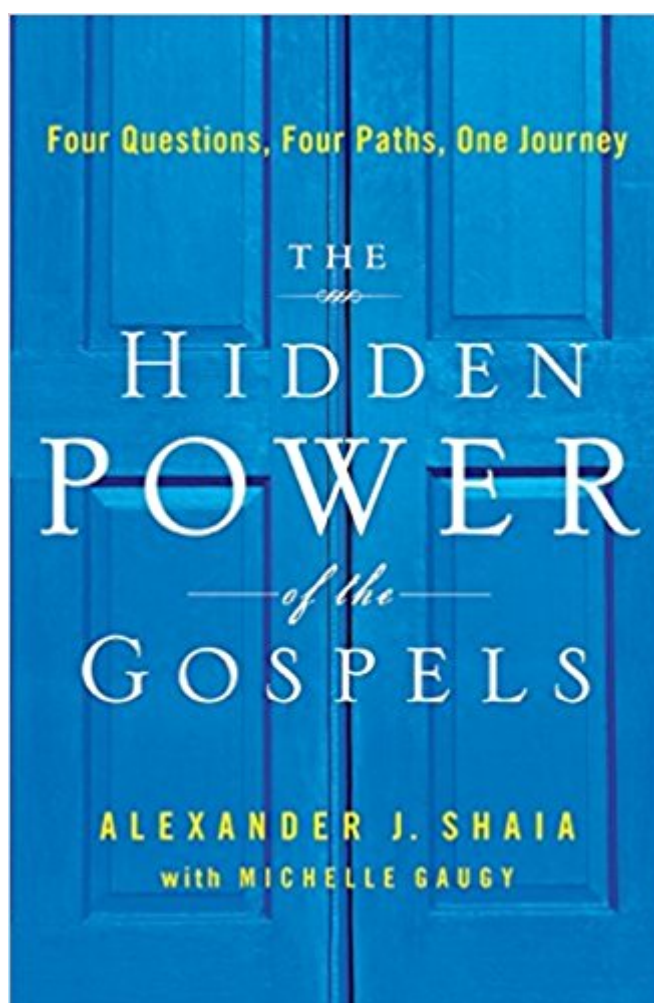


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# The Hidden Power Of The Gospels: Four Questions, Four Paths, One Journey



## Synopsis

In the tradition of Thomas Moore's *The Care of the Soul* and Don Miguel Ruiz's *The Four Agreements*, Alexander Shaia's *The Hidden Power of the Gospels* reveals how the recurring cycles of change, loss, enlightenment, and maturation are illuminated by the Bible's four gospels. Combining ancient Christian traditions, anthropology, and modern psychology, he reveals how each gospel focuses on a vital spiritual question. Matthew begins with How do we face change? Mark faces the hard question of How do we move through suffering? John stirs and elevates the soul as he asks, How do we receive joy? And Luke moves forward on the practical journey, as he inquires, How do we mature in service? By using this lens, the gospels become practical guides for creating faith-filled lives and a map for our never-ending spiritual journey.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 384 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; 1 edition (February 2, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0061898015

ISBN-13: 978-0061898013

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.2 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #294,763 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #77 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Meditations > New Testament](#) #372 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > New Testament > Jesus, the Gospels & Acts](#) #827 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Meditations](#)

## Customer Reviews

"Alexander Shaia reclaims the Christian gospels as religious practices shared across spiritual traditions • minds abiding in peace, guided by love, mandated to serve. This book is a jewel." (Sylvia Boorstein, Ph.D., bestselling author of *Happiness Is an Inside Job*) "It's a rare treat to have someone show you a previously undiscovered layer of meaning and import. Alexander Shaia has given us a tremendous resource." (Brian McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christianity*) "This work on the gospels is breathtakingly liberating. Dr. Shaia is redirecting the last hundred-and-fifty years of gospel scholarship." (Alan Jones, author of *Soul Making*) "This is a wonderfully wise and profound vision of the

Gospels, illuminating their inner meaning and our inner lives with them. (Jack Kornfield, co-founder of Spirit Rock Meditation Center and bestselling author of *A Path with Heart*) "An inspirational book, of value to anyone who turns to the gospels for insight and guidance. Readers will find themselves engaged, encouraged, and energized for their life-long Christian pilgrimage. (Robin Griffith-Jones, author of *Beloved Disciple*) "The liveliest presentation of the Gospels that I have seen in a very long time. (Phyllis Tickle, author of *The Great Emergence*) "Eye-opening, intelligent, and practical, *The Hidden Power* will transform the way you read scripture and reveal a path for a vibrant Christian way of life. (Diana Butler Bass, author of *Christianity for the Rest of Us*) "This book will enrich your prayer life. Every word is delicious. (Mpho Tutu, coauthor with Desmond Tutu of *Made for Goodness*) "Trust me on this. . . . Shaia isn't luring us into some esoteric corner. He's leading us out of the stress and confusion most of us face in daily life toward joy and stronger communities. (David Crumm, *Read the Spirit*) "[This] book is an important contribution that truly highlights the wisdom contained in the Bible and gives us teachings that are relevant to our lives no matter what faith we espouse. My prayer is that it is recognized for the gift it is. (Justine Willis Toms, Co-founder of New Dimensions Radio) "The *Hidden Power of the Gospels*... is a formidable work which can bring new life to the teaching and preaching ministries of Christian churches and added zest to the burgeoning interspirituality movement. (Spirituality and Practice) "In his new book, *The Hidden Power of the Gospels*, Dr. Shaia moves beyond the surface of the gospel accounts and blends his journey of *Equadratos* into the narrative. A provocative, pleasant piece of work. (SeattlePI.com) "The book is loaded with insight, and it is one of those texts that will appeal to any with an interest in psychology, counseling, and spiritual direction. (NextReformation.com)

Christianity is in crisis. Increasing numbers of people are "opting out." Why? Have recent discoveries in archaeology uprooted our faith in the Bible? Do the gospels no longer serve our modern, complicated lives? In *The Hidden Power of the Gospels*, Dr. Alexander Shaia moves beyond the typical approach to reveal an undiscovered truth that's been dormant for over one thousand years. In the tradition of such writers as Thomas Moore and Don Miguel Ruiz, Shaia reveals how the recurring cycles of change, loss, enlightenment, and maturation are illuminated by the Bible's four gospels. Combining ancient Christian traditions, anthropology, and modern psychology, he reveals what has been in front of our eyes for two thousand years: that each of the

gospels is centered on a different core metaphor and each focuses on a vital spiritual question. Matthew begins with the question "How do we face change?" Mark poses the hard question of "How do we move through suffering?" John stirs and elevates the soul as he asks, "How do we receive joy?" And Luke moves us forward on the practical path, as he inquires, "How do we mature in service?" Shaia weaves these questions together in what he calls the quadratos journey, a recurring fourfold cycle that lives on as a constant companion throughout our lives. Shaia unravels the divine inspiration of this mysterious sequence and links its ancient truths to universal, modern understandings. By using this lens, the gospels become practical guides for creating faith-filled lives that are relevant and useful in a time that is much more complex than village life millennia ago. In the sequence Shaia discloses, the gospels become the map for our never-ending spiritual journey.

Personal context for what I write: I am actively seeking to become a better Christian--due to tragedies in our family, I have returned to my faith as the basic way forward--to gain strength personally and to understand through service to others how I can once again be fulfilled. I am a life long protestant that has found traditional church involvement unfulfilling! I saw an rave review of "Hidden Power" and thought why not read? The reviewers promise was inviting, superlative and in the end for me; "transformative"! The luck of reading that review has lead me to a deeper understanding about my four big questions. How do I face change? How do I move through the darkness in my life? How do I receive joy, that is, an epiphany on how to I grow into a new and better state requires doing more than thinking about--it requires action. Finally, how do I mature in service, that is, shelving my ego and methodically improving each and every day. This book has been good for me on 4 levels. First, the gospel stories are brilliantly told with historical context, comparative differences in treatment of major events and the beautiful metaphors that make them rich. Second, since each of gospels tells Christ's story in a different way, I have learned what I could not have ever understood from just reading the Bible. Third, Dr Shaia is a seasoned counseling psychologist so his writing draws on the fundamentals of "how do I plan work out a transformative journey which improves my life". The four questions, anchored in the beauty of the gospels and psychological change principles could not possibly be richer but it is! Fourth and most powerfully, he structures the entire book around his insights that lead to "quadratos", a multi-cycle approach to personal (or organizational) transformation. As he puts it in his book, "the pattern of quadratos runs through every aspect of existence." So much more could be said that is positive and compelling. Dr. Shaia is a gifted writer so the book is easy to read. This is a book that can open your mind and heart--I hope it is ultimately read by millions of people, across the globe and within all the

established religions. For me, I am on my way to a better Christian life--Thank you Dr. Shaia!

This is an incredible book! The historical & cultural information about the gospels & Christ have made so many new connections for me. It is changing my perspective in so many ways.

This book gives a new-old look at the 4 major gospels and the reader gains insight into how and why they were written and used. We used this book in a Sunday School class with a small group of people who enjoy discussion and scholarship. There are so many situations today that it fits! It takes one through a Faith journey in orderly steps of self-insight, self-learning and faith-strengthening that equips him to be a true disciple who shares his faith with others. The original order of the gospels was different than the one we are familiar with and it explains why and what we have lost.

This is a gem of a book written with deep poetic resonance and a holy man's insight. Certainly up there with Andrew Harvey etc. A gifted set of personal insights that carry an informed anthropological and spiritual wisdom as well as a unique angle on how we look at the gospels and the cosmos.

This book will knock your spiritual and intellectual socks off if you give it a chance. Read it seriously, think about it, let it enter your soul. It could be the basis for your spiritual development for years. I gave up traditional Christianity decades ago, although I am a regular churchgoer. I'm not a great Bible lover. But the thoughtful and complex view Shaia presents has made me look for the underlying spiritual and developmental truths under the stories told about Jesus.

This is a can't put down book!! I'm convinced if every new Christian was handed a copy our theology would be very different & the world a different place. Ground-breaking as one would expect as Alexander Shaia has been reflecting on his take on the Gospels for many years. He posits very persuasively on the positioning of the four Gospels in an order that equates with the Christian journey & life's journey in general, & the cyclical nature of this process. He extends this to all life & all people. Those with a conservative viewpoint may find this disturbing.

This book is sort of a hybrid: It's got historical sections that show how the four gospels fit into the context of the historical audience. It's also got counseling and personal-help sections that relate the gospels to our journey through life. It was good enough that I kept it after reading, rather than

re-selling it, so that I could refer back to it later.

This book provided some interesting information about the history of the 4 gospels selected for the New Testament. The author also proposes a way of looking at the gospels that can be used to apply them to daily life. People looking for some suggestions in this regard will find the book helpful

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