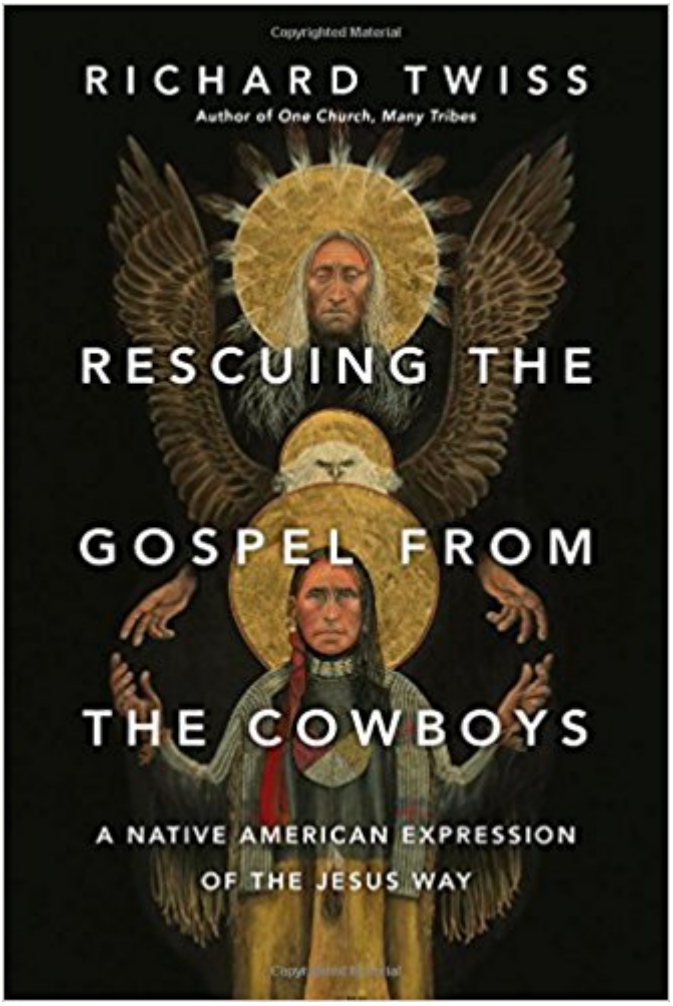
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Rescuing The Gospel From The Cowboys: A Native American Expression Of The Jesus Way



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Synopsis

Missio Alliance Essential Reading List of 2015 One of Seedbed's 10 Notable Books from 2015 The gospel of Jesus has not always been good news for Native Americans. The history of North America is marred by atrocities committed against Native peoples. Indigenous cultures were erased in the name of Christianity. As a result, to this day few Native Americans are followers of Jesus. However, despite the far-reaching effects of colonialism, some Natives have forged culturally authentic ways to follow the way of Jesus. In his final work, Richard Twiss provides a contextualized Indigenous expression of the Christian faith among the Native communities of North America. He surveys the painful, complicated history of Christian missions among Indigenous peoples and chronicles more hopeful visions of culturally contextual Native Christian faith. For Twiss, contextualization is not merely a formula or evangelistic strategy, but rather a relational process of theological and cultural reflection within a local community. Native leaders reframe the gospel narrative in light of post-colonization, reincorporating traditional practices and rituals while critiquing and correcting the assumptions of American Christian mythologies. Twiss gives voice to the stories of Native followers of Jesus, with perspectives on theology and spirituality plus concrete models for intercultural ministry. Future generations of Native followers of Jesus, and those working crossculturally with them, will be indebted to this work.

Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages
Publisher: IVP Books; First Edition edition (July 9, 2015)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0830844236
ISBN-13: 978-0830844234
Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches
Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews
Best Sellers Rank: #127,891 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 inÃ Â Books > History > Americas > Canada > First Nations #63 inÃ Â Books > Religion & Spirituality > Other Religions, Practices & Sacred Texts > Tribal & Ethnic > Native American #176 inÃ Â Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Ministry & Evangelism > Missions & Missionary Work

Customer Reviews

"Although Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys is primarily written for a Native audience,

Christians of all ethnicities ignore books like this at our own peril. Twiss and other Indigenous theologians are important prophetic voices to Christianity in America. The integrity of the ChurchÃ¢â ¬â ¢as well as the effectiveness of our participation in God's mission of reconciliation and redemptionÃ¢â ¬â ¢is severely diminished by ignoring the theological contributions of our Native brothers and sisters." (James Stambaugh, The Englewood Review of Books, Summer 2015)"In Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys, Dr. Richard Twiss is articulate as usual. He has an assertive and yet gracious ability to help non-Natives change their minds about Indigenous issues. I'm grateful for Richard's strong voice that is still resounding among us for our Indigenous people." (Cheryl Bear Barnetson, Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, BC, Canada)"Richard Twiss's Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys provokes and challenges while leading readers into a Native American understanding of the 'Jesus Way.' The reader is confronted directly with racism, oppression and pain in Twiss's own personal narrative as he sought to express a contextualized indigenous Christian theology that extended far beyond the limitations of 'white man's religion.' This indigenous account of decolonization of the gospel presents profound truths about the person of Christ and significant historical lessons from indigenous believers." (Mae Elise Cannon, author of Just Spirituality: How Faith Practices Fuel Social Action, Social Justice Handbook: Small Steps for a Better World, and coauthor of Forgive Us: Confessions of a Compromised Faith)"Dr. Richard Twiss is an irreplaceable voice for all peoples. His work is academically astute. His prose is inspiring and articulate. This work stimulates the mind, woos the heart and ultimately transforms faith." (Tony Kriz, author of Aloof: Figuring Out Life with a God Who Hides)"Richard Twiss was one of my most formative and important mentors in the Jesus Way. His words, life and ministry left an indelible mark on all who knew him. Now in this book, we are able to sit and learn once more from one of the most important voices in American Christianity. This text serves as a necessary prophetic critique of culturally captive Western Christianity but it also provides a redemptive way forward. Richard's words once again call us to a joyous and infectious hope that can arise from honesty." (Soong-Chan Rah, Milton B. Engebretson Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism, North Park Theological Seminary, author of The Next Evangelicalism)"A compelling witness and call to acknowledge the power of the gospel across cultural lines, in spite of colonial and neo-colonial oppression and distortion." (Justo L. GonzÃƒÂ¡lez, author of A History of Christian Thought)"I wish I had this book a decade ago when I started in Native ministry, desiring to create a fellowship where Native American students could meet Jesus without being required to cross cultures. Twiss challenges those who long to see an indigenous Native American church that contextualization must go beyond initial changes in music and language and 'address economic, political, legal, health, agricultural, etc.,

issues as well.’ I can’t wait to have the conversations Twiss starts in this book with my coworkers and others who long to see Jesus’ church thrive in the Native community." (Megan Krischke, co-coordinator of Native Ministries, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship)"Wow! Finally, a book that is refreshingly honest, profoundly spiritual and historically accurate about God’s love for the First Nations people from an indigenous perspective! Richard Twiss challenges us to take Jesus out of the box of tradition so we can see and celebrate the wonderful work of God in every tribe and nation. Bravo! I highly endorse this book and wholeheartedly agree that it’s time to rescue the gospel from the cowboys." (Brenda Salter McNeil, author of A Credible Witness)"Having sat at the feet of Richard Twiss, known the warmth of his friendship and grieved his passing, I was thrilled to learn of this volume we now hold. Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys is a significant book for all who seek to live in the way of Jesus. Speaking honestly and respectfully in the face of oppression and violence perpetrated in the name of the good news, Twiss invites fresh and real ways of following in the way of Jesus without preference to any one cultural frame, and therefore opens the way to be who you are, as a particular person, of a particular culture, and to do so in the shambolic way of the Creator. This book accomplishes a vital task that should be self-evident: a person can be fully Lakota and fully ChristianÃ¢â ¬â ¢in fact, there is no other way to be fully Christian. Twiss throws open the door for all indigenous churches to wrestle afresh with the fact that the gospel is at home in every culture and simultaneously alien to every culture." (Dwight J. Friesen, associate professor of practical theology at the Seattle School of Theology & Psychology, coauthor of The New Parish and author of Thy Kingdom Connected)"Richard Twiss’s legacy is to challenge the distinctions cowboys have made much of to explore how a more faithful life on the Jesus way can be forged. This message is important not only for cowboys and indians but for all who are committed to the cause of the gospel in our twenty-first century global context." (Amos Yong, professor of theology and mission, Fuller Theological Seminary)"Christians and ministry leaders, both Native and non-Native alike, will find Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys a relevant text. . . . Twiss calls us to seek dialogue over judgment and control by pursuing authentic worship. If we are Christians committed to corporate enactment of the story of God in worship, then we must be open to relating that story in ways that bring the fullness of who we are to God and to one another. Richard Twiss was also called Taoyate Obnajin, ’He Stands with His People.’ In this good work, he has lived into his name." (Alexandria Macias, Covenant Quarterly, Vol. 75, No. 1, 2017)"An eye-opening viewpoint from witnesses too seldom heard, this volume should be salutary for many pastors and administrative leaders." (Library Journal, July 2015)"This is a provocative, engaging book. It brought me to tears. It challenged many of my assumptions. I did not agree with every jot

and tittle of Richard's approach to contextualization, but this is a book every thoughtful Christian should read. Pastors, missionaries, and educators in particular need to chew on the issues Richard raises about contextualizing the gospel in light of the many cultures and peoples in the world, not least those who have been condemned and silenced and forced to 'unbecome' themselves, whether under the authority cowboys or others." (Nijay Gupta, Missio Alliance, August 28, 2015)"The late theologian Richard Twiss (1954Ã¢â ¬â œ2013) makes a powerful case that Native American Christians can pursue their faith 'while still fully embracing (their) tribal identity, traditional customs, cultural forms, worldview and rituals.' . . . Twiss's book offers valuable lessons for those struggling with decolonization in a religious context or any other. . . . Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals." (W. F. Schulz, CHOICE, November 2015)"This is an important book for non-Natives. We can and must learn the Native story, as we did that day sitting between Luther and Wesley at Gary Church. But we need to walk further by going into Indigenous communities, waiting humbly to be welcomed into their circle and story. The way to learn and restore a shattered relationship is by deep listening as we sit among Richard's oyate, his people. And at that moment a realization will dawn on us; we all are deeply embodied in the story. As Richard said at the end of each address, Mitakuye Oyasin, 'All my relatives.' This is our common story, but we hardly recognize it." (Gene L. Green, Books & Culture, November/December 2015)"The late Richard Twiss here offers both a powerful and dangerous gift to the church. For anyone who has wondered why so few Native Americans follow Jesus, this work reminds us how painful our history is when missionary efforts are wedded to colonization. Be prepared to have your assumptions challenged as you work through this important book chronicling the church's oft tense relationship to indigenous people." (Andrew Dragos, The Seedbed Blog, December 8, 2015)"Richard was enigmatic. On the one hand, as he made clear in the closing years of his life, he was a common man. Yet undoubtedly in many ways, he was not. He became, for many in the wider Indigenous community, 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness,' inviting believers to make straight paths for people to find Jesus. . . . Richard was a foil to anyone who encumbered the message of Jesus with culturally-bound prejudice. He presented a simple path to faithÃ¢â ¬â ¢inviting people to be all they could be through a renewed relationship with Creator's son. He welcomed everyone to be a part of what Creator was doing among us, making everyone feel special in the process." (From the foreword by Ray Aldred, Adrian Jacobs, Terry LeBlanc and Randy S. Woodley)

Richard Twiss (1954Ã¢â ¬â œ2013) was the founder and president of Wiconi International, a nonprofit that works for the betterment of Native people and communities by advancing culture,

education, spirituality and social justice in the spirit of Jesus. A member of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate from the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, his native name was Taoyate Ob Najin, or "He Stands with His People." He is the author of One Church, Many Tribes. A widely traveled speaker, activist, educator, author and networker within the Native North American community, Twiss led Native American performing arts teams and addressed issues of spirituality and justice in hundreds of venues worldwide. He served as a local pastor for thirteen years, worked as national director of Native ministries for the International Bible Society and was the U.S. representative for the World Christian Gathering of Indigenous People Movement. A board member of CCDA (Christian Community Development Association), he was a cofounder of NAIITS (North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies) and Evangelicals for Justice. Twiss was committed to serving the local Native community in Portland, Oregon, as a respected spiritual leader with his wife Katherine, who continues his vision today. He was a member of the Portland Indian Leadership Roundtable and was a board member of the city's Native American Youth and Family Center. He also taught at Portland State University, Warner Pacific College and Sioux Falls and George Fox Seminaries. As a writer, Twiss contributed to The Justice Project, Holy Bible: Mosaic, Jamestown Remembered, Coming Together in the 21st Century and Common Prayer by Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove and Enuma Okoro. He was a contributing editor for Cultural Encounters and wrote a bi-monthly column in Charisma Magazine called Smoke Signals. He earned a doctorate of missiology in inter-cultural studies from Asbury Theological Seminary.

I have long worked in ministry under the conviction that the Spirit of God can reach people most powerfully within the context of their God-given culture. Having served as a Bible translator for some 16 years among a people whose culture was in most ways diametrically opposed to my own, I found great comfort in knowing the if we were faithful in translating the Scriptures in their language, the way of applying that message in their lives could and should be left up to the local people. I am encouraged that the message of Jesus is beginning to find full expression among the First Nations people groups of North America in their local contexts. Thank you to Richard Twiss! Though he is no longer with us, his work will continue to bear fruit for generations to come!

Rev. Dr. Twiss makes some very good points in a very easy to read and understand style. I would recommend his book to clergy, academics and lay people alike and hope that when they read it they take the lessons he gives to heart.

As discribed

Amazing book for anyone looking into Native Christianity!

A much needed read for anyone desiring authenticity and honesty among all followers of Jesus.

Intelligent and insightful

Excellent book.

Richard Twiss has some amazing enlightened perspectives.

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