. Each tribe had its own set of religious observances. However, some beliefs and religious practices were widespread and typical of Native American religion. Their survival depended on these beliefs and rituals.

These practices helped them avoid illness, produce enough food and control the weather. Native Americans had healing rituals to treat illnesses of the body and spirit. These rituals were meant to find and restore balance and wholeness in a person. This would bring one to a healthy and spiritually pure state. Native Americans would have ceremonies, Drum Dances, to seek help from the spirits. The spirits would assist them to ensure a successful hunt and a good harvest. After a good hunt or harvest Native Americans would have a ceremony to call the spirits to thank them.

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They felt that this would insure continued success in hunting and harvesting so they had enough food. Native Americans would also call upon the spirits to control the weather. This was sometimes done through rain dances.

Native Americans had another ritual called the Sun Dance. This ritual helped promote health and friendship. It was also away for Native Americans to give thanks to the " Creator". The " Creator" was responsible for creating all that surrounded them. Native Americans didn't have a precise belief about life after death.

Some believed that they would be reborn, return as a ghost, or go to another world. They would have after life rituals to ensure that the spirits do not continue to roam the earth and trouble to living. Religion greatly affected the everyday life of Euro-Americans. They came to America to practice their faith freely. Upon arriving to America settlers set out to search for the " right" religion that would satisfy the needs for everyone. Christianity started to grow. They believed this was the one and only path to life. They had strict rules with harsh discipline.

They believed the struggle between good and evil was their test of faith. All Christians believed in God, Christ and the Holy Spirit. God is the creator of all people and the world, everything that is seen and unseen. Christ is the son of God. He was sent for our salvation. Christ was conceived of the Holy Spirit and through the Virgin Mary. The Euro-Americans and Native Americans didn't understand each other religion and beliefs because of the difference that each religion had. Christianity believes in one god, while the Native Americans believe in many spirits.

Christians believe that after death they will go to haven if they believe in God and don't sin, otherwise they will go to hell. Native Americans don't have a clear understanding what will happen after death. Religion also played an important role in how society views women. This is true for the Native American as well as Euro-Americans. However, their views are very different. Native American women gave life so it was only natural for them to tend the fields to provide corn which sustained life. Their spirits would not offend the corn spirit.

In most Native American societies, wealth and power passed through the female line. Women made the decisions to move to more fertile grounds. Men took life. They hunted and went to war. In contrast, Euro-American men tended the fields. Hunting was considered a sport reserved for the nobility. Euro-American thought the Native American men to be lazy and therefore inferior. Christians viewed Native Americans were evil and bound for hell. Euro-Americans . Euro-Americans felt it was their Christian duty to convert Native Americans to Christianity to save their souls.

This caused a lot of tension between the two groups. Many Native Americans resisted efforts to convert. They thought if they did they would upset the spirit world possibly ruin a good hunt or harvest. Despite the differences between the religious worlds of Euro-Americans and Native Americans, there was no avoiding the transformation to Christianity. Euro-Americans forced the Native Americans to convert to Christianity. As a Kamia Indian, Janitian described in Native American Testimony he was lassoed and dragged by two men on horseback. They brought him to a mission. There he was made Christian, they baptized him.

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There are other stories of how Native Americans were forced to adapt to Christianity, if they didn't the Euro-Americans would make their lives unhappy. Many Native Americans did adapt to Christianity in hopes they would be able to live a prosperous life. Native Americans were promised an allotment of land. They were also given new tools to help aid in farming, as well as cattle. This was all needed for Native Americans to survive because Euro-Americans were starting to take over the land. Also, conversion to Christianity helped heal the sick. With more and more Europeans coming to America more disease were coming with them.

The Native American population was decreasing because of the amount of people that were dying from the new diseases. Native Americans tried their own rituals to cure the sick, but it wasn't working. However, Christian priest were able to help some of the sick. Some Native Americans kept their traditional beliefs, while others incorporated elements of Christianity into their own beliefs. The most widespread religion at the present time is known as the Native American Church. It incorporates both elements of spiritual practices and elements from Christianity.