

A Comparison
of Native American Missional Methodology:
The Moravians and the New Lights.

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The 18th century is known for several things, especially in North America. These years saw the French and Indian Wars, the creation of new colonies along the eastern coast of North America. They witnessed the formation of and beginnings of the United States of America. The 18th century also is when a series of evangelical revivals, largely occurring in the north eastern coast of North America took place. These revivals are now referred to as the “Great Awakening.” Closely connected to the Great Awakening is the missionary movement it created. On the one hand the Great Awakening inspired individuals to live out their Christian faith through missionary activity to the Native Americans. On the other hand prior to and throughout the Great Awakening there were already missionaries in North America emphasizing Native American evangelism. The purpose of this paper is to compare the missional methodology of the Moravians and the New Lights, in particularly that of David Brainerd in regards to Native American evangelism. Each of those compared are not only products of revivalism but also are foundational to what would later be referred to as the Modern

Missionary Movement of the early 19th century.¹ The Moravians² and the New Lights are both pivotal movements in not only Native American evangelism but also in modern missions and should therefore be understood systematically in their methodology.

The Moravians: Historical Context

It is fitting to begin with the Moravians, who largely sprouted out from among the early German and Dutch Pietists or as Thomas Kidd describes them, "The two main branches of European Pietism, Reformed and Lutheran..."³ On the one hand Dutch/Reformed Pietism was largely developed or made popular by Willem Teellinck (1579 – 1629) and Gysbertus Voetius (1589 – 1676). Teellinck was a supporter of what is referred to as the "second reformation"⁴ and through his preaching popularized piety for the layman.⁵ He stressed practical religion in such sermons as, "Concerning the Needful Duty of the Christian Coming to the Holy Supper; focused on the Words of Christ in Luke 22:19, 'Do this in my remembrance.'⁶ Teellinck made concrete a common core of piety while Voetius developed a more scholarly and systematic Pietism.

¹ It is evident that William Carey, whom the majority of missiologists refer to as the father of the Modern Missionary Movement found great inspiration from both the Moravians and David Brainerd, see Samuel Pearce Carey, *William Carey, D.D., Fellow of Linnaean Society* (Carey Press, 1934), John Clark Marshman, *The Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward, Embracing the History of the Serampore Mission* (London, 1859) and also Daniel Potts, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793-1837: The History of Serampore and Its Missions* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1967).

² David Schattschneider, "William Carey, Modern Missions, and the Moravian Influence," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 22, no. 1 (January 1998).

³ Thomas Kidd, *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale, 2007), 24.

⁴ Tony Maan, "The Eucharistic Presence of Christ in Seventeenth Century Dutch Protestant Popular Piety: Toward a Catholic - Protestant Rapprochement?," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 44, no. 2 (Spring 2009): 269.

⁵ Joel Beeke, "The Dutch Second Reformation (Nadere Reformatie)," *Calvin Theological Journal* 28, no. 2 (1993): 312.

⁶ Willem Teellinck, *Dengaende de Schuldige plicht der Christenen ontrent the heyliche Avondmael. Ghedaen over de woorden Christ Lucas cap.22. vers. 19: 'Doet dit tot minjer ghedachtenisse.'*

Voetius published *Exercitia et Bibliotheca Studiosi Theologiae* in 1644 through the University of Utrecht. This volume theologically upheld the two revolutionary ideas that when intertwined created the basis of Pietism: genuine godliness and proper living.⁷ These men among others cultivated the idea of individual devotion to God and connected such with sacrificial ministry.⁸ The Dutch Pietists were largely concerned with a genuine faith religion as opposed to what Kidd refers to as “...formal religiosity...”⁹

On the other hand, since the Dutch Pietists emphasized genuine faith the German Pietists contributed largely to the aspect of godly living. Perhaps the most influential of the Moravian movement regarding German Pietists are what Michele Gillespie refers to as the “...Halle based leaders”: Jakob Spener and August Herman Francke.¹⁰ Frederick Herzog refers to Spener as the founder of Pietism as a movement, “What many had felt and said in one way or another, Spener was able effectively to communicate, evoking a wide response.”¹¹ This was done through the publication of Spener’s *Pia Desideria*¹² in 1675. In this writing Spener offered six proposals to correct the current condition of the Church,

⁷ Voetius also wrote two other revolutionary Pietistic works, *Proeve van de cracht der godtsalicheyt* (1628) and *Exercitia Pietatis* (1664) neither of which have been translated into English. Johann Georg Welch still holds *Exercitia Pietatis* as the foremost work among the Reformed. Tanis, James, *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity: Reformed Pietism in Colonial America*, ed. F. Ernest Stoeffler (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 34.

⁸ For an excellent source dealing specifically with the Dutch Pietists see, Fred Van Lieburg, *Living for God: Eighteenth Century Dutch Pietist Autobiography* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2006).

⁹ Kidd, *The Great Awakening*, 25. See also Ted Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Columbia, 1991).

¹⁰ Michele Gillespie and Robert Beachy, comps., *Pious Pursuits: German Moravians in the Atlantic World* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2007), 4.

¹¹ Frederick Herzog, *European Pietism Reviewed* (California: Pickwick Publications, 2003), 19.

¹² Also titled, *Heartfelt Desire for a God-pleasing Reform of the True Evangelical Church. Together with Several Simple Christian Proposals Looking Toward This End.*

them being ultimately the main points of Pietism.¹³ For Spener, primitive Christianity as expressed in the New Testament functioned as a model for both individual and communal ecclesial activity.¹⁴

August Hermann Francke (1663 – 1727), the other of the Halle-based leaders is perhaps the most influential individual for the Moravians. It was Francke that, "...translated the Pietism program into a vast network of influence and outreach."¹⁵ One of the many ways that Pietism grew was through an orphanage opened in 1695 in Halle largely due to the workings of Francke. Along with the Halle orphanage Francke organized Bible distribution as well as Protestant care in Eastern Europe as well as in the colonial United States. In very similar ways to that of Spener, Francke's writing and sermons emphasize the importance of Christians being godly examples within the community as well as being daily in God's word and to keep a diary.¹⁶ There is no doubting that

¹³ These 6 proposals are, (1) Beyond the daily preaching of the pulpit, there should be diligent reading of the Scripture by the head of the household. (2) Each Christian is a priest and part of being such is to teach others concerning living and salvation. (3) The majority of Christianity exists in practice. (4) Christians must have great concern for the protection of the Spiritual life. (5) Spener placed great emphasis on educational reform, calling for Biblical practice within Theological training. (6) The sermon and or preacher should edify the inner life of the hearer rather than an opportunity for showmanship. It is interesting to note the similarity between Spener and Luther. Herzog, *Pietism Reviewed*, 14-7.

¹⁴ For a comprehensive biography of Spener see, K. James Stein, *Phillip Jakob Spener: Pietist Patriarch* (Chicago: Covenant Press, 1986). See also, Johannes Wallman, *Phillip Jakob Spener und die Anfanges des Pietismus* (Tubigen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1970) and Georg Gremels, *Die Ethik Phillip Jakob Speners nach seinen Evangelischen Lebenspflichten* (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2002).

¹⁵ Herzog, *Pietism Reviewed*, 20.

¹⁶ Francke's titles included, "Rules for the Protection of Consciousness and for Good Order in Conversation or in Society" (1689), "A Letter to a Friend Concerning the Most Useful Way of Preaching" (1725), "If and How One May be Certain that One is a Child of God" (1707), "Pure and Unblemished Worship" (1704) and "Admonition to the Twelve Students Traveling to Lapland" (1722). Peter Erb, ed., *Pietists: Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 99-166.

Francke played a pivotal role in the development of the Moravians.¹⁷

At this point it would be helpful to review five principles developed by Stephen Neil pertaining to early Pietist missions¹⁸ as a framework for future Moravian missions. The first principle is that Church and school are to be synonymous. Because the Pietists placed such a great deal on reading the Word of God, they attempted to educate Children and adults so that they would be able to read the Bible themselves. Secondly the Pietists recognized the importance of Bible translations. How else would the Bible be useable in foreign lands? Third, that the preaching of the Gospel must be based on knowledge of the natives. Fourth, the aim of missionary activity is obvious and individual conversion. These previous two principles were largely an attempt to genuinely convert natives rather than to westernize them. The final theory composed by Neil is that the Pietists sought to as quickly as possible initiate native converts into ministry as to have them eventually take over.¹⁹ These five tenets are helpful in understanding the development of Moravian missional methodology.

The final individual that will be examined is not only the founder of the Moravian movement but also is often regarded as the true father of modern missions, Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf.²⁰ Zinzendorf was born in May, 1700 and from a very early age revealed promising signs of leadership and blessing.²¹ His father died from tuberculosis hardly a

¹⁷ Sadly there are not many biographies or works of Francke in English, see Gary R. Sattler, *God's Glory, Neighbor's Good: A Brief Introduction to the Life and Writings of August Hermann Francke* (Chicago: Covenant, 1982). See also Peter C. Erb, *Pietists: Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), Marianne Beyer-Frohlich, *Pietismus und Rationalismus* (Leipzig, 1933), Gustav Kramer, *August Hermann Francke: Ein Lebensbild* (Halle, 1880), Erich Beyreuther, *August Hermann Francke 1663-1727: Zeus des lebendigen Gottes* (Marburg: Verlag der Francke, 1956).

¹⁸ Composed mostly from a work concerning the Royal Danish Mission, Arno Lehmann, *Alte Briefe aus Indien* (Halle, 1957).

¹⁹ Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (London: Penguin, 1986), 195-7.

²⁰ B.M Brian, "Zinzendorf, Father of Modern Missions," *Missionary Review of the World*, no. 23 (1900).

²¹ Warneck gives an entire chapter to the Moravian missional movement, focusing largely on Zinzendorf. Gustav Warneck, *Outline of a History of*

month after Nicolaus was born, but upon his deathbed he recognized that his son was unusually blessed, "...I should bless you who are already more blessed than I who am about to stand before the throne of Jesus."²²

It is clear that Zinzendorf was part of a family that embraced Protestantism and encouraged a personal relationship with Jesus Christ,

When I was six years old, my preceptor, Herr Christian Ludwig Edeling...spoke a few words to me about my Savior and his merits; and in what sense I belonged to him and to him only. These words made so deep and lively an impression on me that I fell into a long protracted paroxysm of tears...This confidential interchange of thoughts and feelings prompted all my endeavors in later years to establish bands or societies for mutual conference and edification.²³

All biographers will agree that Zinzendorf was largely influenced by Martin Luther and August Hermann Francke.²⁴ On one hand Luther influenced Zinzendorf concerning the love of God's Word, the beauty of the sacraments and the necessity of Christian freedom. On the other hand Francke influenced Zinzendorf concerning the practicality of the gospel, the power of Christians united and the need of a renewed missions movement.²⁵ Weinlick emphasizes that the links made while studying with Francke at the University of Halle lead to the launching of Moravian missions.²⁶

Protestant Missions from the Reformation to the Present Time (New York: Revell Company, 1903), 53-73.

²² Natzmer, Gneomar Ernst von, *Die Jugend Zinzendorfs*, trans. John R. Weinlick, 1.

²³ John Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church* (Pennsylvania: Moravian Church Press, 1989), 19.

²⁴ W. Walker, "Zinzendorf: Life and Work," in *Great Men of the Church*, (Chicago: Chicago University, 1908). See also, A.J. Lewis, *Zinzendorf the Ecumenical Pioneer* (London: SCM Press, 1962), Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

²⁵ For an excellent introduction to Zinzendorf's theological outlook see Craig Atwood, *Community of the Cross: Moravian Piety in Colonial Bethlehem* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, 2004), 45-75. See also, David Schattschneider, *Souls for the Lamb: A Theology for the Christian Mission According to Count Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf and Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg* (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1976).

²⁶ Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf*, 29-30.

In short, Zinzendorf transformed his central European estate into the center of the Moravian religious and education effort beginning in the early 1720's known as "Herrnhut."²⁷ Within the first five years Herrnhut had grown tremendously and was attracting not only Moravian immigrants, but German Pietists and other persecuted Protestants who dissented from their congregations. Within ten years this group of "Herrnhunters" grew and developed a new religio-socio-economic environment which highly emphasized missions per Zinzendorf's interests.²⁸ In fact the idea of missions became so important to the Moravians that the term "Moravian" became synonymous with missions.²⁹ Within twenty years the Moravians established Missionary presence in the West Indies, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, South America, Southern Africa, Labrador (South and Mid-Eastern Canada) and in eastern North America emphasizing Native American evangelization.³⁰ The methodology of the Moravians Native American Missions will now be explored.

The Moravians: Missional Methodology

The methodology of the Moravians can largely be drawn based on the convictions of both the influences and beliefs of the Moravian leaders. A specific Moravian missional methodology is difficult to arrange due to

²⁷ It is difficult to say exactly when the estate became the "estate." Weinlick asserts that prior to August, 1723 with the effects of the Covenant of the Four Brethren which is when many assume to be the beginning of the Moravian Movement, there was an established orphanage already. Ibid, 66-7.

²⁸ Gillian Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds: A Study of Changing Communities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 2. See also Hunter James, *The Quiet People of the Land: The Story of the North Carolina Moravians in Revolutionary Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1976)

²⁹ John Weinlick and Albert Frank, *The Moravian Church through the Ages: The Story of a Worldwide, Pre-Reformation Protestant Church* (Pennsylvania: Moravian Church Press, 1989), 75.

³⁰ "The remarkable nature of this world-wide missionary movement can be appreciated only when it is borne in mind that the entire congregation at Herrnhut in 1732 numbered about six hundred, that the great majority of its members were very poor, that the means of transportation and the maintenance of communications were exceedingly limited..." Taylor Hamilton and Kenneth Hamilton, *History of the Moravian Church: The Renewed Unitas Fratrum 1722-1957* (Pennsylvania: Moravian Church Press, 1967), 34-59.

the fact that there was no systematized Moravian outlook on theology or more specifically missiology at the time. It is important to understand that the Moravians in colonial North America involved in Native American evangelization were of a similar mind set to that of Zinzendorf; meaning that the purpose of evangelization was based on the desire to ultimately spread the Gospel to those who had not heard it. The following methodology is based on both the theological outlook of Nicolaus Zinzendorf and intense research of mission narratives regarding Native American evangelism primarily in Georgia, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

Zinzendorf and the Moravians held to and largely developed an interesting theological idea regarding personal relationship with Jesus Christ and with the community: that is “theology of the heart” and it relates directly to the Moravian missional methodology.³¹ Zinzendorf recognized that the greatest threat to Christianity was not unity over doctrine or beliefs but a heart that was not passionate after Jesus Christ. Atwood asserts that this “theology of the heart” was developed by the earlier devotional material of writers such as Jan Amos Comenius, Johannes Arndt, Paul Gerhard, and Pierre Poiret yet it was the Moravians that took such an idea mainstream.³² The theology of the heart was a response to the academic struggles for Christians in light of the Enlightenment. Rather than depending on reason concerning salvation, the Moravians relied on ones will, emotions and actions being set to glorify Christ. Such devotion was prevalent among other contemporary Protestants yet for the Moravians such devotion was not only central but more intense. From such devotion the missionary enterprise emerged.

An important aspect of the Moravian missional methodology is their uniqueness regarding views of civility. Rachel Wheeler is among a growing number of historians and missiologists that assert that the Moravians were unlike any other European or American missionary

³¹ For a more detailed description of Zinzendorf's theology see Arthur Freeman, *An Ecumenical Theology of the Heart: The Theology of Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf* (Pennsylvania: Moravian Publication Office, 1998).

³² While the Moravian movement was not “mainstream,” the theology of the heart was implemented by anyone who claimed to be of the United Brethren. Atwood, *Community of the Cross*, 43.

society.³³ Previous to the Moravian missionary presence in North America there was already missionary work being done. However the work being done was for the most part rejected by Native Americans in light of several aspects. The first of such aspects was that missionaries claimed that while both the white man and the Indian were created by God they were still created separately.³⁴ This idea created an intense resentment to the Gospel message simply because most Indians thought that missionaries were attempting to civilize them in order to enslave.

Secondly most Indians recognized a strong disconnect between the claims of missionaries and the actual lifestyle lived.³⁵ In several Native American accounts, primarily drawn from the Mohawks³⁶ it is clearly seen that the Indians had no problem understanding the simple claims of Christianity, the issue was that the missionaries were not living by the teachings they preached.³⁷ In most accounts this was largely due to the abuse of alcohol exhibited by the “white men.”³⁸

The final reason why evangelization was difficult among Native Americans was because the Indians continually concluded that their old ways were better than the ways of the Europeans. Early missionaries underestimated the learning capacity of the Indian and condensed the Gospel to something suitable only for children. In so doing the Indians never encountered a god that was more powerful than their native god, *Manitou*.³⁹

³³ Rachel Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope: Mohicans and Missionaries in the Eighteenth-Century Northeast* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 83.

³⁴ Michael McNally, *Ojibwe Hymn Singers: Hymns, Grief, and a Native Culture in Motion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 14.

³⁵ Paul Wallace, *Conrad Weiser: Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Pennsylvania: Wennawood Publishing, 1996), 144. See also James Merrell, “Shamokin, ‘The Very Seat of the Prince of Darkness’: Unsettling the Early American Frontier,” in *Contact Points: American Frontiers from the Mohawk Valley to the Mississippi, 1750-1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 16-57.

³⁶ Robert Spencer and Jesse Jennings, *The Native Americans* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965). See also Robert Hamilton, *The Gospel Among the Red Men* (Nashville: SBC, 1930) and G.E.E. Lindquist, *The Red Man in the United States* (New Jersey: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1973).

³⁷ Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 83.

³⁸ Peter Mancall, *Deadly Medicine: Indians and Alcohol in Early America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995).

³⁹ Wheeler, *To Live Upon Hope*, 84.

The Moravians went against what the Native Americans had seen in previous missionaries. Because of their strict discipleship, love for one another and their Biblical teaching the Moravians saw success among the Indians where previous missionaries failed. The Moravians were outcasts themselves and untied to any particular crown or set of rules. This methodology is tied closely with the “theology of the heart” and the fact that the Moravians understood the Indians concerns about enslavement and political pressure. It is important to state at this point that while this aspect of Moravian methodology is clear, it does at the same time have it failures. Because the Moravians were not largely concerned with civilizing or imperialism, the Moravians did not focus on planting “Moravian” churches or establishing denominational outfits. This eventually constituted to the numerical decline of the Moravians in later centuries.

Another methodology that should be reflected upon is the Moravian ability to face both utter danger and daunting task in order to spread the gospel. The Moravians exemplify the courageous missionary spirit in that they ventured into what were essentially undiscovered regions of colonial North America. More specifically the Moravians focused strongly on the southern colonies, especially Georgia⁴⁰ and North Carolina.⁴¹ Of course that is not to say that the Moravian missionaries were not present in the northern colonies.⁴² Wherever the Moravians were they made it their mission to take the Gospel to the natives. The missionaries took on learning languages and acquiring cultural knowledge without modern aids; and several were quite successful.⁴³ In

⁴⁰ Adelaide Fries, *The Moravians in Georgia, 1735-1740* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1967). See also Rowena Malinton, *The Moravian Springplace Mission to the Cherokees* (2 vols., Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2007).

⁴¹ Daniel Thorp, *The Moravian Community in Colonial North Carolina: Pluralism on the Southern Frontier* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989). See also Levin Reichel, *The Moravians in North Carolina: An Authentic History* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 1968).

⁴² John Heckewelder, *A Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians, from its Commencement, in the Year 1740, to the Close of the Year 1808* (Arno Press, 1971).

⁴³ Wellenreuther, Hermann and Carola Wessel, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger, 1722-1781*, trans. Julie Tomberlin Weber (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

short, the Moravians took the words of Paul, “I have become all things to all men...” (1 Cor 9.22) literally in their mission activity. This courageous stand regarding missions is what largely influenced the leaders of the Modern Missionary Movement and is a pivotal methodology.⁴⁴

There has been three distinct methods presented thus far concerning Moravian missions: a theological, a social and a personal. In theological terms the Moravians connected solidly their understanding of the theology of the heart with their mission activity. This relationship between faith and action stimulated all those who were of the Moravian community to a genuine missional action. In regards to a social methodology the Moravians were much less concerned with civility than were previous missionary societies. Because of this the Native Americans were more open to hear what the missionaries had to say and were more likely to incorporate Christian practices into their community. Not only were the Moravians uninterested in claiming ground for a particular ruler, they were individually courageous in the face of a new wilderness. They took the example of Christ suffering on the cross as a beacon for any peril they encountered. The early Moravians were indeed mission pioneers and their methods established the foundation for the Modern Missionary Movement. William Carey exclaimed, “See what these Moravians have done...”⁴⁵ Let us now look into the methods of another mission movement, that of the New Lights.

The New Lights: Historical Context

Much like in the context of the Moravians, the New Lights were part of a movement made up of several different theological approaches and individuals. Before getting into the historical makeup of the New Lights, it would be beneficial to define what is meant by “New Lights.” The term New Lights refers to a movement largely begun by Jonathan Edwards with the majority being concentrated in and around New England; hence it is also referred to as “New England Theology.”⁴⁶ This movement

⁴⁴ Karl-Wilhelm Westmeier, “Becoming All Things to All People: Early Moravian Missions to native North Americans,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21, no. 4 (October 1997).

⁴⁵ J.E Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1922), 3.

⁴⁶ Edwards Amasa Park defined the movement. “It signifies the formal creed which a majority of the most eminent theologians in New England

emphasized the legitimacy of the occurring spiritual awakenings and compared to the Moravian movement was much more concerned with theological unity. Frank Lambert includes in his description of the New Lights, "...reborn men set out to create a new society compatible with the vision opened in the Great Awakening."⁴⁷ The handbook of this movement was primarily Edwards, *Freedom of the Will* which dealt with the reconciliation of absolute Calvinist predestination and the demand for holiness.⁴⁸ The New Lights can be defined as Edwardsean Puritans. While the New Lights were not a self-sustaining denomination it is a legitimate movement and constitutes an important shift in mission thought within Calvinist Evangelicals. The missionary efforts of the New Lights have had a definite influence in mission methodology and theology throughout the Modern Missionary Movement.⁴⁹

The missiology of the New Lights was chiefly influenced by several Puritan leaders, namely Richard Sibbes, Richard Baxter and Jonathan Edwards. Richard Sibbes (1577-1635) was exposed very early on to Protestant thought. Sibbes lived and died as a minister of the Church of England but supported the Puritan movement independently. There is a great deal of silence concerning his personal life and about his accomplishments. He remains known through his vast collection of sermons and as an extremely influential preacher in the early seventeenth century.⁵⁰ Douglas Elwood concluded that Sibbes is among the purest examples of the Puritan tradition.⁵¹ Within the theology and

have...sanctioned, during and since the time of Edwards. It denotes the spirit and genius of the system...in their writings." Douglas Sweeney and Allen Guelzo, eds., *The New England Theology: From Jonathan Edwards to Edwards Amasa Park* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 15.

⁴⁷ Frank Lambert, *Inventing the "Great Awakening"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 135.

⁴⁸ Sweeney, *New England Theology*, 15.

⁴⁹ R. Pierce Beaver, *Ecumenical Beginnings in Protestant World Missions* (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1962), 18. See also _____, *Church, State, and the American Indians* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1966).

⁵⁰ Sibbes is responsible for the conversion of several Puritan leaders including John Cotton. Sidney Rooy, *The Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition: A Study of Representative Puritans, Richard Sibbes, Richard Baxter, John Eliot, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 16.

⁵¹ Douglas Elwood, *The Philosophical Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (New York, 1960), 107.

sermons of Richard Sibbes there are three distinct principles that can be drawn regarding missiology. First that God is sovereign over all. More specifically that God's sovereign will is not altered by man's act of faith. Predestination, providence and election all work together and includes missions.⁵² Secondly that God uses means, namely humans to accomplish redemption. For Sibbes such redemption was seen in the Church and its ordinances and the preaching of the word. "Preaching is the chariot that carries Christ up and down the world."⁵³ God could convert the elect by a direct spiritual act, but rather He chooses to use the weakest means to do so, such being missional activity. Thirdly Sibbes asserted that man must respond to the gospel. While predestination is given a great deal of emphasis in Sibbes sermons, he continually calls attention to the seemingly contradictory idea of man's responsible choice for Christ and godly living. Sibbes saw no way of avoiding this direction regarding predestination and repentance. "The answer is ours but the power and strength is God's, whereby we answer..."⁵⁴ These three theological principles are foundational for the New Light mission's movement.

Richard Baxter (1615-1691) is another pivotal figure in Puritan missional theology. Baxter was passionately concerned with both church unity and conversion.⁵⁵ For the most part Baxter aligns with Sibbes in the three principles discussed earlier regarding predestination and repentance yet Baxter introduced new developments. Baxter developed the idea of God's sovereign will as seen in a "beyond-time and beyond-logic" position.⁵⁶ The tension between God's will and man's action was contradictory but Baxter did not linger on it, he concluded that such is a mystery of God and that man indeed is obliged to spread the gospel⁵⁷ Baxter also describes functions of two types of ministers, that of the "fixed" and "unfixed." On the one hand the fixed minister refers to a

⁵² Sibbes, Richard, *The Complete Work of Richard Sibbes, D.D.*, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (Edinburgh, 1862), 510.

⁵³ *Ibid*, 170.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 515.

⁵⁵ Geoffrey Nuttall and Owen Chadwick, *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962* (London, 1962), 184-85.

⁵⁶ Rooy, *Theology of Missions in the Puritan Tradition*, 153.

⁵⁷ Richard Baxter, *The Practical Works of Richard Baxter, I - IV* (London, 1888), I 639.

minister that has particular duties within a local, particular church.⁵⁸ On the other hand the unfixed minister is someone who employed themselves in converting pagans or as Baxter put it "...a pastor in the universal church."⁵⁹ Here Baxter recognized the ministry office of the missionary and emphasizes the spiritual gifts of the missionary. Baxter calls attention to the human responsibility to use our spiritual gifts not only to spread the gospel but by them to see our own conversion. Baxter even developed what might be called an early missional methodology based on the Great Commission, that the proper order of pagan conversion is to preach the gospel, to baptize and to teach all things.⁶⁰ Baxter holds a particular place within Puritan tradition as developing Sibbes understanding of missions in a practical manner.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) is perhaps the most important theologian/pastor of the eighteenth century. Largely known for his work within the Great Awakening, Edwards also is responsible for the "New Light" missionary movement. As seen in the developments of Sibbes and Baxter, Puritans were treading through the tension of Calvinism and missions for decades previous to Edwards. Yet Edwards redefined not only the developing previous missional ideas but also he connecting missions and the end times. "Edwards hoped, in his devout heart of hearts, that the Great Awakening was the overture to the day of judgment and the millennium."⁶¹ This was done through the thesis of Edwards, *History of Redemption* which Perry Miller states is the "unity of history."⁶² It is clear that Edwards introduction of theology structured historically was a radical break from structure of Puritan theology which is why the New Light movement can be described as an Edwardsean-Puritanism.⁶³ Edwards was under the impression that the events of the Great Awakening were preparatory for a soon dawning millennial reign

⁵⁸ Ibid, 556.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 641.

⁶⁰ F.J Powicke, "Some Unpublished Correspondence of the Rev. Richard Baxter and the Rev. John Eliot, 'The Apostle to the American Indians' 1656-1682," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, no. 15 (1931).

⁶¹ Sweeney, *The New England Theology*, 14.

⁶² Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (Cleveland, 1959), 313.

⁶³ Rooy, *Missions in the Puritan Tradition*, 293.

of the Church.⁶⁴ This millennial reign of the Church was to come about by the successful labors of the missionaries. This particular view of connecting the eschaton and mission work is specific to the New Lights and is evident in the diary of David Brainerd.

Two other key aspects of Edwards influence on the New Lights was his aggressive Calvinistic offense to the watering down of theological determination. This was largely in response to the British Enlightenment, where the idea of a sovereign God was turned upside down in the face of modernity. For Edwards, God was completely sovereign over history yet a popular notion that mere material substance and forces controlled human actions emerged with the Enlightenment.⁶⁵ The New Lights also emphasized civil action. While they did express a separation of church and state, the New Lights emphasized the church's role in America's policies. On one hand the New Lights could not change laws regarding alcohol, slavery and Sabbath observation. Yet on the other hand they viewed public awareness as a vital demonstration of their Christianity and organized anti-alcohol and anti-slavery organization that encouraged Christian involvement in politics.⁶⁶

In short there are six distinct theological outlooks on missions for the New Lights. First that the tension between God's will and man's action does not disregard the importance of missionary work. Second that God indeed chooses means to accomplish redemption. Third that man must respond to the gospel. Fourth that there is a stark reliance of God's coming kingdom to missionary work. Fifth is an aggressive Calvinistic view of sovereignty. Finally that Christians are in a way responsible for directing governmental policies in order to create a virtuous society. These theological outlooks are important in developing a New Light missional methodology.

The New Lights: Missional Methodology

The missional methodology of the New Lights can be largely drawn from the missionary work of David Brainerd (1718-1747) as described in his diary. *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd* was published in 1749 by

⁶⁴ Charles L. Chaney, *The Birth of Missions in America* (California: William Carey Library, 1976), 272-3.

⁶⁵ Sweeney, *The New England Theology*, 17.

⁶⁶ Tocqueville, Alexis de, *Democracy in America*, ed. Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 277-8.

Jonathan Edwards⁶⁷. Interestingly Edwards published the diary not as historical literature, but as revival literature.⁶⁸ In no other of Edwards' writings did he so vividly embrace the religious faith of one man. Edwards did utilize case studies in some of his writings such as *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1736), *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* (1741), *Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival of Religion in New England* (1742) and *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* (1746). Yet for Edwards, Brainerd was the perfect example of a product of the Awakening and genuine spirituality.⁶⁹ Edwards wrote, "There are two ways of representing and recommending true religion and virtue to the world...the one is by doctrine and precept; the other is by instance and example."⁷⁰ David Brainerd was the epitome of the second representation of true religion, "It (the publication of the diary) transformed an obscure, sickly, largely ineffectual young missionary into a saintly figure who embodied authentic spirituality, not simply ephemeral revivalistic enthusiasm, and who had sacrificed his life for Christianity."⁷¹ Such is the reason as to why this paper equates him with the New Light missional methodology.⁷²

Overall Brainerd's life and personality is somewhat sad. It is obvious from reading his diary that he struggled greatly with intense feelings of sadness regarding his position with God; he described it as

⁶⁷ For an excellent article read Joseph Conforti, "Jonathan Edward's Most Popular Work: "The Life of David Brainerd" and Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Culture," *Church History* 54, no. 2 (June 1985).

⁶⁸ Originally published under the title, "An Account of the Life of the Late David Brainerd, Minister of the Gospel, Missionary to the Indians, from the Honorable Society in Scotland, for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and Pastor of a Church of Christian Indians in New-Jersey. Who Died at Northampton in New England, October 9th 1747 in the 30th Year of His Age: Chiefly Taken from his own Diary, and other Private Writings, Written for His Own Use; and Now Published." Edwards, Jonathan, *The Life of David Brainerd*, ed. Norman Pettit (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 5.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 6.

⁷⁰ Sweeney, *The New England Theology*, 47.

⁷¹ Joseph Conforti, "David Brainerd and the Nineteenth Century Missionary Movement," *Journal of the Early Republic* 5, no. 3 (Autumn 1985): 312.

⁷² David Weddle, "The Melancholy Saint: Jonathan Edward's Interpretation of David Brainerd as a Model of Evangelical Spirituality," *The Harvard Theological Review* 81, no. 3 (July 1988).

“melancholy.”⁷³ Yet in spite of seemingly overwhelming introversion Brainerd was compelled to preach and influenced by individuals such as Gilbert Tennent and James Davenport. Brainerd was involved in the evangelization of several Northeastern Indian Tribes, namely the Delawares and the Susquehanna.⁷⁴ It is important to understand that while Brainerd is still a popular evangelical missionary hero; his ministry did not see mass conversions and was quite frankly unsuccessful,⁷⁵

“David Brainerd...was a complex individual who can only be understood within his own...context. Without this context, Brainerd arrives on the mission field as little more than a religious desperado grasping at a final straw after having his original goals torn away by a too-powerful establishment.”⁷⁶

Yet this does not negate the fact that much can be gleaned from his methodology.

Before Brainerd’s methodology based on his diary will be explored, it would be helpful to understand the methodology for missions that Brainerd was given at his ordination. Brainerd was ordained and commissioned by the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1744. The ordination sermon was given by Ebenezer Pemberton and includes a particular approach to missions. Pemberton drew three conclusions based on Luke 14:23⁷⁷ that relates specifically to the task of the SPCK. First is that the heathen is in a “melancholy” state. Because the heathen had yet to hear of the gospel they were in a perishing and helpless state as described in Romans 1:20. Secondly, that the servants of the redeemer are called to “care” for the helpless heathen in order to invite them to the house so that it will be full. Thirdly, that the ministers of the gospel are to compel the heathen to come into the masters’ house so that the house will be full, alluding to

⁷³ Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 19.

⁷⁴ Richard Ellsworth Day, *Flagellant on Horseback: The Life Story of David Brainerd* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1950).

⁷⁵ William Hutchinson, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 30-2.

⁷⁶ John Grigg, *The Lives of David Brainerd: The Making of an Evangelical Icon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 188.

⁷⁷ “Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.’”

the fulfillment of God's kingdom.⁷⁸ Along with these three points Pemberton asserts that the basic beginning of evangelization is to compare the heathen of their guilty state, to convince them of the evil of sin and to establish a fear of the Lord. In ending an evangelistic discussion Pemberton reveals the importance of exhibiting the advantages of accepting the Gospel call.⁷⁹ While such methods were drawn for the SPCK it is not excessively clear as to whether or not Brainerd follows such. Let us now explore Brainerd's diary and establish specific methods for the New Lights.

As mentioned earlier, Brainerd struggled with introspective doubts regarding his personal faith. This is clear from statements such as, "I seem to be declining with respect to my life and warmth in divine things: had not so free access to God in prayer as usual of late."⁸⁰ Not only did Brainerd struggle with doubts concerning his stance before God, but he also understood his unworthiness before God, "Had a humbling and pressing sense of my unworthiness. My sense of the badness of my own heart filled my soul with bitterness and anguish."⁸¹ It is clear that Brainerd struggled with what many refer to as depression or melancholies throughout his life. It seems strange therefore as to why Edwards uplifted Brainerd as the prime example of the New Light movement. The reason was because both Brainerd and Edwards did not see the introspective process as negative, but they saw it as sense of personal piety. This personal piety was exemplified by Christ,

"Jesus Christ...when He came...He not only declared the mind and will of God...but He also in His own practice gave a most perfect example of the virtue He taught. He exhibited to the world such an illustrious pattern of humility...self-denial...meekness...as neither men nor angels ever saw before."⁸²

⁷⁸ R. Pierce Beaver, comp., *Pioneers in Mission: The Early Missionary Ordination Sermons, Charges, and Instructions* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 112-14.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 117, 119-20.

⁸⁰ Edwards, *Life of Brainerd*, 157.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 233.

⁸² Edwards, Jonathan, *The life and Diary of David Brainerd*, ed. Philip E. Howard Jr. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), 43.

For the New Lights personal piety was an important characteristic of the missionary and this is exemplified in the life of David Brainerd.⁸³

In regards to the New Lights there seems to be a confusing reputation as to whether or not their missionary efforts were of genuine spiritual concern or more geared toward civilizing the Indians. Beaver argues that the “avowed missionary intent of colonization” was not a motive for Puritan and New Light missionaries.⁸⁴ Rather there are three motives that Beaver argues for, first was for the glory God. Cotton Mather asserts that the missionary activity was not due to any feelings of guilt or indebtedness to the Indians, but was for the glory of God.⁸⁵ The second missionary motive for the New Lights was Christian compassion.⁸⁶ This can be seen in the sermon given by Ebenezer Pemberton as previously discussed. The third motive according to Beaver was the desire to match the Roman Catholic mission endeavor in the new world in hopes of creating a Protestant North America.⁸⁷ While these are astute observations and go against the cold hearted idea of mere colonization, recent scholars have asserted that Brainerd and the New Lights were concerned with colonization. “...it never occurred to him that they could truly become Christian disciples without abandoning their traditional way of life and adopting the European mode...Christianity was a religion of civilization.”⁸⁸ Based on Brainerd’s personal diary it seems most clear that both Beaver and Grigg is correct in their assertions. The New Lights were concerned with God’s glory being revealed, they did reveal genuine compassion regarding the state of the unsaved Native not based on civil guilt. They also were concerned with civilizing the Indians.

⁸³ “Brainerd...set a striking example of deep Christian devotion, ‘of true and eminent Christians piety in heart and practice; tending greatly to confirm the reality of vital religion and the power of godliness, most worthy of imitation, and many ways tending to the spiritual benefit of the careful observer...As much as any that he proclaimed, they shaped the popular perception of Edwardsean spirituality during the heyday of New England’s New Divinity.” Sweeney, *The New England Theology*, 48.

⁸⁴ R. Pierce Beaver, “American Missionary Motivation Before the Revolution,” *Church History* 31, no. 2 (June 1962): 216.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 217-8.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 218.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 219.

⁸⁸ Grigg, *Lives of David Brainerd*, 188.

This is not negative methodology, the New Lights attempted civilization not in an effort to enslave the Indians but because they saw Christianity as orderly.⁸⁹ The Moravians methodology reveals a similar approach in that they emphasized educational reform in their mission attempts.

One methodology that is clear in Brainerd's diary is his concern for the coming Kingdom of God. This approach to mission work is not only expressed clearly in Edwards writings as previously discussed, but is evident in Brainerd's diary. "Then God gave me to wrestle earnestly for others, for the kingdom of Christ in the world..."⁹⁰ Such is more evident in the following quote, "I was especially assisted to intercede and plead for poor souls and for the coming of Christ's kingdom in the world..."⁹¹ There is a clear connection in Brainerd's methodology concerning evangelism/conversion and the coming millennial reign of Christ. From this connection it could be assumed that the missionary attempts were not based on genuine concern for souls but rather the desire for God's kingdom to begin. This is not the case, the New Lights intricately weaved together a missional methodology that included genuine compassion, civility and hope in the already-not-yet.

There are three more methods that Brainerd incorporated into his ministry based on his journal entries. Brainerd relied heavily upon prayer and fasting in his personal preparation. For Brainerd, both prayer and fasting was a way to seek the presence of God in order to gain assistance from God in his attempts.⁹² The aspect of fasting was most likely tied with the idea of personal piety and humility. This is a particular area that the New Lights emphasize in their methodology. Thirdly Brainerd simply "preached" to the Indians. There are numerous entries where Brainerd simply writes that he preached to the Indians. It is difficult to say as to how the sermons went or what was emphasized, but it can be assumed that piety and individual faith was emphasized. It also may be possible that Brainerd undertook a similar pattern as described by Pemberton, to convince the Natives of their sinful state and encourage them to accept Jesus. It is clear based on his journal entries that Brainerd preached exegetically, primarily dealing with specific texts focusing on the Gospel.

⁸⁹ Thomas Kidd, "'Bringing Them to a Subjection to the Religion of Jesus': Native American Missions," in *The Great Awakening*, 189-212.

⁹⁰ Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 159.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 161.

⁹² Edwards, *Life of David Brainerd*, 228,236,344,446.

Another assessment that is clear based on the diary is that the Indians were largely uninvolved with his preaching, “The assembly appeared not so lively in their attention as is usual...”⁹³

The New Lights emphasized four things in their missional methodology as seen in the life of David Brainerd. First that each Christian should have a deep sense of personal piety similar to that of Christ. For Brainerd this appeared frequently in his diary and for Edwards revealed a genuine godliness. In spite of personal doubts, the Christian is to remain faithful to doing God’s work. Secondly, the New Lights showed a genuine concern for the soul condition of the Native that was connected strongly with civility. It is incorrect to only assume that the New Lights were concerned with civility, they did have compassion and desired that the Indians be Christianized. Thirdly, and perhaps most distinct is the New Lights connection of missionary labor and the soon coming millennial reign of Christ. Fourthly, the New Lights encouraged personal devotion for the missionary; this is seen in the intense reliance on prayer and fasting asserted by Brainerd. Connected with this personal devotion is the idea that from fasting and praying God’s power would inhabit the missionary. The New Light missional methodology was largely accepted by American Evangelicals throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The work of the New Lights also inspired the Modern Missionary Movement in that they largely created a missionary endeavor that worked within Calvinism.

Conclusion

The Moravians and the New Lights are undoubtedly the founding fathers of contemporary missions. They exhibited new approaches and further developed existing methods. The Moravians developed the theology of the heart, revolutionizing the idea that faith and actions go hand in hand. The New Lights also emphasized this aspect in their missiology but did so in a Calvinistic setting, therefore revolutionizing again missional methodology. The matter of civility was also revolutionized with the New Lights and the Moravians. In earlier centuries the Roman Catholic attempts at missions were nothing much more than bringing European culture to native lands. The Moravians took the other extreme in that they avoided civility in their mission

⁹³ Ibid, 367.

ventures. Not that the Moravians did not believe in an orderly Christianity, but that they did not bring with them the baggage of any crown. In the middle of this spectrum the New Lights combined a genuine compassion for lost souls and civility. Both the New Lights and the Moravians looked to Christ as being central to their missionary endeavors. For the Moravians it was Christ's example on the cross that encouraged them to venture into unknown wilderness to proclaim the gospel. For the New Lights it was Christ's immanent return that encouraged them to take the gospel message to the Natives. Both the Moravians and the New Lights brought a revolution to missions that emphasized the culmination of personal faith in Christ and the necessity of proclaiming the gospel to others. It was this idea that encouraged William Carey in taking what was being done regarding Native American missions to the world.