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MISSIONARY SENDING AND THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Missiology

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by
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February 2024

APPROVAL SHEET

MISSIONARY SENDING AND THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN

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For the glory of God

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PREFACE

He almost certainly has no idea who I am, but Zane Pratt is a large part of the reason my life took the turn that it did. I was attending The Gospel Coalition National Conference in Chicago in April 2013 when he addressed the pre-conference attendees, telling them, “Many of you do not feel the call to the mission field and will stay at home serving your local churches. For the rest of you, who are not content to stay where you are not needed. . .” This was intended to be funny, but I have never forgotten it, and it started me down the path of nursing a call to foreign missions.

I had been serving on the pastoral staff at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and part of my responsibilities on staff was to oversee the missions partnership in Southeast Asia. After I came home from the next trip to Southeast Asia, I told my wife that I was fairly certain God was calling us to the mission field. Fast-forward four years, and we had sold our house, moved in with my parents, and were in the job match stage with the International Mission Board when my youngest son was born with a heart condition that disqualified us from deployment. We were devastated, but felt that this was God’s way of telling us we were going to be senders instead of goers. If I could not take my family of 6, then I wanted to send an army of 60. This call to send led me back to seminary to pursue a doctorate degree in missiology. I wanted to be equipped to send well in my local church, now at Hebron Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky where I am serving in a more focused sending role.

I wish to thank both Eastwood and Hebron for allowing me to serve them and for their patience with me as I learn how to lead the church to send. To Trey and Bellamy Lyon, Bryan Catherman, Carl Porter, and Michael O’Neal, you guys have taught me

everything I know about partnership in the gospel. Thank you to Southern Seminary and my professors for a world class theological education, especially Dr. Klaassen, who has encouraged me in my research pursuit of the sending church. And thank you to my wife, Wendy, who demonstrates more than anyone what it means to hold the rope. Soli Deo gloria.

Mark Whitaker

Burlington, Kentucky

May 2024

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In God's providence, the turn of the twenty-first century has brought with it a renewal of interest in the local church as the missionary sending agent. Since the dawn of what Kenneth Scott Latourette called "The Great Century" of Protestant missions, missionary societies have proliferated and dominated the missionary sending process.[1] Beginning with only a few parachurch sodalities in the late eighteenth century, by the mid-nineteenth century there were hundreds of missionary sending organizations.[2] Admittedly there is much to be grateful for in the work of these societies and much to joyfully anticipate in their continued fruitfulness, but they were never meant to be the primary engine for missionary sending. That mantle was given to the local church in the New Testament.[3]

In the twentieth century, there has been a growing trend in missionary sending toward this New Testament standard. Samuel Metcalf observed the trend toward local churches taking responsibility for missionary sending in megachurches in particular.[4] Churches with thousands of members have the resources and staff to replace the services that otherwise only missionary sending organizations could provide. While this church-centered missionary sending trend is undoubtedly indebted to these larger churches, the

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[1] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955).

[2] Ralph Winter, "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission," in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movemment: A Reader*, 4th ed. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009), 244–53.

[3] The best example of this can be found in the sending of Paul and Barnabas from Antioch in Acts 13.

[4] Samuel F. Metcalf, "When Local Churches Act Like Agencies," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (April 1993): 142–49.

small- to medium-sized churches, which constitute the vast majority of churches worldwide, ought not to relegate the missionary sending task to sodalities. Church history provides an example of a movement of local churches with less than a thousand members that mobilized men and women to bring the gospel to the nations at an astounding rate.

Sprinkled throughout church history books are references to a group of people sometimes called the Unity of the Brethren, or simply, the Moravians. Most often these references pertain to their pioneer work in business as mission or in their contributions to hymnology.[5] The Moravian Brethren, or Count Zinzendorf, the most significant leader of the movement, are given comparatively brief reference in many church histories, and even in histories of Christian mission, yet they are not shown to be significant contributors to global missions and are immediately forgotten.[6] Yet, historian Charles Robinson writes, "within twenty years of the commencement of their missionary work the Moravian Brethren had started more missions than Anglicans and Protestants has (sic) started during the two preceding centuries."[7] Hamilton states that as of 1732, the beginning of that twenty-year period, there were only six hundred people in the entire congregation.[8] This statistic calls for more study.

I have here written my dissertation for the Doctor of Missiology on the subject of the missionary sending practices of the Moravian Brethren. In what follows, I will offer the significance of the research I am doing, followed by my thesis for the

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[5] See William J. Danker, *Profit for the Lord: Economic Activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002).

[6] See Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 2nd ed, The Penguin History of the Church 6 (London: Penguin, 1990). There are only two references to Moravian mission work, only one of which constitutes a full paragraph. The irony here is that there is a famous quote attributed to Zinzendorf, "Preach the gospel, die, and be forgotten." This certainly was prophetic for his people.

[7] Charles H. Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, The International Theological Library (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1915), 50.

[8] J. Taylor Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society, vol. 6 (Bethlehem, PA: Times, 1900), 66.

dissertation. Next I will offer definitions for the terms and ideas used throughout the work. After this I will give a summary of my research on the topic prior to this proposed dissertation, as well as a few limitations and delimitations for my research, followed by my methodology, which includes a summary of the methods I will employ to advance my thesis. Finally, I will explain how I will argue for my thesis and give a brief chapter-by-chapter summary.

Significance

The statistics about the per-capita missionary sending rate of the Moravians are as ill-explained as they are astounding. Upon first reading the statistic that 1 out of 12 Moravians was on mission in a country other than their birth in *The Great Commission: Evangelicals and the History of World Missions*, I traced the footnotes back to Herbert Kane's *A Global View of Christian Missions* and finally to Charles Robinson's *History of Christian Missions*, where the trail went cold.[9] Robinson compares the statistic to that of all English Christians, which has seventeen times fewer missionaries per capita! I detail this footnote trail to tell the story of how important it is to know more about why the Moravian rate of sending is so high, and to illustrate the point of the dearth of research on the subject of Moravian missionary sending.

The present-day Moravian denomination with seminaries and historical societies is a central location for research on the Moravians. The Moravian University website has a posted bibliography of all research on Moravian missions from 2000–2015.[10] This bibliography demonstrates the tragic lack of research since 2000 on

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[9] J. Herbert Kane, *A Global View of Christian Missions from Pentecost to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), 79; Martin I. Klauber and Scott M. Manetsch, *The Great Commission: Evangelicals & the History of World Missions* (Nashville: B & H, 2008). Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, 50.

[10] "Overview of Publications on the Moravian Church in English, 2000–2010," last modified December 14, 2022, https://moravian.libguides.com/overview_of_moravian_publications. "Overview of Publications on the Moravian Church in English, 2011–2015," last modified December 16, 2022, https://moravian.libguides.com/overview_of_moravian_publications2011-2015.

Moravian missionary sending, while the broader missiology community has produced considerably more research on the subject of the sending church in general during the same period. Of the seventeen entries listed in the bibliography, none address Moravian missionary sending in any specific or significant way. A broader search of the libguides for the school library, as well as the bibliographies provided by the Center for Moravian Studies, produced similar results.[11] It would seem that the Moravians themselves are not aware of significant research in the area of Moravian missionary sending. Their unawareness, in addition to my own search, strongly indicates that there is little, if anything, written specifically regarding the sending prowess of the Moravian Brethren.

Despite the dearth of research on the subject, I believe there should be significant intrigue in Moravian missionary sending engendered by their statistics of per-capita sending. However, there seems to be little to no published research on the subject, and there is a growing interest in the field of missiology in the sending church. The time is ripe for new research on the missionary sending practices of the Moravian Brethren. The findings within this dissertation offer new perspectives on the history of the Moravian church. They also offer useful applications to the twenty-first century church, equipping them to be able to mobilize more of their members to take part in the Great Commission.

Thesis

In this dissertation, I will demonstrate how to build a culture of sending in a local church based on the example of eighteenth-century Moravians. I will extract regular community practices that served as cultural liturgies from their history, then I will translate them into scalable practices for twenty-first-century local churches.

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[11] "Bibliographies," accessed January 6, 2023, https://www.moravianseminary.edu/center-moravian-studies/bibliographies.

Definitions

It would seem appropriate at this point to offer some important definitions for the sake of clarity in both my thesis and the rest of this dissertation.

Missions

First, when I use the term *missions* I will intentionally use it in the plural. I use missions in the plural for the exact reason that Christopher Wright does not; I use it to describe human endeavors.[12] Secondly, I use this term to denote the work a missionary does. I do so because I am specifically referring, in a more narrow way akin to Denny Spitters's definition, to the work of crossing barriers for the sake of the spread of the gospel message.[13] These barriers likely include, but are not limited to, geography, language, and/or culture. This distinction is very important, especially as it pertains to research on Moravians, because much that has been published about Moravian missions in recent decades has focused more on social justice than gospel proclamation.

Culture

In a general sense, it would be expected to use the term *culture* in a missiological way when referring to "the total way of life of a people, composed of their learned and shared behavior patterns, values, norms, and material objects," to "the partially integrated system of ideas, feelings, and values encoded in learned patterns of behavior, signs, products, rituals, beliefs, and worldviews shared by a community of people," or to "the conceptual designs, the definitions by which people order their lives, interpret their experiences, and evaluate the behavior of others."[14] The way *culture* will

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[12] Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 22.

[13] Denny Spitters and Matthew Ellison, *When Everything Is Missions* (Orlando, FL: BottomLine Media, 2017), 37.

[14] Everett M. Rogers and Thomas M. Steinfatt, *Intercultural Communication* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1999), 266; Paul G. Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 18;

be used within this work will remain generally faithful to these definitions, while being applied not so much in terms of host culture, describing the culture of the people a missionary seeks to reach, but instead in terms of home culture, describing the culture of the church responsible for sending missionaries.

I will be using the term culture most often within the context of a local church or Christian movement itself. As the usual aim of determining cultural characteristics is to better contextualize gospel proclamation and church planting efforts among a target unevangelized people group, the aim of cultural analysis within a Christian community is to better contextualize potential missionary discipleship and mobilization efforts. Therefore, most of my use of the word culture is to describe the phenomenon of behavior patterns and norms within a local church or Christian society.

An example of such a culture is a *culture of sending*. A culture of sending is the observable phenomenon of behavioral patterns and norms that demonstrate missions as the foregone conclusion of a significant portion of the community. To illustrate what I mean, imagine attending a two-month resident training as a part of a missionary sending organization. When you first meet another missionary-in-training, you immediately assume they are heading somewhere overseas. When they discuss language learning and cultural acquisition, you are not surprised, because why else would they be there? This demonstrates a strong culture of sending. A strong culture of sending exists among a people who idealize, frequently discuss, and are continually preparing each other for the missionary task.

For further clarification, consider the concept of a cultural institution, which is both formed and reformed by the people who found it and who are members of it, respectively, and is a former and reformer of its members and the surrounding

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Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers, *Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 18.

community as well. Let something like the theatre suffice for example. Playwrights, composers, and lyricists create material, architects and laborers build buildings, and so on, thus shaping the institution in a physical and artistic way. Yet it is also a shaping agent to the patrons as well as to the artists themselves within a guild. In my research, however, I am more interested in the way these cultural artifacts, like plays and buildings, are intentionally created and implemented to create particular kinds of people.

Cultural Liturgies

Cultural liturgies refer to the work of James K. A. Smith, meaning particular practices that shape the human person. This idea is based on Smith's concept of *homo adorans*—you are what you love—and, according to Smith, your loves are shaped by your actions.[15] The term cultural liturgies is addressing something like the philosophical concept of worldview, and is not necessarily mutually exclusive with worldview, but instead seeks to address the formation of a person not from knowledge acquisition, but through repeated behaviors and embodied experiences. In the name of worldview, much energy and scholarship has been dedicated to teaching a student how to think a certain way, thus producing a desired worldview. On the contrary, Smith's application of cultural liturgy within Christian higher education occurs not simply in the classroom, but throughout the entire university experience.

There is a nuance to this understanding of cultural liturgies that is not very explicitly stated in Smith, and that is the idea of the shaping culpability of cultural institutions. He spends considerable time in *Desiring the Kingdom* making the reader aware of institutions like the advertising industry, the "military-entertainment complex," and the university.[16] He draws attention to these particular institutions, referring to their

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[15] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies, vol.1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 25.

[16] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 93–118.

practices as secular liturgies, and helping the reader to understand that cultural liturgies are intelligently constructed by institutions. The mall is built in a particular way to intentionally create consumeristic people. Standing and saluting for the Pledge of Allegiance is specifically enforced in public schools by teachers and administrators to create patriotic citizens. If culture is the total way of life of a people, then cultural liturgies are the means by which institutions manipulate that way of life to create a new people. In this way, cultural liturgies and discipleship are very similar in concept, the difference being that discipleship, like worldview, has come to connote intellectual formation rather than the embodied whole. I use the term cultural liturgies because I believe the Moravians built a culture of missionary sending, not simply in the classroom, but through all of life lived in community. Further, such a culture can be reverse engineered, which is a foundation for this paper.

Moravian Brethren

This paper will use the names *Brethren*, *Unity*, *Unity of the Brethren*, *Moravian Brethren*, or just *Moravians* somewhat interchangeably. All of these terms refer in general to those who are either physical or spiritual descendants of Jan Hus and self-identify as such. It might seem reductionistic to refer to this group as Moravians, considering that by the eighteenth century, there were Moravian Brethren, Bohemian Brethren, Greenlander Brethren, West Indies Brethren, Native American Brethren, and so on. However, I continue to use this name because it is the physical descendants of the Moravian Brethren that were the best kindling for missions during their reconstitution period under Zinzendorf's leadership.[17] Additionally, the terms *Ancient Brethren* and *Ancient History of the Brethren* will be used to refer to the movement prior to Zinzendorf's time.

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[17] Although a technicality, it is also worth noting that when Methodius and Cyril first evangelized Bohemia, it was under Great Moravian rule.

Missionary Sending Statistics

When I refer to per-capita missionary sending statistics, I mean the ratio of the total number of identified missionaries in the field to the total number of identified congregants including those who remain in their home country. So, if a local church of 100 members has sent one missionary since the church was planted, their per-capita missionary sending ratio would be 1:100. In the case of Robinson's statistic, there was one Moravian missionary for every twelve total members, compared to the missionary ratio in all English Christians, which was 1:2000.[18]

Sending Church

The terms *sending* and *sending church* I use to denote the important connection between the existing missionaries on the field to the church who first deployed the missionaries, supported their efforts while on the field, and welcomed them back if they returned. This concept is foundational to this dissertation because I am arguing that this connection needs to have greater emphasis in the overall global missionary sending strategy of the Church. I am indebted to the Upstream Collective's definition of a sending church:

> A Sending Church is a local community of Christ-followers who have made a covenant together to be prayerful, deliberate, and proactive in developing, commissioning, and sending their own members both locally and globally, often in partnership with other churches or agencies, and continuing to encourage, support, and advocate for them while making disciples cross-culturally.[19]

Argument

The argument of this dissertation is that it is possible and prudent through historical analysis to uncover cultural liturgies within Moravian society that shaped them into the kind of people who send missionaries well. Further, I will argue that these

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[18] Robinson, *History of Christian Missions*, 50.

[19] Zach Bradley, *The Sending Church Defined* (Knoxville, TN: Upstream Collective, 2015).

cultural liturgies could be translated and applied to twenty-first-century churches to improve their culture of sending. It has already been said that the Moravians sent large numbers to the mission field. My argument is that if we can know their process of making missionaries, we can reverse-engineer their liturgies in today's church and send more missionaries ourselves.

Summary Research

A survey of existing research in the area of Moravian missions produces numerous works about the missionary task itself. Topics for articles and books include missionary strategy, theological motivation, anthropology, and inter-disciplinary studies. However, I have been unable to find any research focusing specifically on missionary sending.

Limitations and Delimitations

The aforementioned lack of present research in the specific area of Moravian missionary sending practice presents a natural limitation to this particular study. I will have to do my research in adjacent areas like general anthropological and historical studies of Moravians, histories, and biographies. I also recognize that I will not always be able to discern intentions and motivations without direct quotes from Moravian leaders admitting to such.

Despite the dearth of research on Moravian missionary sending practice, mounds of research exists more generally in the area of Moravian missions. For this reason, and to make the research manageable, I will limit my analysis to the missionary cultural liturgies and practices that existed under the leadership of Zinzendorf in the eighteenth century. Even though I do believe the missionary work of the Moravian Brethren after the death of Zinzendorf is noteworthy, I will not give it much attention for two reasons. First, the missionary sending experience of nineteenth-century Moravians is the fruit of missionary sending practices and cultural liturgies instilled much earlier, and

analysis would be redundant. Second, in the interest of distilling practical lessons for small- to medium-sized churches, eighteenth-century Moravians present a better test case.

Lastly, it needs to be said that there is no silver bullet that produces a high rate of per-capita missionary sending. The truth is that unless the Father sets someone apart and the Holy Spirit empowers, no one will go, regardless of what culture you have built. That being said, the Moravian example should provide wisdom and insight into how missionaries can be grown instead of simply waiting for someone to volunteer.

Methodology

In order to analyze the culture of sending of the Moravian Brethren, I need a hermeneutical method that connects their history, culture, behaviors, and character. For such an interpretive grid, I will be utilizing Smith's idea of cultural liturgies. So before I devote any time to the Moravians themselves, I need to more clearly articulate a definition of cultural liturgies and demonstrate their value to this conversation. Smith originally developed the idea, applying it to Christian educational institutions, Christian worship, and Christian political engagement, but I will show that applying Smith's thought to the local church missionary sending process has both descriptive and prescriptive power to see that process improve in effectiveness.[20]

My desire is to discern the cultural liturgies that existed among the Moravian Brethren in the eighteenth century, so that the means of building a culture of missionary sending might be extracted. Before I do I must distinguish eighteenth-century Moravians both from their neighbors and from their ancestors. For the sake of analysis of the Moravian Brethren in a cultural sense, I need to know how much of their culture of sending is inherited from their ancestors and how much of it was a product of the revival

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[20] See Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*; James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*, Cultural Liturgies, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013); James K. A. Smith, *Awaiting the King: Reforming Public Theology*, Cultural Liturgies, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017).

under Zinzendorf. In short, I must determine how much of the missionary sending prowess of the Moravians is inherited culture and how much is peculiar liturgy. By telling the story of the Ancient Brethren, I hope to show what events and circumstances took place to make a people so ripe to become not just great missionaries, but great senders of missionaries.

Therefore, I must begin with the history of the Brethren prior to their revival under the leadership of Count Zinzendorf with particular emphasis on missionary characteristics in seed form. This particular history should begin in the ninth century with the missionary work of Cyril and Methodius from the Greek Church working in Eastern Europe. The name, Moravian, was originally a geographic and ethnic distinction and refers to an area of what was then the Holy Roman Empire called Moravia, part of what is now the Czech Republic. The most missiologically significant portion of the Brethren are descendants of these people. Therefore it seems prudent that the history should begin with the evangelization of that region, including Moravia, Bohemia, and Silesia. Of particular interest in this history is the influence of Jan Hus, the teachings of whom originally defined the Brethren. An appropriate ending of this part of their history would be the underground period of the Brethren just before the settling of Herrnhut in the eighteenth century.

For this part of the history, I will be dependent on the work of John Amos Comenius, the human link between what is often called the Ancient Brethren and the Modern Brethren.[21] His *Account of the Ecclesiastical Discipline and Order in the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren* (Ratio) is the most important primary source of the history of the Brethren between Hus and Zinzendorf.[22] In fact, it was the inspiration of Zinzendorf

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[21] This is the appellation distinguishing the church pre- and post-reconstitution under Zinzendorf.

[22] John Amos Comenius, *Account of the Ecclesiastical Discipline and Order in the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren*, trans. B. Seifferth (London: W. Mallalieu, 1866).

himself in the reconstitution of the Brethren. For the rest of the history of the Ancient Brethren, I consulted the work of David Cranz and Ami Bost, both of which are historians and Moravians themselves, writing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, respectively.[23] In addition, I will consult secondary sources including missions histories and later Moravian histories, as well as articles from the *Journal of Moravian History*. All of these sources will help me to construct a historical reservoir for extracting cultural liturgies and intentional practices of missionary sending that appear prior to Zinzendorf.

The influence of Brethren ancient history and that of Zinzendorf converge in the events of the settlement of Herrnhut and the advent of intentional missionary sending practices that would define the Moravians for the next century. In the revitalization period under Zinzendorf we find the clearest examples of missionary cultural liturgies. Thus, an analysis of the church revitalization period is the heart of this study. The period begins with the first meeting between Zinzendorf and Christian David which resulted in the settlement of Herrnhut and David's work of gathering the remnant of the Ancient Brethren. This history includes the first missionary deployments to the West Indies and Greenland, as well as a look at the development of the Brethren community model first used in Herrnhut but then adopted by Moravian communities and missions worldwide. Cranz and Bost are indispensable here as well for sourcing material, in addition to other Moravian histories, biographies, and journal articles.

Lastly, in this study of Moravian missionary sending practices, I will provide feet to the study, translating cultural liturgies into contemporary practices for local churches based on the example and teachings of the Moravians. These contemporary

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[23] David Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren, or, A Succinct Narrative of the Protestant Church of the United Brethren or Unitas Fratrum in the Remoter Ages and Particularly in the Present Century*, trans. Benjamin La Trobe (London: W. and A. Strahan, 1780); Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*.

practices will be distilled from analysis of the combined research of the preceding chapters.

Chapter Summaries

I have written five chapters to complete this dissertation. The first chapter consists of the introduction, and following that, the second chapter is a fuller introduction to Smith's model of cultural liturgies and an explanation of how I will apply his principles to reverse-engineer a culture of sending. I will demonstrate the relationship between an understanding of cultural liturgy and worldview and defend why I believe Smith's model is a more helpful way to analyze a culture of sending.

The third chapter will include a history of the Moravians beginning with the evangelistic work of Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century and ending in the underground period. Highlights from this chapter include important Greek missions methodologies like Bible translation, vernacular worship, and cultural contextualization that were used in the evangelization of the Moravian people. Other important highlights include the ministry and influence of Hus, the preservation work of Comenius, and the perseverance of the Brethren under persecution. The missionary sending culture of the Brethren was prepared but not yet fully developed during this period, so the emphasis will be on the embodied experiences of Moravian Christians as they were evangelized and discipled that shaped them into missionary senders.

The fourth chapter will consist of focused analysis on particular liturgies and disciplines that were central to the sending prowess of the Moravians. The goal would be that some of these practices might be contemporized and used to bolster the efforts of twenty-first century local churches. If chapter 4 is an exposition of the abstract principles key to their sending, chapter 5 is the practical application of those principles to the contemporary church. I will apply those principles and practices to generate cultural liturgies and focused missionary sending practices. This would be my concluding chapter

It will restate the thesis, summarize the arguments, and offer warning of potential pitfalls of this methodology. I will then make suggestions as to further research that I believe would be fruitful. Lastly, I will call the reader to imitate the Moravians as they imitated Christ.

CHAPTER 2

CULTURAL LITURGIES AND CHRISTIAN FORMATION

The connection between the local church and missions is of vital importance. Mission historian Edward Smither wrote that mission in the New Testament was necessarily church-centered.[1] Although missionary sodalities like sending agencies and denominational entities have been used to great benefit to deploy missionaries, the example of the church in Antioch in Acts 13 puts the onus of missionary sending in the purview of the local church.[2] This can seem a daunting task to the smaller- to medium-sized churches who either feel underequipped by their lack of resources or who might compare themselves to larger churches with apparently greater sending capacity; however, if missionary sending is one of the tasks of the local church given by God, then it must be something every local church can do.

Without a doubt, many normative-sized churches have raised up missionaries. There are a certain number of missionaries that will inevitably mature, experience a missionary call, and prepare for the answering of that call by going to seminary or seeking out a sending agency; however, as global lostness outpaces kingdom advance, and more laborers are needed and faithfully prayed for (Matt 9:38), more laborers need to be sent, which means more missionaries need to be formed by more faithful churches.

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[1] Edward L. Smither, *Mission in the Early Church: Themes and Reflections* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 149.

[2] See also Jedidiah Coppenger, "The Community of Mission: The Church," in *The Theology and Practice of Mission: God, The Church, and the Nations*, ed. Bruce Riley Ashford, rev. ed. (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 75.

This means every local church needs to improve in their ability to raise up more missionaries, even the average-sized church.

In this chapter, I will argue that every local church shapes both people who pursue and people who abstain from the missionary task through cultural liturgies. First, I will argue that missionary preparation and deployment is a kind of spiritual formation that requires a holistic understanding of the human person and a rootedness to historic Christian understanding of piety. Then, I will show how an intellectualist method of spiritual formation—and by extension, raising up missionaries—is deficient by addressing the problem with worldview-thinking as it pertains to identity-shaping practices. Then, I will demonstrate the need for a heart-oriented model of formation, and I will offer James K. A. Smith's cultural liturgies as the best way to address that need. Following that I will expose the reality and inevitability of cultural liturgies in every culture—including the local church—before demonstrating the conflict of liturgies that is constantly occurring in the life of the Christian. Then, I will show that this emphasis on worship does not necessarily mean that missionary liturgies only occur in local church worship services, but with Smith I call the reader to a kind of monasticism. In short, in this chapter, I will answer the question, "How is a missionary made?"

Missionary Sending as Christian Formation

Although the idea of missionary sending may bring to mind commissioning, training, and transporting cross-cultural workers to destinations unknown, there is an often-neglected, foundational step in missionary sending: missionary formation. Before a missionary ever appears before a missionary board or the local pastor or elders as a candidate, they are formed into the kind of people who step forward for missionary service. The question, "How are missionaries formed?" pertains to the field known as Christian formation, or its theological synonym, discipleship.

A Holistic Approach to Christian Formation

There are a number of different ways to approach Christian formation. James Estep and Jonathan Kim suggest an approach in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology and Human Development* where scriptural theology and social sciences are integrated into what might more accurately be called Christian development. The virtue to this approach is that it sees the human as a whole person, made in the image of God, which has substantive, functional, relational, and teleological facets.[3] The authors rightly understand that Christian formation necessarily begins with a theological anthropology. Before understanding what it is to be Christian, one must first establish what it is to be human. And for Estep and Kim, this includes intellectual, personal, moral, religious, developmental, spiritual, and cultural components.

This anthropology is indeed non-reductive, but their approach is insufficient for my purposes in at least two ways. First, Estep and Kim fail to offer a *telos* for Christian formation. The emphasis in the approach of Estep and Kim is development and growth in a number of different spheres of life, but that emphasis does not model for the reader a finished product. It explains how to grow, but this integration of theology and development does not tell the reader what a Christian is. While I do not offer the solution to their problem in any comprehensive sense, setting the *telos* of formation as a missionary creates a focus that can help in upstream development. In other words, I do not intend to reduce the fully-formed Christian to simply being a missionary. To the contrary, some fully-formed Christians will never cross any barriers for the purpose of the spread of the gospel message. Instead, I am interested in the processes of discipling a missionary into existence while acknowledging the intellectual, personal, moral, spiritual, developmental, and cultural aspects of the human person.

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[3] James Riley Estep, "Developmental Theories: Foe, Friend, or Folly?," in *Christian Formation: Integrating Theology & Human Development*, ed. James Riley Estep and Jonathan H. Kim (Nashville: B & H Academic, 2010), 17–18.

Second, the book *Christian Formation* is not quite fully sufficient for my purposes because of its breadth; such a holistic understanding of discipleship requires expertise in psychology and pedagogy, which is something a typical church's leadership does not have. What I hope to develop is a way to shape men and women and boys and girls into missionaries—a way that is reproducible in every expression of the local church. How can a fully-formed missionary be discipled into existence without the expertise to fully measure internal growth in all the facets mentioned by Estep and Kim? What is needed is a non-specialized method for evaluating spiritual growth.

Consider for a moment that you are concerned you might have sleep apnea. You might have noticed sleepiness after what should have been a good night's sleep. You find yourself forgetting things, you have headaches in the morning, and your spouse has complained about your snoring. Before seeing a doctor, you might consider checking your lifestyle to make sure there are not factors outside of sleep apnea that are hampering your sleep. You might consider things like caffeine intake, blue light exposure, and exercise. All of these are easy things to self-regulate that could be affecting the quality of sleep. This method of diagnosis is the kind of method to which I am referring. Making changes to these sleep influences could dramatically affect the quality of sleep without the need of official diagnoses from a doctor. Put another way, making changes to those outside factors can make significant difference to internal issues like sleep quality. Living a more sleep-quality-conducive lifestyle leads to better sleep—unless, of course, you actually have sleep apnea!

If the self-diagnosis approach to holistic missionary formation lacks a certain sophistication that only expertise can provide like a pulmonologist for sleep apnea, perhaps this is where sending agencies pick up the slack. Through training and member care, missionary sending agencies can provide specialized help for a more specialized approach to missionary development. They can employ counselors, nurses, and psychologists who are better trained and equipped for diagnosing internal issues in ways

that local pastors and church leaders cannot.

An Historical-Theological Approach to Spiritual Formation

Another approach to Christian formation is an historical-theological approach like that employed by J. I. Packer in his book, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life*. Gregg Allison defines the overall discipline of historical theology as "the study of the interpretation of scripture and the formation of doctrine by the church of the past."[4] So then, Packer is applying this kind of study to an understanding of spiritual formation. More specifically, Packer is describing what the Puritans believed and practiced regarding spiritual formation—namely, as the title implies, as a kind of quest for godliness. He describes the Puritan definition of godliness: "Godliness, to the Puritans, was essentially a matter of conscience, inasmuch as it consisted in a hearty, disciplined, 'considerate' (thoughtful) response to known evangelical truth, and centred upon the getting and keeping of a good conscience . . . . It is maintained through life by seeking to do God's will in all things, and by constantly keeping the cross in view."[5] Some virtues of this historical-theological approach to learn spiritual formation are that according to Allison, the approach "presents stellar examples of faith, love, courage, hope, obedience, and mercy," it "protect[s] against the individualism that is rampant today among Christians," it "enables [the church] to express those beliefs in contemporary form," and "it encourages the church to focus on the essentials."[6] I would like to expand further these four points.

For the purposes of this dissertation, it is valuable that Packer acknowledges the importance of *stellar examples* of godliness in the past because I am suggesting a

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[4] Gregg R. Allison, *Historical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 23.

[5] J. I. Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994), 114.

[6] Allison, *Historical Theology*, 23–29.

character-driven model of spiritual formation. I want to demonstrate how to make missionaries from scratch, so to speak, which is tantamount to saying that I desire to develop a model of Christian formation that produces the kind of people who willingly cross cultural, linguistic, and/or geographic barriers to bring the gospel to those who have not heard. A necessary step toward that goal is that, like the image on the outside of the puzzle box, I give a demonstration of what that kind of person looks like.

This historical-theological approach to spiritual formation also protects against individualism because the approach shows the Christian that they are a part of a greater whole. As we shall see, the pietism of the Moravians lends itself naturally to individualism, and the Western reader would tend even more so toward an individualistic application of these principles. However, if we can situate our task of missionary formation into a history of others trying to do the same thing, we can keep from trying to reinvent the wheel, or trying to do missionary formation in a vacuum. Opening ourselves to examples of godliness in the past draws our attention off of ourselves, causing us not only to notice those who have gone before us, but others who are trying to do the same thing in our own day.

Reading about these examples of disciple-makers of the past necessitates a critical evaluation of their methods as well as our own. We ought not extract practices wholesale from the eighteenth century and apply them without contextualization to our twenty-first century churches. For instance, the practice of acquiring their own ships proved instrumental in missionary transport and communication for the Moravians, but to do so now might not be the best use of resources. With the ubiquity of air travel and worldwide electronic communication, using sea-faring ships could be a step backwards, not forwards. Not to get too far ahead of ourselves, but the question of how to leverage modern travel to a greater extent as the Moravians did might be one worth asking. While I will not address this specific question at this time, the principle used to generate the question is the topic at hand. After researching a particular practice of missionary

formation, it will usually be necessary to take a step into abstraction to a principle that can be translated into a contemporary context.

Lastly, utilizing an historical-theological approach to Christian formation helps to focus on the essentials. The Moravians of the eighteenth century lived and died more than a hundred years before the academic disciplines of anthropology or missiology appeared. There was practically no precedent for a missionary sending agency outside of the Danish Halle mission of only a decade or two before and the monastic orders of the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, the Moravians were highly effective in their missionary sending abilities. This lack of precedent and of academic development at the time renders the Moravian missionary sending practices of the eighteenth century a pristine prototype for a mere but effective missionary sending church.

So, an historical-theological approach to Christian formation helps to build a foundation for missionary formation; however, it is only a foundation. If all that was needed to raise up Christians to be missionaries was a thorough study of the history of Christian missions, then there should not be such a discrepancy between Moravian per capita missionary sending ratios and that of any other church or agency, even into the present day. Three hundred years elapsed should make contemporary missionary senders three centuries more effective, but clearly this is not the case. So, how should a local church, understanding the necessity to shape the whole Christian, utilize an historical-theological approach to missionary formation?

The Deficiency of Intellectualistic Formation

Many local churches, in the effort to faithfully respond to this call to raise up missionaries in their midst, might set about beginning a training program for prospective missionaries. The more gifted or trained leaders might develop their own material for this training. Other churches might default to parachurch organizations for this kind of

teaching material.[7] James K. A. Smith's book *Desiring the Kingdom*, according to Smith, "begins from a sort of working axiom that every pedagogy assumes an anthropology: that is, every approach to education assumes some model of the human person, even if this anthropology is never made explicit."[8] This tendency toward a curriculum-based approach demonstrates a default setting for many pastors and church leaders when it comes to spiritual formation, and by extension, missionary formation. This default setting is to consider the process as purely, or at least primarily, an intellectual or spiritual enterprise.

In his book *Desiring the Kingdom*, Smith addresses Christian educational institutions with precisely the issue I am describing. While he is addressing most specifically the Christian university and worldview-thinking, the principles he is addressing are very appropriate to Christian formation in the context of the local church, and thus to missionary formation. "The church and the Christian college," says Smith, "are sites of formation that culminate in *sending*: to 'go in peace to love and serve the Lord' by taking up our cross along with our commission to cultivate the earth."[9] So, while he is mostly addressing a residential, university-style educational environment, there are clear parallels to the local church. In addition, Smith's critique is of education as worldview formation. He describes a worldview as a system of beliefs, ideas, and doctrines.[10] James Sire sees this as a reductionist take on the worldview discussion. Sire believes Smith's preference for the term *social imaginary*, borrowed from Charles Taylor, is largely coterminous with Sire's understanding of worldview. Further, Sire states that N. T. Wright was happy to expand the definition of worldview to include the

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[7] One such example is the Perspectives Course, www.perspectives.org.

[8] James K. A. Smith, "Worldview, Sphere Sovereignty, and Desiring the Kingdom: A Guide for (Perplexed) Reformed Folk," *Pro Rege* 39, no. 4 (2011): 15.

[9] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 151 (emphasis original).

[10] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 17.

elements of desire, love, and worship.[11] Elmer Thiessen, in his review of *Desiring the Kingdom*, wrote, "The Reformed notion of worldview need not be, and most often has not been, tied to a stunted rationalist picture of the human person."[12] Hiebert is also critical of worldview, at least at the outset of his book on the subject, as overly cognitive and deficient in the affective and moral components.[13] Smith also questions the effectiveness of worldview: "We might have a highly developed, articulate 'worldview' and yet act in ways that are remarkably inconsistent with such a 'perspective.'"[14] Having established the relevance of Smith's work to this current endeavor, I will show how Smith would take issue with the develop-a-curriculum approach and its underlying worldview.

Smith writes that such a curriculum approach demonstrates an intellectualist understanding of Christian formation. By the term *intellectualist*, Smith means an evident anthropology that portrays a human being as, first and foremost, a thinking being.[15] This, he says, is his primary issue with worldview-thinking. Talking about human beings in terms of the worldview, particularly in the more recent "evangelical" worldview conversation, actually demonstrates a particular worldview! The underlying assumption of worldview, according to Smith, is that a human being thinks through every action before committing it, and that the primary task of education is to correct that thinking. He writes that such an intellectualist model prescribes critical reflection to mal-formation by the world. In other words, the solution to influence by the world, according to overly-

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[11] James W. Sire, *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept*, 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 65–66.

[12] Elmer John Thiessen, "Educating Our Desires for God's Kingdom (Review Article)," *Journal of Education & Christian Belief* 14, no. 1 (2010): 51.

[13] Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 15.

[14] Smith, "Worldview, Sphere Sovereignty, and Desiring the Kingdom," 18.

[15] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 32.

intellectualist worldview-thinking, is "thinking about it more, thinking about what we're doing."[16] Smith is very careful to deny any accusations of anti-intellectualism, both in anticipation of and in response to criticisms of his position. To react against an intellectualist anthropology is not to say that humans are not thinkers at all. "To situate (and relativize) the intellect is not anti-intellectual," writes Smith, "it is emphasizing that even rationality needs to be faithful, needs to be disciplined and trained. And this seems to be a deeply biblical sensibility."[17] Such an anti-intellectual position would be absurd coming from an author writing a three-volume philosophical treatise on the subject. Instead, Smith is reacting against an anthropology that reduces humans as entirely, or even primarily thinking beings.

The danger of a purely intellectual understanding of an education—or by extension, a process of Christian formation—is seeing the task as informative rather than formative.[18] According to Smith, we are shaped less by messages that we hear or read than we are by our regular practices, or as he calls them, liturgies. He illustrates this idea in *Desiring the Kingdom* with an imaginary story about a Martian anthropologist who visits a shopping mall on earth and describes his experience in entirely religious terms based on the floor plan, the décor, and the guided actions of the people around him. The point of the illustration is that the Martian cannot read any of the signage in the mall, nor can he understand anything about what is said, yet his experience is highly formative. He is watching humans being shaped into consumers by the mall as an educational and religious institution.[19]

Smith is not alone in his intellectualist critique of worldview. Paul Hiebert

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[16] Smith, "Worldview, Sphere Sovereignty, and Desiring the Kingdom," 19.

[17] Smith, "Worldview, Sphere Sovereignty, and Desiring the Kingdom," 20.

[18] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 18.

[19] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 19–23.

shares this reaction to the concept of worldview, stating that "because of its roots in philosophy, it focuses on the cognitive dimensions of cultures and does not deal with the affective and moral dimensions, which are equally important, nor with how these three dimensions of being human relate to one another."[20] Hiebert addresses worldview from a missiological and anthropological perspective and admits to using the term only because of its ubiquity and perceived lack of alternative. To compensate for this perceived lack of an affective dimension to worldview, Hiebert offers a definition of worldviews as "fundamental cognitive, affective, and evaluative presuppositions a group of people make about the nature of things, which they use to order their lives."[21]

Hiebert attempts to address the affective deficiency of worldview-thinking, but the acknowledgment of the existence of the affections is not sufficient for my purpose of actually shaping the affection. The proof is in the way Hiebert addresses affective transformation as a change of feeling. He writes about the feelings of being "at home" or the attractiveness of the gospel but describes these feelings as "caught, not taught."[22] The problem with worldview is that it has been used descriptively, but not prescriptively. Hiebert describes affective transformation, but does not explain how it can be brought about, but simply that they must be included in the normal discipleship process. This is precisely what Smith is addressing in the *Cultural Liturgies Trilogy*. The concept of cultural liturgies is designed to help better diagnose and prescribe formation of the whole person.

The Need to Address the Heart

Smith holds that worldview-thinking stems from a misguided philosophical

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[20] Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 15.

[21] Hiebert, *Trasnforming Worldviews*, 15.

[22] Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 312–13.

anthropology.[23] Says Smith, “We don’t ‘decide’ our way into every action. Our being-in-the-world is characterized by inclinations that propel us to all sorts of action without thinking.”[24] He describes humans not as primarily thinkers, but lovers. Smith does not deny that people think at all, “but rather that our thinking and cognition arise from a more fundamental, precognitive orientation to the world.”[25] This is precognitive orientation is love. The love of which Smith speaks is not a feeling *per se*. He recognizes the danger of love language in a post-Oprah world, where it is confused with “Hallmark-ish emotionalism.”[26]

Love As Inclination

Love as Smith understands it is not a feeling to leave room for as Hiebert wrote, but it is an inclination of the body. He illustrates love as an arrow—something like a vector, indicating direction and intensity. The assumption of Smith’s anthropology is that the qualifying feature of humanity is love, which is almost synonymous with intention.[27] Because of the heart, or the affections, human beings are always moving in a particular direction. “The heart,” says Smith, “is a love pump that cannot be turned off, only knocked off-kilter.”[28] Another way Smith says this is that “to say that humans are, at root, lovers is to emphasize that we are the sorts of animals for whom things matter in ways we often don’t (and can’t) articulate.”[29] This flies in the face of an understanding of

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[23] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 32.

[24] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 79–80.

[25] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 28.

[26] James K. A. Smith, “From Christian Scholarship to Christian Education,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 39, no. 2 (2010): 231.

[27] Smith uses the term *intention* as a philosophical term referring to moral and affective inclination.

[28] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 52.

[29] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 51.

worldview that can reduce worldview to something that can be written or verbally communicated, much less taught exhaustively in a classroom setting.

Consider the terms “musically-inclined” or “athletically inclined.” These terms are frequently used to describe a certain knack or talent for music or sport, respectively. But they connote more than just an ability, but a particular draw. Someone who is musically-inclined is simply going to be musical; there is no stopping them. They are going to lift the piano lid and sit down and play without asking. They are going to hum or whistle or drum to the beat. Someone who is athletically-inclined is always going to find a way to incorporate physical exercise and competition into their life. It is a fundamental orientation. This is what Smith means when he describes humans as *homo liturgicus*: “Humans are those animals that are religious animals not because we are primarily believing animals but because we are liturgical animals—embodied, practicing creatures whose love/desire is aimed at something ultimate.[30]

This way of understanding humans is particularly interesting from a missiological perspective, in the very least because of the wording of the Great Commission: “Go [Πορευθέντες] therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matt 28:19–20).[31] One can use the principle of *going* in the Great Commission to apply Smith’s model of love, making a kind of Great Commission of Love/Intention/Inclination: Intend therefore and make disciples of all nations. For more to go on mission, they must be pointed toward going by the inclination of the heart. In this the heart and body go hand in glove. The body goes where the heart wants to go. The question I am seeking to answer in this dissertation is “How is a missionary made?” Understanding how this kind of movement (Πορευθέντες) in the

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[30] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 40.

[31] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations come from the English Standard Version.

Great Commission is aimed at the nations in a productive sense is the foundation for the answer. The concept of *love as inclination* helps to know what to look for in eighteenth century Moravian missionary sending culture. It re-forms the question into, "How were the Brethren inclined toward missionary sending?"

Shaping the Heart

As Smith addresses Christian educational institutions in *Desiring the Kingdom*, he is concerned more about how teaching happens than what teaching happens.[32] The means by which the movement of the heart is aimed, as Smith articulates it, is worship. We worship what we love ultimately, according to Smith, but it is also the case that we love what we worship ultimately.[33] Our worship shapes our heart through imagination and *habitus*, developing into practical sense, and resulting into the anthropological phenomenon "going native."

Shaping the imagination. Smith writes about that important aspect of Christian formation that Estep and Kim were missing—*telos*: "The telos to which our love is aimed is not a list of ideas or propositions or doctrines; it is not a list of abstract, disembodied, concepts or values. Rather, the reason that this version of the good life moves us is because it is a more effective, sensible, even aesthetic picture of what the good life looks like."[34] The *telos*, for Smith, is the kingdom. Further, we are shaped for this kingdom not through the intellect, but through the imagination, and for Smith, the imagination "runs off the fuel of images that are channeled by the senses."[35]

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[32] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 33.

[33] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 51.

[34] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 53. The "good life" in this case is another philosophical word synonymous with human flourishing.

[35] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 57.

It is important here to define *imagination*, a term that is central to Smith's argument. Imagination for Smith is not inventive, fantastic, make-belief, fiction, or pretended. The phrase "use your imagination" has a semantic range distinct from that which Smith intends. Says Smith, "I mean it more as a quasi-faculty whereby we construe the world on a precognitive level, on a register that is fundamentally *aesthetic* precisely because it is so closely tied to the *body*."[36] Aesthetics, for Smith, are simply articulations of human flourishing.[37] So, the goal of Christian formation is human flourishing/the kingdom/the good life, and our imagining of it that drives our affections toward particular ends is fueled by the aesthetics we imbibe which tell us what flourishing/the kingdom/the good life looks like.

Despite the fact that Smith is denying the primacy of intellectual propositions in Christian formation, he is not denying their legitimacy. He makes it a point to say that the understanding embedded in the paintings in the Sistine Chapel are not a substitute for a treatise on Pauline theology or vice versa.[38] But there is a sense of Christian formation, of this driving vector that shapes our direction and intensity, that can only be understood experientially. This notion Smith describes he calls *poetic*. Smith uses the idea of the comprehension of a poem as a way of explaining this aesthetic understanding of Christian formation over against an intellectual model. "One 'gets' this poem," according to Smith, "not by analysis but by immersion: to understand it is to be pulled into the *feel* that it evokes, to resonate with the corporeal significance conveyed, even if that meaning can never quite be put into words."[39] He leans heavily on Mark Johnson here, who wrote, "These aspects of bodily meaning are not, for the most part, propositional, and it

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[36] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 17 (emphasis original).

[37] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 58.

[38] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 70.

[39] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 116.

therefore follows that meaning cannot be primarily linguiform and propositional."[40]

One major problem with worldview-talk is that it is incomplete. It only accounts for those aspects of worldview that can be articulated propositionally as beliefs or doctrines or observed anthropologically through art or culture. The problem with reductively defining a people by their propositional thoughts or beliefs, as we have seen, is that it reduces them to thinking creatures. The problem with reductively defining a people by their observable cultural output is that we are guilty of a kind of *theoretism*, which Bourdieu describes as studying "a community of practitioners as if they were asking themselves the questions *he* asks himself about them."[41] As Johnson and Smith both point out, we need to understand people the way they understand themselves, and that primarily through metaphor.[42]

Smith describes metaphor this way: "The force of metaphor is always just slightly more than what we can analyze—there's a certain 'genius' to a metaphor that generates a power of meaning with a sort of *je ne sais quoi*, an excess of meaning that I 'get' without being able to say. The metaphorical sum is greater than the analytic parts."[43] So Smith uses *poetic* as a term, because a poem cannot be reduced to a list of propositional truths without remainder. The form itself has meaning.[44] The ideas of *poetic* and *metaphor* are ways of articulating observable fruit of Christian formation outside of a systematic theology. But they also help us understand how we shape and are shaped by them. "We need to first appreciate that these primary metaphors are acquired," writes Smith—they are "not hardwired and not possessed a priori . . . . These primary metaphors

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[40] Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 213.

[41] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 31.

[42] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 117.

[43] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 117.

[44] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 134.

are acquired through immersion in an environment or environments.[45] He writes elsewhere, “Over time, rituals and practices—often in tandem with aesthetic phenomena like pictures and stories—mold and shape our precognitive disposition to the world by training our desires.”[46]

An example from Zinzendorf’s life seems appropriate here. When Zinzendorf was eighteen, his station afforded him a time of travel through Europe before embarking on his career. His travel brought him to Dusseldorf, where he was able to take in the art museum. Among the works on display, Zinzendorf laid eyes on *Ecce Homo*, a painting by Domenica Feti of the suffering Christ. Under the painting Zinzendorf read the inscription translated: “All this I have done for thee; what doest thou for me?”[47] This idea—the idea of being of use to Christ—would become the guiding aesthetic for his life and for the lives of the Moravians under his leadership. Further, Zinzendorf would forever connect his obedience to God with participation in the sufferings of Christ.

Returning to my thesis, how are Christians—and by extension, missionaries—made? They are made by shaping their desires. The problem expressed in lower missionary sending numbers is that not enough people want to cross barriers for the spread of the gospel. The solution to the problem, then, is to shape the desires of those under our influence to want to be missionaries. We want to reproduce the kind of people who want to bring the gospel to places it has yet to reach. And “our identity,” according to Smith, “is shaped by what we ultimately love or what we love as ultimate—what, at the end of the day, gives us a sense of meaning, purpose, understanding, and orientation

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[45] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 134.

[46] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 59.

[47] August Gottlieb Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, trans. Samuel Jackson (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1838), 15.

to our being-in-the-world."[48] And that kind of love is shaped by rituals and practices, or more succinctly, through cultural liturgies.

Liturgies, as Smith uses the term, are identity-forming practices.[49] They both reflect what matters to us and shape what matters to us.[50] "Liturgies aim our love to different ends," writes Smith, "precisely by training our hearts through our bodies."[51] The term liturgy might be familiar to some as the term most often used to describe the prescribed order for worship, often imposed by a governing denominational entity or tradition like the Anglican or Roman Catholic church. "However," writes Marva Dawn, "the term *leitourgia*, composed of the Greek words *ergon* ('work') and *laos* ('people'), actually means 'the work of the people.'"[52] She goes on to say that liturgy is not something restricted to high church traditions, but is in fact the term for whatever it is a local church does when it is gathered.

It is worth considering, for a moment, the value of prescribed liturgy in the context of local church gathered worship. Take one aspect for example: many of the historic liturgies include a call to worship that begins the service with Scripture. While the content of the reading is significant—that is to say, the words of the Scripture reading need to literally call the congregant to worship, or at least inspire him to do so through the revelation of God's character or acts—the fact that the service always begins this way shapes the worshippers into a kind of people who listen first and speak after. It teaches a kind of submission to God's Word through practice without necessarily instructing them to do so.

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[48] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 27.

[49] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 35.

[50] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 93.

[51] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 25.

[52] Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 242.

As broadly as Dawn uses the term *liturgy*, Smith uses it more broadly still because of his anthropological convictions. If humans are first and foremost lovers and worshipers, then it seems very appropriate to use the term *liturgy* to describe whatever it is a worshiping people do when they are worshiping. Smith describes his anthropological convictions this way:

> A liturgical anthropology is a strange beast: it offers a theoretical model of the human person that emphasizes that we are not primarily theorizers. It is an intellectual project that argues for the relativization of the intellect. A liturgical anthropology is a theoretical attempt to appreciate our pretheoretical navigation of the world—a theory about the primacy and irreducibility of practice.[53]

It is this irreducibility of practice that sets Smith's concept of cultural liturgies apart from conventional cultural or worldview observations. Cultural liturgies are not an observation leading to some extracted meaning. This is what Smith means when he refers to practice as *poetic*—it means they are irreducible. The physical aspect of cultural liturgies is such that, as Smith writes, "understanding can be absorbed and imbibed in our imaginations without having to kick into a mode of cerebral reflection."[54] In understanding the irreducibility of practice, Smith accommodates for one weakness of worldview-thinking: worldview cannot always be articulated. In other words, the physical activities have intrinsic meaning without some kind of mental processing or acceptance. Smith sees this reality built-in to the human condition, and he sees the sanctification process with the conviction that "our incarnating, accommodating God meets us *in* and *through* these creaturely conditions."[55]

"Liturgies are formative," writes Smith, "because they are both kinesthetic and poetic, both embodied and storied. Liturgies are covert incubators of the imagination

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[53] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 75.

[54] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 166–67.

[55] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 33 (emphasis original).

because they play the strings of our aesthetic hearts."[56] He gives some examples of these cultural liturgies, including the practice of standing, saluting, and reciting the pledge of allegiance in school and how that shapes a patriotic populace. The act of standing, saluting, and reciting, as a cultural liturgy, is an irreducible practice; it cannot be explained, nor does it have an extractable meaning. It both shapes and expresses love—in this case, for king and country. And, as it turns out, it is king and country who are responsible for doing the shaping.

Shaping the *habitus*. Cultural liturgies are activities of Christian formation that are not simply series of unbegotten practices, but are applied by structures and institutions, creating *habitus*. The concept of *habitus* in sociology is largely attributed to Pierre Bourdieu, who defines it most succinctly as, "history turned into nature."[57] Smith goes on to describe *habitus* as "a communal, collective disposition that gets inscribed in me. It is always both personal and political."[58] So, *habitus* is a product of social structures that impose cultural liturgies onto the members of that society. Members of a particular society are both inducted and perpetuated through these societal structures. Smith describes them as, "both durable and transposable—something that endures over time and is communicable, able to be shared and passed on."[59] This kind of product is desirable within an institution like the local church, where the vision remains unchanged generation after generation. Not only is it important to lead the members of the church to take part in the Great Commission, it is important to raise them up to lead others to do the same.

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[56] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 137.

[57] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 78.

[58] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 81.

[59] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 81.

Habitus is acquired by the collective influence of the community. Smith writes, "I learn how to be *in* community by acquiring *from* the community and its institutions a *habitus*."[60] This operates something like peer pressure. We tend to emulate the behaviors of those within our own tribe. This idea is typically used in a morally negative sense, but *habitus* can be used positively in the sense of building a culture—in this case, building a culture of missionary sending. Being in the community of the local church, surrounded by others that are participating in cultural liturgies, a *habitus* can be created that shapes the individual members into missionaries.

This idea of *habitus* is consistent with an idea of building a culture of sending. "The constituting engine of *habitus*," writes Smith, "can run quietly under the hood without me ever thinking of it."[61] This unconscious appropriation of a culture of missionary sending can begin to look natural, as it should. In fact, the result of building a *habitus* within a local church is that the default setting for the people is that they will be missionaries in some sense.

Bourdieu, in his explanation of *habitus*, points out that it is possible to "perform in a conscious mode the operation that the *habitus* performs quite differently."[62] Smith distinguishes the intentional from the automatic in this way: "I can now 'consciously' pick up the cup beside me, whereas up to this point I simply did so 'without thinking about it.' Bourdieu's only point is that the unconscious direction of *habitus* is primary."[63] So, as this discussion pertains to missionary sending, it is possible to essentially "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" and go as a missionary without a culture of sending. This is potentially what has been happening with what successes local

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[60] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 81–82 (emphasis original).

[61] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 82.

[62] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 53.

[63] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 83.

churches have had in missionary sending. Some are making a conscious effort to cross barriers, despite the prevailing *habitus* of their local church. But as both Smith's and Bourdieu's argument is applied to missionary sending, this conscious effort will always be an exercise of will until a missionary *habitus* is built.

Smith describes *habitus* as "a *condition* of possibility: . . . a *habitus* circumscribes just how we'll be inclined to constitute the world. However, a *habitus* is also a condition of *possibility*; rather than being some limit on my range of possible experiences, it's what makes *any* experience possible. The *habitus* both governs and enables perception."[64] Similarly, a missionary *habitus* means not only that being a career missionary is a featured item on the menu of career choices for members of a local church, but also that it is unfathomable to some extent that a church member would choose a career that did not afford them opportunity to cross barriers for the sake of the gospel. This, as I shall demonstrate later, was the case for the eighteenth century Brethren. Everyone within the community understand themselves as part of the missionary task.

Showing practical sense. Another way of looking at the product of cultural liturgies is that they generate a practical or common sense. Practical sense, according to Smith, "is a 'belief' in the sense that it is a disposition of the body to inhabit its world in certain ways."[65] The idea of common sense connotes for many a mundanity, like the knowledge of dressing appropriately for particular situations. "But such 'enacted belief'" writes Smith, "is not just mundane, like counting on the table to hold up my soup or trusting that the buses will run on time. Such a 'state of the body' is also a 'repository for

[64] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 84.

[65] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 87.

the most precious values.'"[66] For instance, the common sense notion dressing up for a date or a job interview indicates a precious value of attracting a mate or getting a job, respectively. Similarly, missionary sending and being sent, after being developed into a kind of common sense, indicates precious values like obedience to God's Word and compassion for the lost.

Bourdieu summarizes practical sense thusly: it is "social necessity turned into nature, converted into motor schemes and body automatisms, is what causes practices, in and through what makes them obscure to the eyes of their producers, to be sensible, that is, informed by a common sense."[67] In our case, the social necessity is Romans 10:14–15: "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?" When this idea permeates a people, it becomes a nature that people need to be sent. This then translates to many stepping up to the task of being sent, while others are constantly looking to send. And these acts of necessity happen almost automatically, in such a way that the members of the church do not even know they are doing it.

One reason it is important to transfer the impetus of missionary sending and being sent to the subconscious is that there is much more that needs to be taught and learned in terms of content. In other words, we need to get past the idea that we should go so we can concern ourselves with how we should go and what we should do or say when we get there. Automating sending and being sent requires common sense because, as Smith puts it, "To have acquired practical sense is to know more than you think."[68] Thus, building a missionary common sense leads to a greater capacity to not just send many,

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[66] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 87.

[67] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 69.

[68] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 89.

but to equip them well before they go.

Becoming native. The final image of a cultural of missionary sending acquired through cultural liturgies is becoming *native*. Bourdieu describes what it is to be *native*: "to be in that relationship of 'learned ignorance,' of immediate and unselfconscious understanding which defines the practical relationship to the world."[69] In other words, *native* describes a state of being in which the socially acceptable behavior happens without thinking. A native responds a certain way simply because they cannot imagine doing so any other way. A cultural-anthropological example of this would be something like the left hand taboo in many cultures. An American expat, say in Indonesia, might initially offend cashiers by passing money using the left hand, unaware of the perceived uncleanness of that body part. Going *native*, in this case, means that, even if the money is retrieved from the wallet using the left hand, it passes to the right before being handed to the cashier, and this without a conscious thought. Says Smith, "You know you've become a native when you know what's coming next, when you can anticipate the next move in social discourse because you are now acclimated to a 'world' on a level that no longer requires conscious deliberation or processing."[70]

Interestingly, and perhaps counter-intuitively, no one is born native. "We shouldn't forget," writes Smith, "that becoming a native is in fact a kind of cultural accomplishment . . . . You are formed into a native. And even if you *want* to join, you cannot simply *choose* to do so."[71] Bourdieu's explanation takes an unexpected turn reminiscent of John 3: "One cannot enter this magic circle by an instantaneous decision of the will, but only by birth or by a slow process of co-option and initiation which is

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[69] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 18–19.

[70] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 93.

[71] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 93 (emphasis original).

equivalent to a *second birth*."[72] The implication for missionary formation is that, at the level of individual discipleship, a missionary inclination in this sense is not something someone is born with, but something that is nurtured and forged by the church community. In fact, *nativity* requires something of a conversion experience.

This conversion experience takes place over time through societal pressures, which is a very physical, embodied process for Smith: "Not surprisingly, my in*corp*oration into a social body is effected through the *social* body co-opting *my* body. The dynamics of initiation are kinesthetic."[73] As the American expat mentioned earlier begins to develop the habit of doing everything with his right hand in public, there begins to develop an un-comfortability with the use of the left hand. Not only does the constant reinforcement of negative postures of those around him cause him to be mindful of the usage of his hands, but he also actually reaches a point when it becomes uncomfortable to use his left hand. While he might not have spiritual or hygienic reasons for avoiding left-hand use, there is a psycho-physical block that forms when nativity is reached.

Because humans are whole persons, *nativity* in one area of life affects the other areas of life. "In other words," writes Smith, "the ritual is not an end in itself or merely a script for one 'compartment' of a life. Because it effectively implants a *habitus* in the body, that *habitus* begins to govern action *across* one's life."[74] The change in the American expat in Indonesia is not limited to right-hand-usage, but it further shapes him into the kind of person who submits himself to other social cues and further wholistic inclusion in the new society.

Before a process of becoming native, there are other *habitus* already present,

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[72] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 68 (emphasis added). To be clear, I do not believe Bourdieu is intending this Christian turn necessarily, but because he has worded this statement this way, the implication to Christian formation becomes more readily obvious.

[73] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 94 (emphasis original).

[74] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 95.

and still others concurrently forming, having been engendered by other communities. That being the case, there will be inevitable friction between rival agents of formation. For instance, consider again the earlier left-hand taboo. Suppose the American expat, prior to going native by refraining from public use of the left hand, is in the habit of carrying his wallet in his right pocket. This requires handling his wallet with his right hand while extracting cash with his left. Transitioning to handing money with the right hand is more challenging because of the requirement of either switching hands every time the wallet is taken out, or of switching pockets.

So, as has been shown, an intellectualist understanding of formation leads to a reductionistic method of formation. If humans were purely thinking beings, then a classroom setting is the ideal place to shape them into the desirable kind of people—in our case, to shape them into missionaries. But, as it is, they are not primarily thinking beings, they are primarily loving and worshiping beings. Love and worship are directions of the body which are aimed through regular practices called cultural liturgies. These cultural liturgies shape the imagination, creating *habitus* and practical sense, leading to *nativity*. Next we will explore the setting of missionary formation through cultural liturgies.

The Inevitable Reality of Missionary Liturgies

Much of what Smith is doing in *Desiring the Kingdom* is convincing the reader that there is no such thing as a secular education.[75] Because everything a human being does is inherently religious, all activities, especially formative ones like education, become intrinsically religious when they are engaged. While my audience and aim is different than his, I want to make a similar argument. First, with Smith, I want to show that cultural liturgies are inevitably and especially present in formative institutions, and

[75] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 26.

by extension, they are inevitably present in the local church. Secondly, I want to show that missionary liturgies specifically are inevitably present in the local church, in both positive and negative ways.

The idea that Smith is writing against is the idea that education and religion can be understood separately. In other words, he believes that a Christian institution that places academics as a separate value equal to, or even higher than Christian formation is becoming more decidedly non-Christian.[76] Even if so-called Christian universities pervade their content with Christian worldview, if the liturgies through which they guide their students form them into the same kind of person as the liturgies of secular universities, then they have done little good for the kingdom. Smith puts it more bluntly: "our Christian colleges and universities generate an army of alumni who look pretty much like all the rest of their suburban neighbors, except that our graduates drive their SUVs, inhabit their executive homes, and pursue the frenetic life of the middle class and the corporate ladder 'from a Christian perspective.'"[77]

All this comes presumedly from an ignorance of the powerful work of identity-shaping practices that are inherent in any institution. Even Christian universities effect decidedly secular liturgies without meaning to, or not realizing the counter-valued result. For instance, a Christian university might infuse their educational content with Christian worldview, but if their system of evaluation and advancement is based on competitive drive through graduate placement or a focus on a materialistic understanding of vocation, is the fruit of the institution a net positive for the kingdom? Even though what is taught might be Christian, what is celebrated is functionally Darwinian. These kinds of cultural liturgies are inevitably present in colleges and universities because they are accredited and funded by people who place vocational readiness and economic feasibility over

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[76] See Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 218.

[77] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 219.

kingdom preparation.

Similarly, yet more alarmingly, these kinds of cultural liturgies exist within local churches. There exist any number of pro-kingdom cultural liturgies within the local church for sure. Corporate worship shapes worshipers into the kind of people who devote their lives and obedience to God.[78] Service within the church, from children's ministry teachers to ushers to musicians, shapes volunteers into the kind of people who give of themselves selflessly in service to the kingdom. Would that these were the only kinds of liturgies present.

Some examples of counter-valued liturgies present in local churches might include the undiscerning use of livestreaming services. There are undoubtedly countless good reasons to provide livestreaming of worship services for those who are sick, traveling, or checking out the church for the first time. However, providing livestreaming services could be a counter-liturgy in a number of different ways. For example, regularly taking in the livestream as opposed to being physically present without the admonition and accountability to the contrary shapes one into the kind of person who does not value fellowship and evaluates the service based on production value.

Another example of possible counter-valued liturgies in the local church's worship might be the way that a worshiper brings their offerings. Posting donation boxes, a practice far more common in the post-COVID era, could be shaping the worshiper into the kind of person who sees their offering as a donation to one charitable organization among many, not unlike those posted in museums. Possibly worse than that, without discernment and proper teaching this kind of liturgy could shape the worshiper into the kind of person who sees their offering as a compensation for service rendered. The point

[78] Much could be said about counter-liturgies within contemporary trends of corporate worship like the emphasis on personal fulfillment over worship of God in the lyrics of congregational songs. Even more harmful are the trends in the accompaniment of congregational singing leading to less participation in the singing at all.

of this exercise is to draw attention to the countless practices of the local church that go on without discernment, tacitly assuming that they are liturgically neutral practices. In other words, pastors and local church leaders are guilty of the same mistake we make when we regard cultural institutions as irreligious.[79]

Not only do cultural liturgies inevitably exist in the local church—missionary cultural liturgies inevitably exist as well. There are both positive and negative examples of these liturgies. One example of a positive missionary cultural liturgy is the way in which a local church can use the end of the worship service and the exiting of the building. The Summit Church in North Carolina is rather famous for the benediction "You are sent" that ends every service.[80] Signage in the parking lot has been utilized in many churches that states "You are now entering your mission field." Other examples of positive missionary cultural liturgies include regular prayer emphases for missions like what is common among Southern Baptist churches who celebrate things like the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering or the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The most problematic and destructive counter-missionary liturgy in the church is actually an absence of practice. When missions is never talked about, either in terms of missions giving, missions sending, or missions praying, this shapes the congregation into the kind of people who believe that everything that is happening is something between them and God; they are learning that there is no greater purpose for their lives than the here-and-now of their local church experience. When the local church leaders never organize opportunities to go on mission trips, church members become the kind of people who think missions is something other people do.

Beyond neglectful absence of missionary cultural liturgies (which is actually a

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[79] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 23.

[80] J. D. Greear, "You Are Sent—John 20:19–23," Summit Church, August 21, 2022, Video, 50:01, https://summitchurch.com/message/you-are-sent.

liturgy), there are other cultural liturgies present in the local church that shape persons into anti-missionary Christians (if there is such a thing!). Often, these liturgies are in place to serve other right purposes. In fact, it is possible that there are certain anti-missionary liturgies in the local church that are even necessary. The sermon itself can be an anti-missionary liturgy. The sermon, taken by itself in a vacuum, shapes Christians into the kind of people who sit and listen at the expense of other things. Parents go to great lengths to discipline their children to be able to sit still and listen during the sermon. This practice, while a necessary part of the Christian life, does not necessarily serve a missionary goal within the practice itself. In fact, the sermon content can be Matthew 28:18–20, and yet the practice of sitting and listening shapes the person in contrary ways.

Opening up to this way of thinking can be a discouraging proposition for church leaders. Smith puts it this way: "But if the church is complicit with this sort of formation, where could we look for an alternative education of desire?"[81] It is very possible, as it pertains to counter-missionary liturgies, that such a complicity is what resulted in missionary sodalities like missionary sending agencies. While the advent of missionary sodalities has brought a considerable growth in missionary sending fruitfulness, their elevation within the local church through regular emphasis is in itself a counter-missionary liturgy for the church, because it shapes the Christian into the kind of person who looks outside the local church for missionary opportunities.

The point of growing in awareness of cultural liturgies within local church practice is not simply to seek out and destroy any and all practices that might possibly shape the person into anything other than the perfect image of Christ. This awareness is not a call to remove preaching from gathered worship, nor is it a call for a moratorium on missionary sending agencies. This awareness is a call to acknowledge the presence of these formative practices within the local church—for better or for worse—and to move

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[81] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 25.

toward greater intentionality, particularly in shaping Christians into missionaries. The danger of continued anti-missionary formation is automation; the default trajectory of most Christians today is away from seeing themselves as sent ones. According to Smith, only about five percent of what we do every day is a conscious choice.[82] Awareness of cultural liturgies within the local church must lead to intentionality in implementation of missionary liturgies to counteract the anti-missionary liturgies inevitably present.

Liturgies in Conflict

As we move toward adopting formative practices for better missionary sending fruitfulness, we must be aware of not only pre-existing anti-missionary liturgies, but also how the conflict of the two opposing liturgies needs to play out. For Smith, this conflict takes place in the way we think about worship:

> Carefully thinking about how worship works has two concrete effects that constructively help the body of Christ. First, by displacing our naïve "intellectualism" (whereby we mistakenly assume that we *think* our way into action) and recognizing how secular liturgies work, we will be able to appreciate the dynamics of *de*-formation . . . and thereby be better equipped to resist assimilation. Second, appreciating the bodily basis of worship and its entwinement with the aesthetic of narratival aspect of worship should foster new intentionality about the shape of Christian worship.[83]

Using liturgies and counter-liturgies, the local church can combat an anti-missionary imaginary among their people by resisting assimilation to the world and fostering intentionality about the shape of their worship. But implementing such liturgies will inevitably lead to conflict.

An anti-missionary imaginary is formed through cultural liturgies both within and outside of the church. The world outside of the church is resistant to the gospel itself, and by extension, the spread thereof. The public education system and universities, of which a majority of the citizens of the United States are a product, have a vision of the

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[82] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 81.

[83] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 20–21 (emphasis original).

good life about human flourishing in terms of production and consumption and often expressed in patriotism.[84] Within the church, there are anti-missional liturgies that correspond with the world's vision of human flourishing. Awareness of these liturgies helps to resist assimilation to a secular imaginary and to increase vigilance for other anti-missionary liturgies.

The kind of intellectualism that Smith is pointing out is present within the local church. He describes Protestant worship "as a heady affair fixated on 'messages' that disseminate Christian ideas and abstract values (easily summarized on PowerPoint slides). The result is a talking heads version of Christianity that is fixated on doctrines and ideas, even if it is also paradoxically allied with a certain kind of anti-intellectualism."[85] He goes on to say that if Christianity is only a system of beliefs, what is the point of the church?[86] There is a kind of consumerism that can be shaped by seeing church purely as a place one goes to be intellectually stimulated or spiritually or emotionally filled up.

This kind of church-as-filling-station mentality can be shaped by the growing trend, especially in churches of the free tradition like Baptists and non-denominational churches, in over-simplified liturgies chronologically dominated by the sermon. An example of such an over-simplified liturgy would be something like three (questionably) congregational songs taking 15 minutes or so, followed by 45 minutes of preaching. Absent are systematic Scripture readings, significant corporate prayer, and often even a meaningful admonition and welcomeness to congregational participation in the singing. The sermon is a non-negotiable liturgy in this tradition—as it ought to be—but awareness of all of the non-participatory elements of worship should lead those who organize the

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[84] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 26, 111.

[85] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 42.

[86] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 45.

service toward a balance of counter-liturgy.[87] An imbalance of non-participatory elements (sermon, announcements, even Bible listening) over participatory elements (singing, congregational Bible reading, corporate prayers) can shape the congregants into non-participatory Christians (if there is such a thing), leading to a non-participation in the Great Commission.

So, awareness of anti-missionary cultural liturgies (an imbalance of participation in worship) should foster a new intentionality. Increasing participation in corporate worship through more engaging singing, more participatory Scripture usage, and more intentional corporate prayer could shape the people of a local church into more participatory Christians, leading them to be more apt to participate in the Great Commission. Also, recognizing the consumeristic imaginary that people bring with them into the church should lead to an intentionality to stand against this kind of formation in other ways. For instance, awareness of the lives the people are planning to lead as they leave corporate gatherings (eating lunch, recreation, etc), the benediction (and even the announcements!) can be utilized as a liturgy that reminds Christians that they are now sent into the world with purpose greater than their personal agendas. Worshipers can be challenged to utilize their lunch time to share the gospel with their server, or to invite a visitor to join them at lunch. Building these habits on Sundays (or whenever the church meets) can shape the Christian into a person who is more intentional to use the rest of their week for the kingdom, and it is only a short trip from that intentionality to a call to missions.

Increasing awareness of and intentionality about anti-missional cultural liturgies will inevitably present conflict among a people who have been so indoctrinated. Smith dealt with this concept as it pertained to the conflict of the idea of the ecclesially-

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[87] For an extended treatment of this idea, see Gary Furr and Milburn Price, *The Dialogue of Worship: Creating Space for Revelation and Response*, Faithgrowth (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 1998).

based school with dominant views on education.[88] "To educate our children in such an alternative culture," says Hauerwas, "will mean that our children cannot presuppose that the education they receive will make it possible for them to be successful actors in a world shaped by a quite different culture."[89] Obviously, in the case of changing the way Christian educational institutions teach, that change is going to invite criticism from students and their parents, who have other ideas about what the Christian university is for, shaped by the secular liturgies to which they are subject. Smith is equal parts cynical and optimistic: "Perhaps a generation is coming that would see it as the calling and task of the Christian university to 'corrupt the youth' precisely by making them citizens of the coming kingdom, thereby making them (thankfully) useless and unproductive for what currently passes for 'society.'"[90]

Much like the conflict to come in Christian higher education, there is a conflict to come after beginning to institute missionary liturgies in the local church. There is a long and sordid history in the Church of resisting change in worship style. Adding more participatory elements to worship services is going to make the service longer, which rails against the prevailing consumeristic mindset, formed by secular liturgy, that church is about coming, getting your Jesus-fix, and returning to business-as-usual. Focusing on congregational singing over being attractional and novel likely means a change in musical choices, again conflicting with preferences formed by secular liturgy. Emphasizing missionary sending will bring about tension with the American dream that has already taken up residence in the hearts of the congregation. To make matters worse,

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[88] See also Michael L. Budde, "Assessing What Doesn't Exist: Reflections on the Impact of an Ecclesially Based University," in *Conflicting Allegiances: The Church-Based University in a Liberal Democratic Society*, ed. Michael L. Budde and John Wesley Wright (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2004), 258.

[89] Stanley Hauerwas, "How Risky Is 'the Risk of Education'? Random Reflections from the American Context," *Communio* 30, no. 1 (2003): 53.

[90] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 223.

in areas where churches are more prevalent, there will be churches who do not share these convictions, churches to which some of those people feeling the tension will flock.

There is good news: change is possible. Smith writes: "The brain is subject to competing formations, and the competition is won by those environmental conditions that most regularly stimulate relevant neural pathways."[91] This means that all that is really needed is time to change the hearts of the people in a local church. The congregants may grumble, but if they stay, and if they are intentionally subjected to missionary counter-liturgies, they can be reshaped into the kinds of people who cross linguistic, cultural, and geographic barriers for the sake of gospel spread. Pastors and church leaders need to be aware of pre-existing social imaginaries in their people that are anti-missionary, as well as to be aware of current anti-missionary secular liturgies to which their people are subject, so that they might be intentional about how the worship of the local church is shaped.

Missionary Monasticism

The call to missionary liturgies is not limited to gathered worship of the local church. The Lord calls us to present our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1), beckoning us to an all-of-life worship. It is no coincidence, then, that the verse that follows commands us not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed in mind renewal (Rom 12:2). It should be obvious, but an hour on Sunday is not enough time to counteract the secular liturgies of the more than 100 remaining hours of the week.[92] In order to resist conforming to the consumerism and pluralism of the world, and to be transformed by mind renewal, missionary liturgies need to be installed throughout the rest of the week to equip and send out more missionaries. Because of the need for greater

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[91] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 115.

[92] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 207.

amounts of time and energy to counteract secular liturgies, there is great need of a kind of monasticism—a paradoxical missionary monasticism.

The word *monasticism* brings to mind a certain kind of retreat from the world that was largely rejected in the Protestant Reformation, as well as in the churches that were birthed from it. One might wonder how, then, can there be a kind of missionary monasticism; how can someone both retreat from the world and cross barriers into the world at the same time? I would begin, with Smith, by saying that such a monasticism is "not abstention 'from culture' as such, which would amount to pietist withdrawal from the goodness of creation."[93] The way in which the idea of missionary monasticism would be a contradiction is if it meant complete withdrawal from the world. But that is not the kind of abstention I am suggesting. Nor is what I am suggesting in opposition to the aims of the reformers, as Smith writes: "what Calvin rejects in monasticism is *not* the commitment to formative practices and regular observance of spiritual disciplines. What he rejects is not the 'rituals' associated with monasticism but the elitism and separation from it."[94]

Instead, I am suggesting that missionary monasticism calls us to abstain from some cultural practices that others consider normal.[95] "The abstention of such a monasticism," writes Smith, "is a retreat not to weakness but to a different kind of power, the weak power of witness, the sort of strange power exerted by martyrs."[96] This kind of abstention is not necessarily avoiding all things that smack of the world, nor is it limited to that. Missionary monasticism would not necessarily mean avoiding certain practices

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[93] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 209. The broad brush with which Smith paints pietism is part of what makes the Moravians as missionary senders so interesting because they practiced precisely the kind of missionary monasticism for which I am advocating. See Smith, "From Christian Scholarship to Christian Education," 231.

[94] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 155.

[95] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 209.

[96] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 210–11.

for moral reasons, like abstaining from alcohol or the cinema, but instead it would mean avoiding certain practices because of their liturgical formative power and replacing those practices with some other liturgies that allow the Christian to remain in the world and a witness to it. Says Smith: "[cultural liturgies] would be undertaken in order to engage in cultural labor otherwise, to unfold cultural institutions that are ordered by love and aimed at the kingdom, cultural practices that are foretastes of the new creation and that, as such, would themselves function as winsome witness to God's redemptive love."[97] For Smith, ecclesial counter-liturgies are a witness to the world of the kingdom in general, but missionary liturgies would be an even greater witness for the spread of that kingdom, putting every human being under the authority of God.

Missionary monasticism means abstaining from habits that form Christians into the kind of people who keep their faith private and see evangelism and missions as an imposition, but it cannot stop there. It also means instilling bodily, communal, and sacramental habits of daily worship that activate the imagination toward missionary ends.[98] Boulton clarifies what I believe is the Moravian ideal of pietism: "monastics are mistaken only insofar as they make elite, difficult, and rare what should be ordinary, accessible, and common in Christian communities: namely, whole human lives formed in and through the church's distinctive repertoire of disciplines, from singing psalms to daily prayer to communing with Christ at the sacred supper."[99] The kind of missionary monasticism I am advocating is one that does not set up a camp for those specifically interested in missionary work, but actually reorients all the practices of the local church such that every member is shaped into the Great Commission Christian they were born to be. The goal is for the missionary lifestyle to be considered normal, even expected. And

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[97] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 209–10.

[98] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 211.

[99] Matthew Myer Boulton, *Life in God: John Calvin, Practical Formation, and the Future of Protestant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 13.

that normalcy is only engendered by regular practices throughout the week that shape armchair theologians into self-denying missionaries.

Not only is missionary monasticism not limited to the Sunday morning experience, it is also not limited to a physical address. As Smith advocates for ecclesial colleges, he suggests that this communal understanding of being shaped by the university does not require all students participating in on-campus housing. "Off-campus intentional communities would provide unique monastic opportunity for students to be the *ekklesia* for the world simply by being a community in and for a neighborhood, enacting Augustine's vision of 'urban monasticism.'"[100] How much more so would a kind of missionary community, in and for the neighborhood, provide a witness to that neighborhood about the kingdom work they should be about!

Conclusion

Sending more missionaries is going to mean creating more missionaries, which is done best at the local church level. Missionaries are not simply taught or trained—as though the lack of missionary sending is primarily an intellectual problem—they are shaped through regular practices James Smith refers to as cultural liturgies. These liturgies shape the heart through the body because human beings were created to be that way. So, I suggest a reorientation of all the practices of the local church, from the Sunday morning experience to the discipleship practices of the church throughout the week, so that they would become missionary liturgies as a part of an overall strategy of missionary monasticism. This monasticism is not a withdrawal from the world, but a lifestyle of set-apart witness within the world, specifically as those who are public and winsome with their faith. Having established the ideas of missionary liturgies and missionary monasticism, I will demonstrate in the next few chapters how one particular movement of

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[100] Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 227.

churches put these ideas into practice.

CHAPTER 3

THE ANCIENT BRETHREN: A BASELINE FOR DIAGNOSIS

If the project of discerning missionary liturgies from the eighteenth-century Moravian Brethren were a medical diagnosis, a base line measurement would be necessary to determine how much improvement was gained by the introduction of these liturgies. In other words, it is necessary to determine to what degree the missionary sending prowess of eighteenth-century Moravians was a function of their character as a people prior to their revitalization and to what degree that prowess was a function of the missionary identity-forming practices. Put simply, how much is nature and how much is nurture? To establish this baseline for diagnosis, I will provide a history of the Ancient Brethren, with particular emphasis on things that happened to them (as opposed to things they did) in that history that could have shaped them into a missionary sending people without the use of missionary liturgies. My hope is to show that the Brethren have always been a people ripe for missionary sending, but that they were not activated until the advent of these missionary liturgies during the Zinzendorfian period. Specifically, I will introduce six key influences in the history of the Ancient Brethren, then point out four primary characteristics of the Brethren that would likely contribute to a people inclined toward an elevated level of missionary sending.

Six Key Influences

Before describing the primary characteristics that likely contributed to a people disposed to missionary sending, it seems appropriate to introduce the streams of influence that generated these characteristics. This is appropriate because it is difficult to study the characteristics of the Brethren prior to their official establishment in 1457, simply

because so little is written about them directly.[1] To say that the Moravian Brethren are simply the theological progeny of Jan Hus would be an oversimplification. This movement is better understood as a convergence of the theological and methodological influences of Cyril and Methodius, the Waldenses, John Wycliff, Jan Hus, Gregory of Razerherz, and John Amos Comenius.

Cyril and Methodius

Despite the fact that the appellation *Moravian* has become far removed from the connection to the region of Moravia in Central Europe, the name indicates the origin of the movement in part of what is now the Czech Republic. This geographic distinction is significant because it placed a people nearly equidistant from Rome and Constantinople, the two parts of the Church family that were not long from schism in the ninth century when the Moravians were first evangelized. Cyril (827–869) and Methodius (815–884) from the Eastern arm of the church are credited with the first evangelization of Bohemia, a region at the time subsisting under the Moravian overlord Mojmir, seeing the at least nominal conversion of the royal family and the lasting Christianization of the margravate.[2] Later I will go into greater detail about the significance of the Eastern evangelization of Moravia, but for now let this brief introduction to Cyril and Methodius suffice.

The Waldenses

There was a proto-evangelical people parallel to the Brethren that also dot the landscape of church history prior to the Reformation variously known as the Waldenses,

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[1] Ami Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1834), 42.

[2] David Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren, or, A Succinct Narrative of the Protestant Church of the United Brethren or Unitas Fratrum in the Remoter Ages and Particularly in the Present Century*, trans. Benjamin La Trobe (London: W. and A. Strahan, 1780), 17; Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1955), 308.

The Poor of Lyons, or the *Vaudois*.[3] There are at least two conflicting stories about the name of this particular group, whether it refers to the shaded valley from which they hail, or whether they were named after their leader, Peter Waldo (1140–1205).[4] Waldo was a rich, educated merchant from Lyons, and as he was studying the New Testament in 1176 he became convinced that the entirety of the teachings of Jesus should be brought to bear for every Christian. In his case, specifically his reading of Matthew 19:21 meant that he needed to sell everything he had and give it to the poor, which he did after paying off all debt and taking care of his family.[5] He began studying and translating the New Testament and personally applying passages that had been previously interpreted as cultural or canonically unique and thus not binding for every Christian throughout time. He took on the dress befitting the apostles prescribed in the book of Acts, as well as much of the methodologies therein. He began to gather followers, and so a renewal movement began, calling back the church to its apostolic roots. They preached openly, traveled in twos (Luke 10:1), empowered laypeople for ministry, and condemned the corruption of the Roman church. Thus, they were excommunicated in 1184 in the midst of much persecution and migrated to Bohemia in 1176 where they folded in theologically with the Brethren.[6]

Those that favor the geographic origins of the name *Vaudois* claim, with David Cranz, that the Waldenses were descendants of a people originally evangelized by the apostle Paul on his overland journey to Spain.[7] As a testimony to the age and to the influence of the Waldenses, Cranz quotes Sincho Reinerus, a persecutor of the Waldenses

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[3] Here, by proto-evangelical, I mean in line theologically with the Reformers, but predating them.

[4] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 451.

[5] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 451.

[6] G. R. Evans, *Faith in the Medieval World*, IVP Histories (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 96.

[7] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 16.

in the thirteenth century:

> Among all sects, none is more pernicious than that of the Poor of Lyons for three reasons: 1. Because it is the most ancient. Some aver their existence from the days of Sylvester, others, from the very time of the Apostles. 2. Because it is so universal; for there is hardly a country into which this sect has not crept. 3. Because all others render themselves detestable by their blasphemies; but this has a great appearance of godliness, they living a righteous life before men, believing right concerning God, confessing all articles of the creed, only hating the pope of Rome, &c.[8]

Whatever their origins may be, the influence of the Waldenses upon the Moravian Brethren is pervasive and profound. In the Waldenses, the Brethren found support and solidarity, and many of the Waldenses themselves joined the Brethren ranks and were henceforth identified with them.

John Wycliff

Educated by and having taught at Oxford, John Wycliff (1328–1384) would have a profound influence on the Ancient Brethren, even at such a distance. This was possible because of the marriage of Richard II of England to Anne of Luxembourg, sister of the King of Bohemia. Because of this political relationship, an academic relationship developed between Oxford and the University of Prague, causing Wycliff's work to be passed between the universities. Before his teachings and writings were banned by Rome and his writings and remains were burned posthumously, Wycliff condemned papal infallibility, episcopal polity, transubstantiation, and indulgences nearly a century before the Reformation. Because of the relationship between the Universities of Oxford and Prague, Wycliff's writings would make their way into the hands of Bohemia's own Jan Hus.

Jan Hus

Jan Hus (1370–1415) was born in Bohemia and educated at the University of

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[8] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 16.

Prague. If Wycliff was the academic influence on the Ancient Brethren, Hus was the preaching influence. In 1402, Hus was made the preacher at the Chapel of the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem in Prague, a facility designed and built not as a church, but as a privately-built and funded place where preaching in the native tongue could be heard.[9] Hus condemned much of the same things that Wycliff had himself condemned, but because of the following Hus had gathered under his preaching at the Bethlehem Chapel, the Ancient Brethren were officially unified as a movement distinct from those loyal to Rome. Hus was banned from preaching in the churches in 1412, but continued to preach in the open air outside of the city until he was tragically deceived by the Council at Constance. The council had promised safe passage, yet arrested him upon arrival, eventually burning him at the stake in 1415.[10] Many of his followers split into factions and became militant, fighting in particular for the right to take both elements of the Eucharist and to have the Bible in their own language. The Hussite wars resulted in what became known as the Bohemian Compactata in 1433, which enumerated four concessions: (1) The Word of God shall be freely preached by able ministers, according to the Holy Scriptures, without any human inventions, (2) The Lord's Supper shall be administered unto all in both kinds, and divine worship performed in the mother-tongue, (3) Open sins shall be openly punished, according to the law of God, without respect of persons, and (4) The clergy shall execute no worldly dominion, but preach the gospel.[11]

Gregory of Razerherz

The founder of the Unity of the Brethren, Gregory of Razerherz (d. 1473), lovingly referred to by the Brethren as Gregory the Patriarch, was a business manager at a

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[9] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 666.

[10] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 18.

[11] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 19–20; Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 37.

Hussite monastery and nephew to an advisor of the king of Bohemia. After studying the works of Hus and Peter Chelčický, Gregory became convinced that greater reform was needed in Bohemia than had yet been achieved by the Hussite wars.[12] He gathered a group of friends to study Chelčický's works together, and eventually felt they needed to separate from the world ecclesiastically, ethically, and geographically. Through his uncle's political connections, Gregory was able to secure land to establish a small community outside of Kunwald in 1457 or 1458 where the Unity of the Brethren was first established. Gregory is credited as the founder of the Unity of the Brethren and served as an organizer, advocate, lay preacher and missionary.[13] Perhaps his most significant role, as I will explain later, was the example he gave in remaining faithful under persecution.

John Amos Comenius

The end of the Hussite wars meant in no way the end of the persecution of the Brethren, and the last major influence on the Ancient Brethren I will mention marked the end of the ancient period when the Brethren went underground. John Amos Comenius (1592–1670) was ordained by the Brethren church as a minister at the congregation at Fulnek in 1616. He served as the bishop to the Brethren diaspora after he was exiled to Poland in 1627 under the Hapsburg counter-reformation.[14] Of Comenius's inestimable value to the resilience of the Brethren as a people I could not do justice here. However, I will mention two primary ways the Moravians, both Ancient and Modern, have been influenced by John Amos Comenius.

First, Comenius was responsible for drafting *Account of the Ecclesiastical*

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[12] For more on Peter Chelčický, see Craig D. Atwood, "The Bohemian Brethren and the Protestant Reformation," *Religions* 12, no. 5 (May 2021): 2.

[13] Rudolf Říčan and Amedeo Molnár, *The History of the Unity of Brethren: A Protestant Hussite Church in Bohemia and Moravia*, trans. C. Daniel Crews (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church in America, 1992), 31.

[14] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 69.

Discipline and Order in the Unity of the Bohemian Brethren (*Ratio*), a theological and methodological summary of the ministry of the Brethren.[15] This document would serve to distinguish and perpetuate the movement. *Ratio* set the Brethren apart from both the Roman Catholic Church as well as other Protestant movements as such movements would appear in due time. But perhaps more importantly, Comenius published *Ratio* as a way to preserve the memory of the movement as its dissolution seemed immanent and to call the Church to reform.[16] It was this very document that found its way into the hands of Count Zinzendorf a century later, inspiring the Count to revitalize the movement and mobilize them for mission all over the world.

Second, Comenius was singularly responsible for the perpetuity of the Brethren through advocacy before powers both earthly and heavenly. On behalf of the Brethren, he repeatedly petitioned the Church of England for help because the Brethren were continually the casualties of war and political transition. But most importantly, Comenius prayed fervently for the preservation or eventual reconstitution of the Brethren. Says Cranz, "Being arrived at the mountains on the confines, he, casting once more an eye towards Moravia and Bohemia, fell with his Brethren upon his knees, and with many tears prayed to God, that he would not quite remove his gospel from Moravia and Bohemia, but still reserve to himself a seed."[17] The answer to this prayer, as we shall see, was undeniable, albeit delayed by a century.

Four Primary Characteristics

I have briefly surveyed six key influences in the history of the Ancient Brethren. All six of these influences were claimed by Moravian scholars as key figures in their development as a movement. Interestingly, all six hold at least four characteristics in

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[15] The shortened title for this work, *Ratio*, comes from the first word of the original Latin title.

[16] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 117.

[17] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 69.

common that seemed to have been passed on to the Brethren, characteristics that are also valuable to effective missionary work. Those characteristics include the use of vernacular in Bible translation and worship, the experience of persecution, the high view of proclamation, and the priority of doctrinal and ecclesial purity.

Vernacular

The term, "vernacular principle" is one coined by church historian Lamin Sanneh, referring to the task of making Scripture available in the heart languages of the world's cultures.[18] This principle is significant to the study of missiology, but historically its priority among a people has led to an especially missionary church.[19] In the following section, I will demonstrate the value of vernacular translation to all six of the major influences on the pre-Zinzendorfian Moravian Brethren. Yet, there was no major movement toward missionary work until Zinzendorf.

Unlike the Western arm of the Church, where only Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were acceptable languages for the Bible and for worship, in the Eastern part of the Church the use of vernacular prevailed, translating the Bible and the text of worship into the local language.[20] So when Cyril and Methodius came to evangelize Moravia and Bohemia, they brought their Eastern missiological convictions with them. Cyril had already begun language work before he even left Constantinople and arrived in Moravia with some translation work already complete.[21] Cyril's finished translation excelled to such a degree that it was still in use in Cranz's time nearly one thousand years later.[22]

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[18] See Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, American Society of Missiology Series, no. 13 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989).

[19] For the effect the vernacular principle had on the early church, see Edward L. Smither, *Mission in the Early Church: Themes and Reflections* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 91–108.

[20] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 308.

[21] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 307.

[22] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 14.

Both missionaries faced a great deal of opposition for their use of vernacular—both in Bible translation and in the liturgy—from German clergy who were beginning to trickle in from the West, even though Hadrian II is said "to have given approval to the Slavonic service books, to have permitted the use of Slavonic in the Eucharist in some of the churches in Rome, and to have made arrangements for the ordination of several of the candidates for the priesthood who had come to Rome with the missionaries."[23] Methodius's presence in particular seemed to offend the Germans, who tried to condemn him in a synod and confine him to a German monastery. The pope ordered his release, but in compromise to the Germans forbid the use of Slavonic in worship, although he later allowed vernacular use again in the mission to Bulgaria for a time, later to disallow it once again.[24] One wonders if this ambivalence regarding the practice of vernacular use contributed to its value to the Moravians as Rome alternated between whetting their appetite for clarity only to take it away again. Once Bohemia was fully absorbed into the Roman Empire under Otho I, the See of Rome withheld bishops until the churches adopted the Roman rite, meaning, among other things, the use of Latin in worship.[25] The fight to retain worship in the vernacular would characterize the history of the Brethren all the way until after the Reformation.

The Waldenses also brought the value of worship and Bible translation in the vernacular. Waldo personally saw to a New Testament translation in 1176 by commissioning monks for the task and made a diligent effort to study it carefully with the desire to follow its ethical implications to the highest degree.[26] Picking up this value of

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[23] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 308.

[24] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 308–9.

[25] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 15.

[26] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 451; Jana K. Schulman, *The Rise of the Medieval World, 500–1300: A Biographical Dictionary*, Great Cultural Eras of the Western World (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 432.

studying the Bible in their native language, Waldo's followers would memorize vast portions of this translation.[27] From Kenneth Scott Latourette's account, this translation and careful study of the New Testament is what led to their distinctiveness as a movement, and this is a practice they seemed to have shared with their Brethren friends. Not only did the Waldenses value vernacular translations of the Bible, but they were enthusiastic about the intelligibility of the liturgy. They decried prayers in Latin because those prayers would not have been understood by the laity.[28]

Wycliff set himself apart by, among other things, valuing what Latourette called "intelligent sincerity" over form in worship.[29] In other words, it was more important to understand what was being prayed, chanted, or sung in worship, and for it to arise from genuine piety, than for worship to conform to some exterior standard like church tradition. However, Wycliff might be most famous for his translation of the Bible, consistent with the value that everyone—even the most uneducated—might understand God's Word and believe it. Going even a step further, he encouraged the preaching and teaching of the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the seven deadly sins in vernacular language, that the lessons might be understood by all. Again, through the bridge of Jan Hus, this value of the vernacular he shared with the Brethren.

Now we come to Hus, who does not disappoint when it comes to the value of the ministry of the church in common speech. Two major contributing factors to Hus's rise to influence in Bohemia were his use of the Czech language in preaching and his position as rector and preacher at the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague. Hus's vernacular preaching was a significant factor in his rise to influence because, according to

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[27] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 452.

[28] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 452.

[29] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 664.

Latourette, it "stimulated a patriotism that was already growing."[30] Hus's preaching gave the Bohemian people a taste for hearing God's Word in their heart language and understanding it, a thirst that would not be quenched despite the negative attention it received by the Roman powers.

This thirst was demonstrated in the erection of the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, built specifically for the purpose of the preaching of the gospel in the language of the people.[31] The chapel was financed by a wealthy layman and was not considered an official cathedral, but as Hus was called as its primary preacher, it gained considerable influence with the people of Prague and the surrounding country. In fact, the archbishop of Prague—an enemy of Hus's—strategically secured a papal decree that, among other things, banished preaching outside of official cathedrals, parish churches, and monasteries, believing that such a decree would silence Hus.[32] It did move him out of the city, but it did not stop him from preaching in the countryside instead.

After Hus had amassed a considerable following and after he had been martyred, there was a considerable amount of war and violence that resulted from persecution and a desire to maintain the use of vernacular in worship. After much violence, the Council of Basel resulted in the Bohemian Compactata (1436), which granted, among other things, the right of the churches to use vernacular in worship.[33] This concession was far from a guarantee of religious freedom for the Brethren, who would soon officially band together and take on that name, but it does demonstrate the value that the pre-Brethren Hussites placed on the ability to worship in their mother-tongue.

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[30] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 667.

[31] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 18.

[32] Justo L. González, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, 1st ed., vol. 1 of *The Story of Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 349.

[33] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 19–20; Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 37; González, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, 353.

Persecution

The fighting that had broken out between the Hussites and the Roman crusaders hardly marked the beginning or the end of persecution for the people who would become the Ancient Brethren. On first blush, persecution would seem to be a detriment to the missionary impulse. It would seem that fear of abuse, imprisonment, or death would prevent many from wanting to share the message of the gospel. However, as Edward L. Smither argues of the early church, persecution "seemed to invigorate the church and its mission as martyrs were remembered on feast days, through sermons, sacred biographies (*vitae*) and even through the construction of churches."[34]

Methodius himself experienced a great deal of persecution. His presence as a Roman bishop offended the Germans, who tried to condemn Methodius in a synod and confine him to a monastery. The pope ordered Methodius's release, but only if he agreed to cease worship in Slavonic. The pope later allowed it in the mission to Bulgaria, then withdrew his permission shortly after.[35] This ambivalence would characterize the history of the Brethren for centuries.

Much of the back and forth was due to political change. In 884 Bohemian Duke Borivoj was forced into exile because of the missionary work he had brought to Bohemia.[36] Later, the Duke's daughter was murdered in the chapel and churches were demolished.[37] With the ascension of Wenceslas to the throne in 923 or 924, Bohemia enjoyed what seemed to be genuine Christian rule. Latourette says of him "A Christian, profoundly religious, he is said to have been a builder of churches, generous to the poor, ardent in his personal religious devotions, to have worn a rough shirt under his royal

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[34] Smither, *Mission in the Early Church*, 51.

[35] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 308–9.

[36] James Travis, "Beginnings of Bohemia: Borivoj I and the Premyslids," *The Czech Center Blog* (blog), November 11, 2022, https://www.czechcenter.org/blog/2022/11/11/beginnings-of-bohemia.

[37] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 14.

robes, and to have remained a virgin."[38] However, in 929 he was murdered by his brother, Boleslav I on the way to mass. Boleslav I took the throne, and his reign brought considerable anti-Christian sentiment. However, his son, Boleslav II, was active in his encouragement of missionary work among his people, and Latourette held that "it was under his rule that the nominal conversion of Bohemia was completed."[39]

The absorption of Bohemia into the Roman Empire under Otho I marked the beginning of persecution from the Roman church. Bishops were withheld until the Roman rite was adopted, which would mean a celibate clergy, the teaching of transubstantiation, the abolishment of the use of the cup in the Eucharist, and the use of vernacular in worship.[40] Eventually, under the rule of Otho I and Boleslav II, the bishopric of Prague was created, but religious unrest continued through the time of Hus.

Persecution is what brought the Waldenses to Bohemia, a place for hopeful refuge. It might be that the Waldenses provided one of the best examples of the way in which persecution served to grow and strengthen the Unity of the Brethren. Without their immigration, it might be that the Brethren would not have felt the comradery, solidarity, and fellowship that helped to carry them through their own persecutions. The Waldenses also demonstrated the pilgrim sensibility that was bred in the Brethren throughout centuries of forced exile.

Jan Hus, the patron reformer of the Czech people, was perhaps the most notable and tragic character in the long line of persecutions and martyrdoms that both plagued and blessed the Brethren throughout their history. Taking many of his cues from Wycliff, Hus made many enemies within the establishment, both locally and in Rome. Ironically, the attempted silencing of Hus by the archbishop of Prague by banning public

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[38] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 393.

[39] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 393.

[40] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 15.

preaching outside of established church buildings only served to spread his teachings ever wider in the countryside where he continued to preach.[41] The disgraceful imprisonment and execution of Hus galvanized the Czech people to revolt against their Roman oppressors and to explore greater lengths of reformation.

Greatly influenced by the writings of Hus, Gregory the Patriarch would serve as a legend when it comes to persecution. Ami Bost records an endearing story of Gregory, who had been leading a small group in his home, when he opened the door to the officer who had come to arrest them, and addressing his company, said, "It is written, that all who will live godly shall suffer persecution; follow me to prison."[42] It was the official policy that the inquisitors were to make even the most mild recantation their goal, but Gregory was firm, remaining steadfast under this persecution. Bost gives a further, perhaps more fantastical testimony of Gregory's suffering:

> On being put to the torture he fell into a swoon, and as he afterwards related, saw the three men, who six years afterwards were chosen by lot as the first bishops of the brethren, guarding a tree loaded with fruit, on which were a number of birds singing in the most melodious strains. Every one thought him dead; and his uncle Rockyzan, on hearing of it, ran to him, crying out, 'Oh, my poor Gregory; would to God that I was where you are now!' Gregory however recovered, and was released at Rockyzan's request. He lived after this till the year 1474, and continued faithfully to watch over the church under his care.

The veracity of this testimony notwithstanding, the widespread belief in it by the Brethren indicates that, first, the Brethren understood their work as ordained by God by the content of this supposed prophetic vision and Gregory's apparently supernatural recovery. Second, it demonstrates the value of fruit-bearing for the Unity. The church itself—especially the laity—were meant to bear fruit, both in godly living and in evangelism and mission, and it would seem that the vision indicated future success in fruitfulness. In addition, the circumstances of Gregory's imprisonment and release and

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[41] González, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*, 349. See also Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 15.

[42] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 46.

the sentiment expressed by Rockyzan gave the Brethren hope of an advocate in the church government for their interests, only to have that hope finally smashed by Rockyzan's refusal to come to their aid. Bost attributes this last ambivalence as the final nail in the coffin of ongoing relationship with the established church and the beginning of the movement of the Brethren underground.

Moving underground was one of the most important steps toward self-reliance for the Brethren because it required them to build their own practices and customs to safeguard the right teaching of God's Word and the right living of God's people. The underground era was precipitated by members of the Unity being driven from their homes and into hiding, meeting in greater and greater degrees of secrecy until such meetings could only take place at the level of the nuclear family. Elders and bishops were then required to make dangerous house calls and administer the church from afar. The greatest example of this pastoral care at a distance is found in one of the great heroes of the Brethren, Comenius.

Comenius was a bishop of the Unity who fled to Poland in 1627 under intense persecution. The Unity capitalized on his exile by making him bishop over the diaspora Brethren in 1632. Comenius himself speaks of the dire circumstances of the now Europe-wide Brethren community:

> Those, who were dispersed by thousands in the neighbouring kingdoms, that they might remain faithful to God, were either disheartened on account of the hardships of their exile, and did not persevere in their stedfastness (sic), or, through the long continuance of their tribulations, decreased in such a manner, that at present only a small remnant of us is left.[43]

Cranz testifies that, despite the quiet lives they were forced to lead, the Brethren faithfully passed on a theological and methodological heritage and distinguished

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[43] John Amos Comenius, *Church-History of the Moravian Brethren*, §126, quoted in Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 85.

themselves by their peculiar godliness and by the education of their children.[44] Comenius's contribution to the perpetuity of the Brethren included not only the publishing of a summary of their theology and methodology in *Ratio*, as well as his advocacy for the Unity, but Comenius is also responsible for the maintenance of the succession of bishoprics that narrowly escaped being snuffed out in the underground period. By Zinzendorf's time, only two ordained Moravian bishops remained in the world, both of which owe their ordination to Comenius.

Cranz says of the remaining years of persecution between Comenius and Zinzendorf:

> Now, although a great number of them fell asleep, and all means were used totally to extinguish the sparks covered with ashes, yet the Lord still has known how to preserve a multitude of secret disciples, and, very probably, more than the seven thousand in the days of Elias, and has made use of precisely the same methods to preserve and propagate the truth, by which the adversaries fought to destroy it and them.[45]

And so, despite the wishes of the enemies of the Brethren, the remnant would be preserved by the very skills they learned in persecution, and these disciplines and habits would serve and define the people for centuries of fruitfulness. Persecution taught this fledgling movement how to maintain personal spiritual discipline without the aid of the established church, which could have easily translated—and did translate—into the resilient kind of Christian needed for missionary work. Exile and forced displacement led to a diaspora that brought the gospel to places it had not yet been. Varied degrees of forced emigration also created a people with considerably less ties to a homeland, which was likely to contribute to the generation of a missionary people.

Proclamation

What is a missionary people if not a people enamored by the gospel message

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[44] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 86.

[45] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 88.

themselves and motivated to see it spread to the nations? This value of preaching might be taken for granted by twenty-first century evangelicals, but in the midst of the Roman dominance of the worldwide church, this value was not universally shared. David Bosch says of the medieval Church that "the actual performance of the baptismal rite often tended to become more important than the individual's personal appropriation of the faith. The responsibility of the missionary was reduced to bringing the 'convert' to the baptismal font as soon as possible."[46] In a world where half-hearted so-called converts were rushed to baptism as though it were *ex opera operato*, preaching for actual conversion was somewhat unique among the streams that flowed into the identity of the Brethren.

J. E. Hutton hints that from the beginning, even in the days of Cyril and Methodius, the Bohemians valued preaching, especially the preaching of their own people. And they saw the preachers from the East as their own people, who were not in Hutton's words "distant and awful" like the Roman priests, but instead intermixed with the people.[47] The very fact that the missionaries from the East were seen as "preachers" and "apostles" instead of the Roman preference of "priests" is telling of the value the Moravian people placed on the proclamation of God's Word.

The Waldenses were a significant influence to the emphasis on preaching. Evans writes that Waldo himself "said that God ordered the preaching of his word throughout the world. He said that if the pope were to forbid this, then he was a false witness, and that this was a disobedience to God's will which ought to be punished."[48] Waldo saw the present church as the inheritors of the apostolic tradition laid out in the

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[46] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 20th anniv. ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 224. See also Timothy Reuter, *The Greatest Englishman: Essays on St. Boniface and the Church at Crediton* (Exeter, UK: Paternoster Press, 1980), 76.

[47] J. E. Hutton, *A Short History of the Moravian Church.* (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1895), 5.

[48] Evans, *Faith in the Medieval World*, 97.

book of Acts, which is why he took not only the ethics of the New Testament so seriously, but the evangelistic mandate as well. He sought to emulate even the clothes called for in Mark 6 and Luke 9, demonstrating in his mind the connectedness between the Christian's evangelistic calling and that of the Apostles.

The Waldenses believed themselves to be descendants of a people evangelized by the Apostle Paul himself, and took up much of Paul's apostolic methodologies as well. Waldo did not see the preaching ministry as something only for himself, or even only for the priesthood, but something to which all Christians were called. He equipped many lay leaders—even some women—to go two by two, as the apostles had done, to preach the good news to the poor. The Waldenses came to Bohemia in 1176 and soon joined ranks with the Bohemian Christians, and Cranz even claims that the Bohemians and Waldenses sent missionaries early to England, Hungary, Brandenburg, and Pomerania.[49]

Wycliff likewise prized the proclamatory ministry of lay preachers. Lattourette writes that Wycliff sent many out himself to "preach wherever they could gain a hearing—on the roads, in village greens and churchyards, or in churches."[50] At first those preachers sent out by Wycliff would come from the gentry, but over time most would be from the poorer classes and largely uneducated. He equipped these preachers with tracts, sermon outlines, and Bible paraphrases but for himself, he placed a premium on expository preaching from the Bible. It is through the sending of so many lay preachers that Wycliff was able to gain such a following and his followers to play such a crucial role in the English Reformation.

Downstream of Wycliff, Hus's influence was almost entirely due to his preaching. His largest single point of influence was unmistakably as preacher at the

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[49] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 17. His is the only testimony I found regarding these missionaries. The other Moravian histories do not speak to missionary work prior to the Zinzendorfian era.

[50] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 665.

Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, a building constructed not as a church, but as a house of preaching in the heart language of the people. It is difficult to say, when it comes to Hus's relationship with the Bethlehem Chapel, whether its effectiveness was due to Hus's influence, or whether the effectiveness was a product of the growing movement in the populace, and whether Hus was simply the lightning rod.[51] But this difficulty gives all the more support to the lay component of the movement that would result in the creation of the Unity of the Brethren.

After being excommunicated in 1412, Hus went to preach in the open countryside. As we have already seen, persecution and exile forged a mobile people ripe for missionary sending. However, in Hus we see a great example of how persecution also generates a proclamatory people. The crackdown of the establishment on vernacular biblical preaching caused an extraction of the preaching act from the liturgy of gathered worship and exported the act into the community, more particularly the community further from the city center. This extraction of biblical preaching as a separate unit from Lord's Day worship would characterize the Unity in centuries to come.

For the Bohemian Christians, among the spoils of the Hussite wars was the Bohemian Compactata. Of the four demands that made up the Compactata, two of them concern preaching. The first demand prohibited the restraint of able-bodied ministers from preaching. This language is telling, because it specifically empowers laymen for preaching service. The last of the four demands charges the clergy with their primary duty of preaching. This demand does not preclude the administration of the sacraments, but it does distinguish proclamation as the primary obligation of the clergy.

To say that the primacy of preaching was evident in the history of the Bohemian Christians leading up to the establishment of the Unity is not necessarily to say that the Brethren were singular in this priority. However, in combination with these other

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[51] See Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 667.

characteristics—persecution, the use of vernacular, and as we shall see, the priority of doctrinal and ecclesial purity—it seems inevitable that such a people would be a missionary people. Putting preaching into the hands of laypeople seems a self-evident step toward missionary prowess. It is a short step from empowering lay preachers to sending lay missionaries. Notwithstanding the singular reference by Cranz to the cooperative missionary efforts with the Waldenses, there was no notable missionary effort among the Ancient Brethren comparable to the Zinzendorfian period.

Purity

Bost makes one of the greatest commendations of doctrinal and moral purity that could be made of the Brethren:

> If we search in ecclesiastical history for the course of those Christian societies, which, amidst the darkness of superstition, have carefully endeavoured to preserve the doctrine of the gospel inviolable, and to conform their life and conduct to it, we shall find that the Waldenses and the Bohemian brethren have preserved the light of the truth more than any other association of Christians, even in the midst of the most violent persecutions and cruel sufferings.[52]

At the risk of minimizing the priority of moral reform in general, which was undoubtedly a priority for the Brethren from the very beginning, doctrinal and ecclesial purity set the Brethren apart as unique throughout their ancient history. Such an emphasis should have set them up as a missionary people, because they would see tares when others saw wheat, and would see many within the church as targets for evangelism. While this priority of purity during the original evangelization of Moravia by Cyril and Methodius is less demonstrable, the introduction of the Waldenses to the community made a significant impact on this facet of the Brethren's identity, and this characteristic was further developed under the influence of Wycliff, Huss, Gregory, and Comenius.

Waldo himself, with his call to realign with the New Testament for the Church as a whole, had much to say about her leadership in particular. He and his followers set

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[52] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 127.

themselves against any pope or bishop they felt was not similarly conforming himself to the New Testament. The Waldenses saw the church of Rome as corrupt and this view pitted them against most of the hierarchy in Rome. Further, any priest or bishop not living by New Testament standards was deemed invalid, as were his administrations. Only faithful priests and bishops were to be obeyed. To replenish the priesthood rendered anemic by so many disavowals, the Waldenses raised up their own clergy, including priests, deacons, bishops, and even a head over their fellowship.[53]

Wycliff taught similar proto-reformational views on the church. Among these teachings were that popes could err and that they were not necessary for biblical church administration in the first place. Heavily influenced by Augustine, Wycliff taught that the church consisted of the elect, an invisible distinction the entrance to which could not be controlled by any earthly power. He decried the rampant abuse of power by the ecclesial hierarchy of Rome at the time, seeking to purify the church from the top down. Wycliff also spoke out against the cult of saints, relics, and pilgrimages and taught the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, decrying the distinction between priests and bishops. He rejected the sacrament of confirmation, the doctrine of transubstantiation, the issuance of indulgences, and the celebration of mass for the dead. These were some of the teachings that brought him to trial as a heretic and precipitated the banning of his works by Rome. Yet, these were the teachings that he wanted his students to believe, to practice, and to teach others—and teach others they did.

While not agreeing with everything that Wyclif taught and wrote, Hus was significantly influenced by Wyclif's value of biblical over ecclesiastical authority. Hus believed that Christ—not Peter—was the foundation on which the church was built. In light of the papal schism concurrent with Hus's life and ministry, this position gained him

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[53] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 452.

much negative attention. Hus went further than Wycliff to say not only that Popes could err, but that some had been, in fact, heretics.[54]

Gregory the Patriarch would lead the first Brethren community to Lititz, where he became one of the first elders of the new church. This route was suggested by Gregory's uncle, an influential cleric with ties to the royal family, after it became clear that unity with the Roman Catholic Church was impossible.[55] The Brethren were given a small amount of freedom there, at least for a time. According to Ami Bost, the election of elders from among themselves began because they could no longer abide receiving pastors from the state with whom they disagreed theologically.[56] This began the tradition among the Brethren of raising up their own pastors and training them internally instead of seeking them out from seminaries or universities. Says Bost: "A large proportion of the candidates for the sacred office were still instructed in preference by some pastor, with whom they resided for the purpose; for the brethren set more value on piety, Christian conduct, and the knowledge of Divine truth, than upon any human learning."[57] In other words, the Brethren were willing to sacrifice higher academic learning in a university to gain moral and theological integrity through apprenticeship.

The maintenance of an unbroken chain of bishops from the apostles served as a crucial part of the ministry of Comenius. Despite the irreconcilable differences between the Brethren and Rome, it was important to the Brethren to remain connected to the historical church. Despite the significant membership decline among the Brethren, Comenius saw to it that his son-in-law, Peter Jablonsky, was ordained as bishop over the

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[54] Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, 667.

[55] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 21; Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 41–42.

[56] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 49.

[57] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 133.

Moravian and Bohemian diaspora "in hope against hope."[58] It would be Jablonsky's son David Ernest, ordained in that same hopeful spirit, that would supply the apostolic succession to the bishopric under the renewed Unity of the Brethren. The importance of an apostolic succession for the Brethren testified to their motivation not to create a new church, but to restore the ancient one. It would not do to have their bishops ordained by Rome, with all the abuses and impurities.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the Ancient Brethren had the right upbringing to be a missionary people. They were influenced by Cyril and Methdodius, their original evangelists, as well as by the Waldenses, Wycliff, Hus, Gregory, and Comenius. All of these influences demonstrated the priorities of vernacular translation, perseverance under persecution, widespread gospel proclamation, and doctrinal and ecclesial purity. The Ancient Brethren then demonstrated these priorities after their organization. Yet, despite all these reasons to be a missionary people, they were not missionally active until after the advent of Zinzendorf. In the next chapter, I will explore what changed to produce such a missionary people.

[58] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 75.

CHAPTER 4

THE AWAKENING OF A MISSIONARY PEOPLE

Nineteenth-Century Moravian historian Ami Bost makes the grandest of claims on behalf of the Brethren:

> The church of the United Brethren may indeed be called a "missionary church." No other body of professing Christians can lay an equal claim to that appellation; for the establishment of missions to the heathen is considered by them as part of the business of the church, as such, and one of the main designs of its existence, while every brother and sister stands prepared to go wherever the general voice shall determine, according to the opinion entertained of their qualifications and gifts.[1]

That appellation is precisely why the Moravians are of such a great interest to the study of the missionary sending local church. The Brethren believed that international missions was, indeed, the business of the church and one of the main designs of its existence. It was also, they believed, the prerogative of every member of the local church, which is evidenced by a spirit of readiness among the entire congregation. How does a local church become a missionary church? What formative practices led to the United Brethren becoming such a church? In this chapter, I will argue that, by means of the employment of cultural liturgies, eighteenth-century Moravian Brethren produced a culture of readiness, deployment, and community alignment, resulting in a high missionary-sending rate. I will begin by showing what such a culture looked like, then I will explain a number of their regular missionary sending practices with emphasis on their formative properties.

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[1] Ami Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1834), 420–21.

A Culture of Readiness, Contribution, and Community Alignment

To establish the effectiveness of the cultural liturgies I will later demonstrate, it seems prudent to elucidate their results. First, what is meant by such a title? What is a culture of readiness, contribution, and community alignment? Secondly, how did the Moravians demonstrate such a culture? In what follows, I will describe each aspect of the missionary sending culture of the eighteenth century Moravian Brethren, and then show specific ways this culture was made manifest.

The readiness of the Moravian missionary-sending culture describes the prevailing attitude akin to the faith of Abraham, who departed at God's command even when he knew not where he was going (Heb 11:8). Abraham's obediece was attributed to his faith in God. He was driven by a vision of the city of God, which played out in action, even counter-intuitive action. This readiness was not necessarily to move physically, but to do whatever God might command. This inclination in Abraham can also be seen in the willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac. What Abraham's spirit of readiness has in common with missionary readiness is faith and obedience. Further, the missionary readiness displayed by the Moravian Brethren in Zinzendorf's time also included a preparedness to pick up and move.

Zinzendorf displayed this kind of readiness in the commitments of the Order of the Mustard Seed, one of which was "to be at the Saviour's service when, where, and how he might choose to employ them."[2] For Zinzendorf and Watteville, the originators of this commitment, this readiness meant they would primarily be senders of missionaries because of their responsibilities of social station.[3] Both undertook several short- to medium-term missions trips in their lifetimes, but neither gave themselves indefinitely to

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[2] August Gottlieb Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, trans. by Samuel Jackson (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1838), 421.

[3] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 9.

foreign missions as a goer.

For the Brethren under Zinzendorf's leadership, however, there was a readiness to give up their lives, comfort, vocation, and homes to cross the planet for the sake of the gospel. Says Cranz, "they stood prepared to relinquish even this commodious situation, the moment they knew that they could serve their Lord and Saviour in other places among Christians or Heathens."[4] The commodious situation refers to the revival they were experiencing at Herrnhut, where they knew sweet Christian fellowship and worship on a daily basis. The ability to go as a missionary was a greater joy than even a life of blessed and Holy Spirit-inhabited devotion. And each member of the community stood in such a readiness.

Repeatedly, as a need or request would come down from Zinzendorf for missionaries in the hardest-to-reach places of the world, people would line up to serve at a moment's notice.[5] Cranz describes such an attitude among the people that they simply awaited a call, and even asked for opportunities to serve. Many even expressed a desire to go, and simply desired to be pointed in a direction by church leaders.[6] One such example occurred in February 1728 when Zinzendorf pitched an idea for the need for missionaries in the West Indies, Greenland, Turkey, and Lapland, and the next day twenty-six men made commitments to express their readiness to go.

There are components of a missionary sending culture that do not necessarily result in missionary sending per se. The culture among the eighteenth century Brethren was one that did not abide stillness in a physical sense. There is much to be said about the famous work ethic of the Moravians, and more will be said later, but one component of

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[4] David Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren, or, a Succinct Narrative of the Protestant Church of the United Brethren or Unitas Fratrum in the Remoter Ages and Particularly in the Present Century*, trans. by Benjamin La Trobe (London: W. and A. Strahan, 1780), 444.

[5] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 505.

[6] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 560.

the missionary sending culture of the Brethren was a spirit of contribution, and by that I mean that it was expected that every member of the community would exercise the gifts that God had given them within the context of that community. Zinzendorf saw the stirring up and employment of the gifts as mutually edifying and for the general good of the community.[7] Spangenberg testified that Zinzendorf genuinely "believed that awakened individuals ought not to rest satisfied with holding private meetings, and exercising themselves in praying, reading, singing, and speaking, which was at the time pretty customary."[8] Even widows were expected to contribute to the good of the community and of the kingdom, and much discussion took place as to how this could be accomplished.[9]

It is no misnomer that self-adopted appellation *the Unity*. These communities were each of one mind; whatever they did, it was for the kingdom. Even the person keeping the cooking fires going considered his position "as important as if he were guarding the Ark of the Covenant," because he believed even that job was so the community could churn out missionaries, as well as their funding and supplies.[10] There were only three kinds of people in a Moravian community: those devoting themselves to missions or education, and others laboring to support these heralds and teachers.[11] Moravian historian J. E. Hutton writes, "Each was a free-will agent; each was willing to earn his own living, and serve the cause without pay; and each was ready, even at the risk

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[7] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 86.

[8] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 105.

[9] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 457.

[10] J. E. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions* (London: Moravian Publication Office, 1922), 82.

[11] J. Taylor Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society, vol. 6 (Bethlehem, PA: Times, 1900), 138.

of his life, to render Zinzendorf implicit obedience."[12] It was clear that the Brethren did not see this obedience simply to their charismatic leader, but to the cause of Christ to which that leader had devoted his life.

Missionary-Sending Cultural Liturgies of Eighteenth Century Moravians

So we come to the heart of this entire work of analysis of eighteenth century Moravian Brethren, and what I believe to be a list of practices that were major contributors to the spirit of readiness, deployment, and community alignment resulting in a high missionary-sending rate. Hutton describes the bulk of these practices as a four-year training program:

> During those four years he employed four methods. First, to teach the settlers obedience, he persuaded them to sign their names to a number of Statutes, known as the Brotherly Agreement (July 4th, 1727); secondly, to teach them Christian charity, he invited them to a Holy Communion in Berthelsdorf Parish Church . . . thirdly, he deepened their spiritual experience by means of Bands, Classes, Hourly Intercessions, Singing Meetings, and the Daily Watchword; and fourthly, and above all, he not only sent some of the settlers on reconnoitering expeditions to England, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Moravia, and the Baltic Provinces, but also, in connexion with these expeditions, established a monthly Missionary Prayer Day. . . . By means of foregoing methods he changed a band of refugees into a missionary army; and history, says Dr. Bernhard Becker, supplies no similar example."[13]

Hutton has explained missionary preparation in terms of education and training. While I do not wish to deny the value of these methods, in what follows I will be describing not academic lessons, but identity-shaping practices. These identity-shaping practices are of various kinds, some more self-evident than others, some more replicable than others. My hope in the following pages is to present each cultural liturgy clearly and fairly, acknowledging the faults that lie therein, but pointing to the resulting character each produced. In addition, I will provide some contemporary applications to the lessons learned by the cultural liturgies employed by the Moravian Brethren.

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[12] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 172.

[13] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 11–13.

Focused Attention

Perhaps the most basic cultural liturgy that contributed to the Moravians becoming such a missionary sending force was simply the attention missionaries and missionary candidates received from top-level leadership. This particular practice demonstrates the difference between simply teaching about missions in a purely intellectual way, which certainly took place among the Brethren, and instilling practices that shaped them into missionary people. What I mean by *focused attention* is not the content of Zinzendorf's missionary teaching. In fact, the training content of missionary preparation changed dramatically almost daily as the Brethren learned what methods of missionary engagement were most effective, and which were not effective at all.[14] What I mean by *focused attention* is the special access to Zinzendorf granted to those who showed particular commitment or aptitude for missionary work.

According to Hutton, the Count "gathered round him a body of chosen disciples—called first the Pilgrim Band, and later the Disciples' House—employed them as confidential clerks, and, through them, managed the whole enterprise. . . . On several important occasions, also, he appointed and sent out men to pay official visitations."[15] This practice Zinzendorf learned during his days of sitting at the dinner table with Spener, Plütschau, Ziegenbalg, and Gründler, the latter three returned missionaries sent by the former to Tranquebar. The Count and Watteville, who also took part in these inspiring meals, were profoundly influenced by these conversations in their missionary fervor.[16] Hutton goes on to say that the relationships formed by these conversations had far greater effect than what could be gained simply by reading the missionary reports.

This church of pilgrims with which Zinzendorf surrounded himself were a collection of Brethren to which the Count devoted himself to prepare for kingdom work.

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[14] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 21, 73.

[15] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 169.

[16] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 8.

To them he gave unique personal attention, and intentionally exposed them to returning missionaries and deputations. They moved with Zinzendorf wherever he went, and the rest of the community understood their unique connection to him.[17] The effect of this practice of priority by proximity divided the community into two parties or divisions of labor. The ones to which Zinzendorf devoted more concentrated energies were the ones, largely descendent from the original Moravian settlers of Herrnhut, which would devote their lives to going as missionaries. The others, largely made up of pietistic Lutherans and other theological refugees in Herrnhut, saw their roles as supporting those that would go.[18] This division reiterated to the entire community that the spread of the Kingdom of Christ was everyone's greatest priority.

The contemporary application for the principle of focused attention as a cultural missionary liturgy is rather simple. Those who seem to demonstrate a particular calling or gifting conducive to the missionary lifestyle need particular attention from church leadership in preparation for sending. That much may seem obvious. What may not seem obvious is that the rest of the church needs to witness that focused attention. One counter-liturgy to missionary sending that exists in contemporary sending processes is the sending away of missionaries for preparation. While field preparation training is vital in most cases for a successful missionary career, the separation that happens during the last few months or years prior to deployment denies an important discipleship process to the rest of the congregation. The rest of the congregation is deprived of witnessing the setting apart of missionary candidates during this time, potentially creating an *out-of-sight-out-of-mind* situation. The rest of the Moravian community that were not being set aside for missionary deployment felt that comparative neglect as we have seen, and it was

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[17] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 327–28.

[18] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 177.

motivation for greater participation in support work, or for consideration of going themselves.

Some of this separation is undoubtedly unavoidable to maintain healthy training processes. In other words, in Southern Baptist sending processes, I am not suggesting that we completely replace Field Personnel Orientation with something that happens entirely in the local sending church. However, sending organizations need to be aware of this counter-liturgy of depriving the sending church of witnessing the focused attention on missionaries and consider what parts of training can be transferred to the local church, that they might prolong this formative period in the life of the church. Local sending churches need to be ready to pick up these parts of training, and be aware of the value of witnessing focused attention on missionary candidates to the rest of the sending church.

A Missional Understanding of Work

Another cultural liturgy that formed the Brethren as a missionary people was the way they viewed work itself. Although their work certainly included the work of the evangelist and that of the missionary, every member of the community understood that all work was done as unto the Lord. While this instilled a certain pride and ownership in their labors, particularly in the more artisan vocations, the Brethren saw their work as more purposeful than simply pleasing the Lord. Each member of the sending community labored to generate goods and funds for the community as a whole, as well as for the missionary communities being planted, by contributing all of their proceeds to the cause.[19]

Zinzendorf believed that all work was ordained by God and therefore good for every member of the community. Conversely, any member of the community from

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[19] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 264–65.

children to aging widows that was not at every moment laboring in some way was impoverished, not simply financially, but spiritually. Bost preserves Zinzendorf's words: "We should not work to live, but live to work; and when we think there is nothing more to do, we must be in a bad and declining condition. In a church we must work. . . . They are moreover called to labour with their own hands, not only that they might not be chargeable to any one, but that they might have something to give to those that need."[20] Bost further quotes Zinzendorf regarding the relationship to work and mission:

> It is very important that the brethren should labour everywhere in the true spirit of the community, not seeking their own advantage, but that of the whole church. To consult our own ease at the very time that we are sending hundreds of our brethren into all parts of the world, in the midst of poverty and distress, and while the church altogether is so poor, would be an affront to the cross of Jesus. I am therefore of opinion, that we ought to reject every man who shows a disposition to seek his own ease and advantage, and if he be a brother, we ought not to trouble ourselves with his complaints.[21]

The Count saw all of work as something that should benefit the church, not the individual, especially when their missionary endeavors had created such financial need. This missionary work ethic also applied to the missionaries themselves, who were expected to labor not only with their mouths as evangelists, but with their hands as artisans and mechanics. This practice of requiring missionaries to maintain a secular vocation continued long after Zinzendorf's death, indicating clearly that such a missionary work ethic was pervasive among the people and not just in the leadership.[22]

This way of working each day generated a people who were all expected to be a net positive in their community in evangelism, fund raising, and commodity production.[23] Specifically, each worker understood their labor to support childhood

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[20] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 372.

[21] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 374.

[22] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 188.

[23] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 91.

education and missionary work.[24] This was expressed in a motto, itself a cultural liturgy: *In commune oramus, in commune laboramus, in commune patimur, in commune gaudemus* (together we pray, together we labor, together we suffer, together we rejoice). With this spirit, even a child plucking wool serves the gospel, and understands their work as such.[25]

This cultural liturgy of *all-work-as-missions* could have a profound influence on a local congregation. One way this principle particularly applies is to missionary giving, which is a more central issue to missionary work today than it was for eighteenth century Brethren. It was normal practice to send missionaries with only enough money for travel to the port city. The missionary candidates were then expected to earn passage through manual labor, and then support themselves by working a trade once they reached their destination. The business-as-mission model, particularly that which was demonstrated by eighteenth-century Moravians, has been discussed already at length.[26] However, *all-work-as-missions* as a cultural liturgy means that missionary senders can have an enriching experience in their support role as givers.

This kind of cultural liturgy begins with every member of the congregation seeing their work as kingdom work. This perspective has two components. First, they must see their work as unto the Lord, motivating them to do their work excellently and for his pleasure (Col 3:23–24). Secondly, assuming they are giving faithfully to the church—and by extension, to missions—they need to see their work as producing funds for missions.[27] Undoubtedly, this requires teaching for this liturgy to work fully. This

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[24] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 264–65.

[25] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 82.

[26] See William J. Danker, *Profit for the Lord: Economic Activities in Moravian Missions and the Basel Mission Trading Company* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002).

[27] I am making two assumptions here. First, I am assuming a giving pattern resembling a tithe. Time and appropriateness do not permit me here to make an argument for the necessity of a tithe. Second, I am assuming the local church has some kind of giving pattern toward missions resembling something like

thinking needs to be trained and reinforced to the conscious mind from the pulpit ministry of the local church. Once this way of thinking is adopted, then each pay raise and bonus means a higher capacity for missions giving. Each hour of overtime work generates more funds for cross-cultural evangelism. Each new client or customer yields a source of cash for more kingdom work.

Perhaps one of the most shocking cultural liturgies that generated a missional understanding of work was the relegation of child-rearing to those that held the responsibility as guardians. The task of raising children was consolidated in the missionary economy of the Brethren to guardians within the choir system, freeing parents to labor. Hutton captures the emotional weight of this practice: "for this cause the fond mothers, with tears of joy in their eyes, handed over their children to the care of the guardians, and thus, with fingers free to work, made shoes, cut patterns, ground powder for the chemists' shop, sliced turnips, knitted socks, and copied invoices and letters."[28] This community-over-family ideal was adopted not as a universal best practice for Christian community, but was seen as expedient to generate maximum missionary and economic output.[29]

While I am not suggesting the outsourcing of child-rearing (more on this later), there needs to be an awareness within the local church that the care of children is a vital step in missionary preparation and deployment. The imminent practicality of this notion cannot be overstated. With religious volunteerism at an all-time low, and volunteerism in

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the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention. The second assumption, then, is that a certain percentage of each dollar given to the local church goes to missions.

[28] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 82.

[29] Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 143–44. More on this topic in the discussion of community organization below.

children's ministry being no exception, motivation is crucial for recruitment.[30] If all of the ministries of the local church are forming each member toward missionary proclivities, then parents of young children need to be freed up to be a part of those ministries, particularly when it comes to training and evangelism. Going door-to-door with young children in tow can seriously undercut effectiveness depending on the situation, and so offering childcare for young families so that parents can go visiting is a way to facilitate missions.[31] When volunteers are recruited for this kind of childcare with a mind to facilitating evangelism, then childcare itself becomes a missionary liturgy for the childcare worker.

Childhood Indoctrination

Not only is it hard to imagine the effect of this community-over-family value on parents, even more so it is difficult to imagine the same effect on the children. Because of their prolonged and targeted exposure to missionary cultural liturgies, the children within the Brethren communities likely experienced the greatest effect of those identity-forming practices. Children were seen, both by Zinzendorf in particular, and by the community in general, as little more than future missionaries or future contributors to the missionary economy. Spangenberg demonstrates just how strongly Zinzendorf held to this view: "His prayer on this occasion was, that God would either devote [his infant child Christian Renatus] entirely to his service, or soon remove him from the world."[32] This understanding of committing children to kingdom purposes was passed on to the

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[30] Jeffrey M Jones, "U.S. Charitable Donations Rebound; Volunteering Still Down," Poll Results (Washington, DC: Gallup, January 11, 2022), https://news.gallup.com/poll/388574/charitable-donations-rebound-volunteering-down.aspx.

[31] Having children in tow can, on occasion, be an asset to door-to-door evangelism. However, the point here is not to discuss strategy per se, but to offer an example of missionary work that could necessitate child care.

[32] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 92.

parents as well, who were charged at the baptism of their children to see them as the property of Christ and that, by virtue of the covenant of baptism, they were to raise the children with a mind to kingdom deployment.[33] Such an understanding of the missionary end to childrearing was instilled all throughout their educational process as well. Bost wrote, "What is the education of children? A holy method of teaching them, even from the cradle, that they belong to Jesus, and that all their happiness consists in knowing him."[34]

Children were seen not just as future missionaries or future contributors to the missionary economy; they were also seen as present assets to community piety and were treated as such. In reference to religious services planned specifically for the children, Bost testified that the minister in charge would often himself prostrate and pray with the children intently while they worshiped.[35] The prayer of the children was a prized commodity for the community as a whole, and they were given a day every fourth week specifically for guided prayer for their community and for their kingdom efforts.[36] This expectation upon children at even the youngest age to participate in missionary prayer, in addition to the expectation that children learn to read and write as young as eight years old to participate in the internationally circulated community reports, must have had a profound effect on their future as participants in a missionary church.[37]

Likewise, in contemporary local church settings, children need to be seen as both present and future participants in the missionary force. This was largely the impetus

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[33] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 91.

[34] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 369.

[35] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 377.

[36] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 185.

[37] Amy C. Schutt, "Complex Connections: Communication, Mobility, and Relationships in Moravian Children's Lives," *Journal of Moravian History* 12, no. 1 (2012): 42–43.

behind the Royal Ambassadors and Girls in Action programs within the Southern Baptist Convention. The stated curricula of these organizations include age-appropriate missions experiences.[38] These experiences can be formative in a child's life, not simply as a learning environment, but as a habitus that can be nurtured throughout childhood, producing a missionary adult. With the advent of short-term missions, local churches can offer missions trips for the entire family. In addition, much like the Moravian children of the eighteenth century, children can be tasked for intentional prayer for missionaries around the world, and even to writing encouraging letters or emails to missionaries, forming healthy habits of missionary participation and forming the children into world Christians.

Community Organization

The dual priorities of piety and missionary effectiveness led to the adoption of a unique community structure. Within the communities of the Brethren, children were raised *en masse* largely away from their biological parents under the guidance of surrogate parents appointed by the community.[39] As we have seen, outsourcing childrearing served the purpose of freeing up the parents for missionary service or support, as well as the purpose of raising the children in an intensely missionary culture. This structure extended beyond just the care of children and divided the community into groups of choirs, bands, and classes.

The largest division of the community consisted of gender- and age-oriented groups called choirs. Depending on community size and building availability, the community would be divided into groups such as young boys, young girls, older boys, older girls, single men, single women, and/or older widows. These groups would live in

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[38] https://wmu.com/missions-discipleship/children/ accessed November 17, 2023.

[39] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 307.

houses devoted to their choir until such time as the choir outgrew the place and needed to multiply out, age out, or marry out. Zinzendorf found this community structure particularly conducive to devoting time to the single men's and women's choir, which, according to Bost, "he regarded as a nursery of witnesses and soldiers of Christ."[40] Spangenberg even notes that at one point a group from within one of the young men's choirs separated themselves out on their own to devote themselves even more so for preparation as missionaries.[41] This more concentrated attention included lessons in world geography and church history, which Zinzendorf believed would help prepare them for foreign missions.

This way of structuring community perpetuated outside of Zinzendorf's direct influence, evidenced in the communities established at the North American frontier. Hamilton actually attributed the success of the missions to Native Americans largely to this kind of organization. He writes: "[Choirs] were . . . conceived with a view to develop as quickly as possible the resources of the new settlement in a manner coordinate with the utmost employment of the latent power of the congregation for evangelism."[42] In other words, the nuclear family was deprioritized for missional effectiveness.

To the twenty-first century mindset—and for that matter, a more biblically-informed mindset—this seems negligent at best and potentially abusive at worst. It is unfathomable that such a community could exist today without some kind of governmental interference. Even more so can this outsourcing of child-rearing seem inappropriate for the Christian community. The institution of family existed before sin entered the world and is a part of God's created order. Thus, in no way am I advocating

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[40] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 347.

[41] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 96.

[42] Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 143.

for this kind of community structure, or any community structure that undermines the family as a biblical foundation of society.

While I am not advocating for the choir system as it were, it is undeniable that such a system, as Hamilton wrote, "served its purpose remarkably."[43] One wonders whether there might be a liturgy or liturgies to replace it. To some degree, the single brethren's missionary-focused choir resembles a missionary sending sodality in microcosm. In other words, separating out those with particular interest in missions could fulfil part of this liturgical need. Another kind of replacement liturgy would be something that required children to sacrifice something for greater missional effectiveness. Being raised apart from parents was a difficult thing for children to endure, but the children were made to understand the reasons for this difficulty. Similarly, a replacement liturgy could mean that children could be deprived of some of the trappings of a busy schedule of sports and extra-curriculars, with the knowledge that such a deprivation frees up the parents to spend time in evangelistic endeavors.

Bands and classes were simply a further division of the community into smaller and smaller groups for the purposes of greater and greater mutual transparency and accountability. Spangenberg wrote to the value of bands to the evangelization of and by children: "In a new regulation of the bands or companies of children, the attempt was made to employ some of them, in whom a particular work of grace was manifested, in awakening other children. This attempt was not entirely unsuccessful, and it was continued for many years, not without a blessing."[44] This early evangelistic deployment of children must have exercised a profound influence on the rest of their lives. The contemporary application of this liturgy is a straight line; children who profess faith need

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[43] Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 144.

[44] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 122.

to be mobilized to reach their yet unregenerate friends and siblings. This develops habits of evangelism that could pay dividends in missionary mobilization once children reach adulthood.

The Use of the Lot and the Text Book

Much like the use of the guardian system with children, there were other practices that may not necessarily make straight lines into contemporary application. One example of those practices is the use of the Lot and the Text Book for decision-making. The idea behind decision by Lot was simple: most of the time three strips of paper would be placed in a container representing an affirmative response, a negative response, and an interpretive response, the latter indicated by a blank strip of paper. A strip would be drawn at random, and the message conveyed by the strip would be understood as the will of God in that particular matter. This process would take place only in situations when there was not sufficient clarity on the matter from Scripture.[45] The Text Book, on the other hand, was a collection of Scripture texts and hymn excerpts corresponding to every day of the year. As long as Zinzendorf was in leadership, he was responsible for compiling a new Text Book each year and distributing it among all of the Brethren communities. The text for each day, the Brethren believed, was divinely inspired, not only when it was written by the original authors, but as it was selected for that particular day, as though it was a special word from God for that day.[46]

Moravian Historian Elisabeth Sommer traced the origin of the use of the Lot through the Old Testament use of Umim and Thumim, as well as the influence of Martin Luther, quoted by Zinzendorf in his defense of the Lot in the 1740s.[47] She goes on to

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[45] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 93.

[46] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 173.

[47] Elisabeth Sommer, "Gambling with God: The Use of the Lot by the Moravian Brethren in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59, no. 2 (1998): 269–70.

demonstrate that Zinzendorf's—and by extension the Brethren's—use of the Lot stemmed from a firm belief in the sovereignty of God, as well as a belief that God desired his will to be known by his people.[48] Hutton preserved Zinzendorf's own words on the subject: "To me, the Lot and the Will of God are one and the same thing. I would rather trust an innocent piece of paper than my own excited feelings." Hutton further stated that such a connection between the Lot and the will of God was shared by the entire Brethren community and contributed to their missionary spirit.[49] How can such a risky decision-making method actually contribute to a greater missionary spirit?

Hutton documents at least four occasions between 1731 and 1732 when Zinzendorf used the Lot for decisions regarding missionary sending in particular.[50] In fact, Hutton notes the use of the Lot in June 1732 in particular came after a significant doubt from Zinzendorf about the Lord's will in sending the very first international missionary team to the field.[51] Leonard Dober, a member of this team headed to the West Indies, noted his confidence in the Lord's will before the Lot, but submitted to the Lot for the sake of greater confidence for the rest of the Brethren. Zinzendorf, the missionaries, and the greater Brethren community all believed in their very core that the mission was first and foremost the Lord's, and they desperately wanted to submit to their Savior and Master. In Hutton's words,

> At every serious crisis, therefore, Zinzendorf turned to the Lot for guidance. His theory was perfectly consistent. Christ, he said, was the only true Head of the Church; Christ had His own missionary "plan"; and Christ revealed that "plan" to His servants by means of the Lot. Christ, said the Count, by this means, was giving him and his colleagues infallible guidance. . . . With this faith Zinzendorf inspired

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[48] Sommer, "Gambling with God: The Use of the Lot by the Moravian Brethren in the Eighteenth Century," 272.

[49] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 173.

[50] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 15, 18, 21, 26.

[51] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 21.

> his soldiers. . . . On the men themselves the effect was wonderful. With this simple faith in their hearts they could face any fate.[52]

The Brethren understood every time they used the Lot that they were submitting themselves by so doing to the Lord in obedience and faith. Further, they understood that the Lord has a missionary agenda, and so they built a habitus of obedience that was virtually coterminous with that missionary agenda. The use of the Lot created a sense of anticipation of God's will, as well as an expectation that such a will could command significant life change, namely, that the Lord might call them overseas. Within the Moravian community there was a pervasive sense that God had a purpose for each member, and that they should seek out what that purpose was. They were a mustered people awaiting marching orders.

The Text Book shared a similar function for the Brethren. Bost gives an example of an occasion where there was an uncanny correspondence between the text of the day and the occasions within that day. On the first day of ministry in St. Thomas, the text of the day was Matthew 11:5: "The poor have the gospel preached to them."[53] Bost went on to say that the Brethren were much inclined to notice these apparent coincidences.[54] Both the Lot and the Text Book did as much to affirm the actions of the Brethren as they did to prescribe them. And in the business of missionary sending, when so much is at stake, the confidence inspired by the Lot and the Text Book was very much needed.

I do not wish to commend either of these practices necessarily. The Lot can be, and likely was, abused. The blank slip, the meaning of which changed from one decision to the next, left much room for error and misunderstanding. The making and use of the Text Book opened the Brethren up to mishandling of God's Word, as well as to the

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[52] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 173.

[53] Translation as quoted by Bost.

[54] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 277.

elevation of humanly-authored hymns to levels of divine inspiration equal to Scripture. However, these two practices generated a sense of the expectation of God to move in their lives and an understanding that God expected things from the Brethren. It would do a local church much good to consider exploring cultural liturgies that generate the same kind of social imaginary. Regular, organized prayer time could be one example of this. More specifically, this organized prayer should regularly include asking God whether he would have the church member commit to missionary efforts. This regular asking of God's will could generate a similar social imaginary of a mustered people.

Necessary Travel

Another frequent practice that contributed to a mustered social imaginary was travel, even non-missionary travel. The Moravian Brethren had a history of being driven from their homes due to persecution, a trend that showed no signs of stopping even in Zinzendorf's day. Zinzendorf himself experienced exile on three different occasions. This persecution continued to create a people everywhere at home through the eighteenth century. Hutton describes the auspicious nature of a first meeting between Zinzendorf and several missionaries-to-be:

> In these men, though he knew it not, Zinzendorf was soon to find his first missionaries to the heathen. From Senftleben came Christian David, one of the first missionaries to Greenland; from Sehlen, the Neissers, some of whom preached to the Indians; from Zauchtenthal the Nitschmanns and David Zeisberger, the great apostle to the Indians; from Kunewalde, George Schmidt, the first missionary to South Africa, and Fredereick Böhnisch, another Greenland pioneer; and from Mankendorf, Matthew Stach, the founder of the Greenland Mission. . . . At the time not one of these men had the least idea of becoming a foreign missionary. . . . Each had the blood of martyrs in his veins; each had learned to suffer for his faith.[55]

None of these men knew of their missionary futures, but all of them had been prepared and primed by their varied experiences of persecution and suffering. They

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[55] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 10.

would not even have met Zinzendorf in the first place, even less so would they have been mobilized for missions, if persecution had not driven them from their homes.

Both Zinzendorf himself and those Brethren who would be mobilized for international missions saw their exile as an opportunity for kingdom spread. Bost described Zinzendorf's reaction to his own exile: "'Then,' said the count, in a transport of *joy*, 'the moment is come for collecting together a church of pilgrims; we must go and preach the Saviour to the world.'"[56] Zinzendorf was actually excited to have the excuse to leave home and be counted a missionary. Spangenberg wrote that the Count saw himself as following the example of Christ, "who, when a child in the cradle, was obliged to leave his resting-place and travel about in the world." It is worth noting Spangenberg further explained that Zinzendorf did not believe himself to have the disposition toward travel. His preference was rather to be in one place and passing his time with something of significance. It was God who saw to it that the Count was not in one place for very long.[57]

Although Zinzendorf was forced to travel a considerable amount more than what was normal for the time period, and counter to his temperament, he did greatly value travel-readiness in Christians. Bost preserved the Count's words to this end:

> Whenever a man cherishes in himself the desire of living and dying in the little corner in which he was born, he thinks only of himself, and a feeling of this kind may have an influence over his whole life, rendering him the slave of his own will, and love of home, so far as to retard all his efforts in the work to which he is called by the Saviour. There is but one thing truly valuable, and that is to carry with us whithersoever we are called to go, a heart happy in the Lord; and the place in which we can serve him best, is that which ought to be our home.[58]

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[56] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 327 (emphasis added).

[57] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 162–63.

[58] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 329–30.

Providentially, the Count did travel a considerable amount, and not all of his travel was as a result of persecution, or even for primarily missionary purposes. Zinzendorf's nobility obligated him to make visitations as matters of state, yet he understood these trips to be opportunities for mission. The wider community shared this understanding, and encouraged the Count to take these trips, that he might have greater opportunity to spread the gospel ever wider.[59] Similarly, Christian David, one of the earliest missionaries among the Brethren, was in the habit of repeatedly returning to his homeland to ferry the persecuted to the haven at Herrnhut. His primary purpose was to bring about the safety and freedom of family and friends, but he overlooked no opportunities to share the gospel as he traveled.[60]

Both of these men demonstrated the habit of traveling often, and the habit of leveraging their travel for missions. There has never been a time in history where travel—even significant and frequent travel—was more normal than it is now. With the advent of affordable airfare people travel for work, for school, for vacation, and for any number of other reasons. In April 1732, before Zinzendorf traveled to Copenhagen for a state visit, he requested the approval of the community, which was unanimously granted because of the gospel opportunities it presented.[61] It seems unfathomable to consider the effect such a practice would have to the local church of the twenty-first century. While I am not necessarily suggesting that all travel be submitted for approval to the church—although that might be worth considering—what I am suggesting is that churches find ways to mobilize their members to capitalize on non-missionary travel for kingdom purposes. What if every time a family goes on vacation, or someone travels for work,

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[59] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 140.

[60] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 59.

[61] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 140.

they are commissioned and prayed for, that they might maximize their travel for gospel purposes? This cultural liturgy of travel, and of leveraging said travel for missions, helped to shape a missionary-sending force in the Brethren, and could do so in the local church today as well.

Missionary Reports

In 1728, Zinzendorf instituted what was possibly the most formal and formative missionary liturgy for the Brethren community. Variously known as *congregation days*, *feast days*, *prayer days*, or *thanksgiving days*, these times of worship occurred on a monthly basis and were not readily neglected.[62] Spangenberg described the services as unsurprisingly consisting of Scripture reading, preaching, and singing, but these elements, although important in themselves, seemed largely a warm-up to the congregation reports.[63]

Some background on Zinzendorf and missionary reports is appropriate here. Zinzendorf himself describes his experience as a young man sitting in the drawing room of his family's castle: "I know the day, the hour, the spot in Hennersdorf. It was the Great Room; the year was 1708 or 1709; I heard items read out of the paper about the East Indies, before regular reports were issued; and there and then the first missionary impulse arose in my soul."[64] The reminiscing of this event was recorded nearly fifty years after it took place. Clearly, the Count never forgot the effect of hearing these reports on his missionary zeal. It would seem that he wanted this same experience for those under his care, and so the congregational reports became a centerpiece of the worship services.

Hutton described the congregational reports, coming either from the mission

[62] Cranz, *The Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren*, 386.

[63] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 95.

[64] Quoted in Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 4.

field or from other Moravian communities: "At the monthly Prayer Day, Zinzendorf was at his best. Sometimes he read out a piece of news in vivid dramatic style; sometimes he read a letter from a travelling brother; sometimes he introduced a visitor from Denmark or Lapland; and sometimes, on the spur of the moment, he even composed and sang a missionary hymn."[65] Not only did the Count understand the power of hearing what God was doing on the mission field and the effect that it could have on the listener to increase their missionary spirit, he also demonstrated that he knew that such a report needed to be understood not intellectually, but emotionally. In other words, these congregation day services were aimed at the heart.

To be sure, there is certainly intellectual and even spiritual value in the text of each report read. Zinzendorf himself describes the reports that were so formative of him as "edifying intelligence of the kingdom of Christ."[66] Bost describes the content in similar, dry terms—pointing to the value of the report itself.[67] These reports consisted of diaries and letters of missionaries and community members from all over the world. Ironically, Zinzendorf had a personal policy that missionary biographies not be published publicly because of the risk of glorifying the missionary rather than God. This policy ceased almost immediately following his death. He nonetheless saw to it that all community members—children and adults alike—in every location in every country all over the world kept meticulous records, personal diaries, and voluminous correspondence, all of which were collected centrally, copied into single volumes, and then re-distributed worldwide. These volumes would be read during the monthly services, often lasting hours, to the entire community, including the children.[68]

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[65] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 12–13.

[66] Quoted in Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 7.

[67] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 317.

[68] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 193–94.

There should be no question that simply hearing the details of the kingdom spreading in other locales should naturally be both exciting and motivating to the believer. However, the liturgical power of these reports, besides the intrinsically powerful nature of the content itself, comes from its top billing in the service. It is worth noting that these reports appeared after the sermon. The entire service, in fact, was building to the high point of the reading of these reports. The power also came from the manner in which they were read. The one reporting believed in the importance of the events being reported, and communicated them with appropriate emotional import.

The response was fruitful in two ways. First, it spurred the people toward prayer for the missionaries and the lost. Bost testifies to this result, as well as Spangenberg.[69] When the community heard of the great work, there was rejoicing, and with the great need came supplication. The second way these congregational reports bore fruit is inspiration of missionary candidates. We have already noted the effect missionary reports had on a young Count. Bost testified to the connection between the communication of gospel spread and a manifest readiness in the congregation to engage in missions.[70] Spangenberg also wrote of the impact that missionary reports generated on calling out new missionaries: "When the Count spoke, on the 6th of January, upon the labours amongst the heathens, many testified their willingness to devote themselves to the Saviour for that purpose, at the hazard of their lives."[71] In other words, the testimony of what missionary labor had already been undertaken inspired others to join in the work.

Missionary reporting as a practice is not novel in the field of missiology. Many churches may expect it from the missionaries they support as a means of accountability.

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[69] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 219; Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 92.

[70] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 317.

[71] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 185.

However, missionary reporting as a liturgy that forms missionaries might be an idea that local churches of the twenty-first century could overlook. Zinzendorf himself, arguably one of the most effective missions mobilizers in church history, credits missionary reports as the genesis of his missionary spirit. How many countless others could say the same? In this technologically-advanced age, it has never been easier to hear from missionaries on the field. While physical presence for missionary reporting can be valuable, pre-recorded videos and even live video-calls could serve just as well. And with the simplicity of digital video editing, as well as the more widespread usage of it in the younger generations, these videos can be dramatic, utilizing emotive music and inspiring video clips from the field. To raise up more missionaries in the local church, members of the local church need to hear—and hear often and passionately—about what God is doing in the field, what kind of prayer is needed, and how people can join and go.

Frequent Commitment-Making

A crucial piece of joining missionary work is the making of commitments, and this was a practice already happening regularly among the Moravian Brethren. This habit is one area Pietistic influences had the greatest impact on missionary culture for the Brethren. Much of the Brethren missionary work within Christendom consisted of the planting of *ecclesioloa in ecclesia* (church within a church). The Pietists in general, and Zinzendorf and the Brethren in particular, believed much of the church required a kind of awakening, to move from a nominal faith to an experiential one. The hopeful result of this work was to see Christians make new, greater commitments of obedience and love to the Savior. Zinzendorf himself testified to this practice: "Having found traces of Spener's labours wherever I went, and attempted, both in Dresden and Frankfort, to water the seed he had sown, I wished to do the same in Berlin, by the preaching of the gospel."[72]

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[72] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 238.

This way of doing ministry resulted in a culture of making commitments and re-commitments. Hamilton told the origin story of the Order of the Mustard Seed, initially a group of five young men led by the Count, who committed themselves to mobilizing others for missions among the unreached.[73] Hutton documented the establishment of the Covenant of the Three Brethren, who were missionaries committed to laboring in Greenland under an agreement with seven values.[74] The Unity of the Brethren was itself a commitment of its members toward, among other things, neglecting no opportunity to proclaim Jesus.[75] The congregation days were intended to be a regular opportunity to recommit the Brethren to the cause of Christ.[76] There are countless examples of smaller groups and individuals making similar commitments in the histories and biographies of the Moravians. The Brethren were a people committed to making commitments, which made commitments to the missionary life that much more normal.

Similarly, in contemporary local church practice, a culture of commitments can be built through regular, incremental covenant ceremonies. A response to a missionary message could be a commitment to pray about going on a mission trip. A Sunday school class could commit to regular prayer for a missionary partner every time they meet. Parties within a discipleship relationship could commit to raise a certain amount of money for international missions. Further, what creates a commitment culture is the public nature of the commitment. A noteworthy aspect of each of the commitments mentioned previously—as well as those not mentioned—is that they were preserved; they were made public. Regular, public commitment ceremonies can shape a missionary

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[73] Hamilton, *A History of the Church Known as the Moravian Church; or the Unitas Fratrum, or, the Unity of the Brethren, During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, 20.

[74] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 68–69.

[75] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 44–45.

[76] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 90.

people ready to commit their lives to the missionary call.

Regular, Impassioned, and Realistic Appeal for Missionaries

Romans 10:15 asks the question: "And how are they to preach unless they are sent?" (ESV). That missionary call often comes from the pulpit, and from the pulpit it came for the Moravian Brethren. The Count was inclined toward missionary sending much earlier than some within the community, evidenced in Bost's account of his first corporate appeal:

> Some of them adverted to the impossibility of ever being able to reach these countries; but the count expressed his firm conviction that the Lord would one day grant the brethren, with the grace, the means also necessary for the work. They were thus inspired with great courage, and disposed to hold themselves in readiness to engage in the sacred enterprise, whenever the Lord should give the signal.[77]

This testimony paints a clear picture of impassioned appeal as a missionary-sending liturgy. In order to prove that the practice has the ability to shape a missionary people, it would be helpful to see somewhat of a conversion experience of a people previously unconvinced, and such a conversion experience seems to have taken place here. No doubt many in present-day local churches give countless reasons for not heeding the call. Perhaps their careers are taking off, they perceive their family situation to make them ineligible, or the thought of moving to a foreign country terrifies them. How many more reasons possessed the Brethren! A significant portion of their missionary force died on the field. There were no funds to support such a venture—further, the Brethren were committed not to fund more than the journey to the port, requiring the missionary to work their own passage. So the dream of sending missionaries to faraway countries seemed impossible to some prior to the Count's appeal, yet they were so inspired by his appeal that they waited expectantly to hear the Lord's call.

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[77] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 258.

The effectual call came not only from the leadership, but from the field. Bost tells the story of Anthony Ulrich, a freed slave from St. Thomas whose testimony Zinzendorf had heard in Copenhagen and whose appearance he had requested at Herrnhut, that he might inspire some of the Brethren to serve his homeland as missionaries. Bost even notes that Zinzendorf was ready to send his travel companion David Nitschman to St. Thomas straight from Copenhagen.[78] Ulrich's testimony of the state of the slaves in St. Thomas, including his sister who remained in this state, as well as the confidence in the success of missionary venture, inspired Leonard Dober and Tobias Leopold to resolve independently to make themselves available, even to sell themselves into slavery, that the slaves in St. Thomas might have the gospel preached to them.[79]

At the very same time, an appeal was made to send Brethren to Greenland to come alongside Hans Egede whose work had been struggling to the point of giving up.[80] After hearing the testimony of the two Brethren who had stepped forward for service in St. Thomas, two other Brethren volunteered to go to Greenland. The Brethren transitioned from reticence and fear to a place where two overseas missionary teams were being readied within the year. This is the effect of regular appeal: the missionary candidates had been inspired to a state of readiness by the Count's impassioned general appeal, they had been mobilized by Ulrich's specific appeal, and they had been encouraged by the faithfulness of Dober and Leopold.

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[78] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 270.

[79] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 272. Hutton included a footnote that indicated none of the missionaries needed to become slaves after all, despite rumors to the contrary. As a matter of fact, some became slave owners for lack of any other means of income. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 20n1. Dober himself ended up a house steward in the governor's mansion. Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 35.

[80] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 149.

These missionary appeals were not without warning. The Count was nothing if not realistic in his understanding of the risks of ocean travel, foreign climates, and hostile peoples.[81] All the loss sustained by the Brethren in missionary endeavor caused Zinzendorf much serious reflection.[82] Ulrich's call included the call to slavery, because he thought it was the only way that the slaves of St. Thomas could be reached.[83] The effectual, regular, and impassioned appeal for missionaries was realistic and sober-minded, and so must be the appeal for twenty-first-century missionaries.

Commissioning Practices

Once the missionary call was extended to the Brethren community, those who answered the call would be commissioned by the entire community with all manner of serious reflection and worship. Hutton described the evening before Dober and Nitschmann as intense, including a time of singing as much as a hundred hymns.[84] Not only was there a great deal of ceremony, but there was much sifting as well. Missionary candidates underwent intense scrutiny leading up to their commissioning and departure. The original Greenland team led by Christian David underwent such criticism and opposition that at least one of the team dropped out before departure. Hutton described the elders' approval as a "surrender," indicating their slowness to send[85]

Missionary candidates underwent a thorough interview process prior to commissioning as well. Hutton preserved a sample of questions and expected answers from one such interview:

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[81] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 154–55.

[82] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 187.

[83] Bost, *History of the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren*, 271.

[84] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 22.

[85] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 59.

> Q: Where do you desire to go? A: When the elders mentioned Surinam I felt that that was the very place designed for me by Christ. . . . Q: How long do you intend to stay there? A: I shall stay there either till I die or till the elders call me to another field. . . . Q: How will you treat the Brethren already there? A: I will cherish them as though they were my own children. Q: How will you treat the congregation you are leaving? A: I will honour and obey Herrnhut as my spiritual mother. Q: How will you behave if you have to wait a long time before you go? A: If I have to wait for a ship, I shall simply regard the delay as the will of the Lord.[86]

This interview demonstrates both the value of connection between the sending church and missionary and the effectiveness of missionary sending liturgies to produce the kind of missionaries that see themselves as an arm of their sending church. The call came from the elders when Surinam is first mentioned as a possibility. The elders reserve the authority to call the missionary away, even oversees. Dober himself was recalled from St. Thomas to serve as Chief Elder back at Herrnhut.[87] Each missionary was meant to understand that they were a part of a team of Brethren, even on the ground where they would land. And each missionary understood that they served under the direction of the sending church, to whom was owed their full allegiance.

This way of sifting out each missionary candidate betrayed a reticence in the Count to send any missionary without full confidence. Spangenberg had full confidence that Zinzendorf would have a missionary extracted from the boat after setting sea if he thought the missionary had wavered in their determination at all.[88] Zinzendorf was well aware of the risks of trans-ocean travel, and he wanted to risk no senseless death on someone not fully committed to the cause. This kind of commissioning practice cannot but shape a dependent people on God.

The use of the Lot and the Text Book set the missionary on the path of spiritual dependence. Then the constant barrage of naysaying and sifting that occurred in the

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[86] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 171.

[87] Hutton, *A History of Moravian Missions*, 37–38.

[88] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 159.

sending community before departure was a constant reminder to everyone that, but by God's grace, no one could be sent as missionaries. The Count intentionally dragged his feet on moving forward with Dober and Leopold's calling until their reasoning became clear.[89] The amount of corporate prayer invested in the effort of sending shaped a people into dependence on God. The transparency of ignorance and inexperience from Zinzendorf and the broader leadership resulted in an intentional lack of instruction in methodology prior to deployment, requiring the missionary and sending church to depend even more on the Lord.[90] In fact, the only instruction given early on was simply to pay attention to the work of the Holy Spirit.[91]

Similarly, all of the activities surrounding the actual deployment of missionaries, especially those activities that are the most public, do much to shape the way the local church thinks about missions. Every practice, from training and preparation to commissioning and prayer, needs to be considered as to their value in shaping a missionary people. The missionary is not the only one engaged in missions. The church is called, like the Brethren at Herrnhut, Marienborn, London, and Nazareth, to hold the rope for those they send through prayer and support.

Conclusion

The eighteenth century Moravian Brethren produced a culture of readiness, deployment, and community alignment through the use of missionary liturgies that resulted in the highest per-capita missionary sending rate in church history. In this chapter I have enumerated several such liturgies, including the use of the Lot, the

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[89] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 149.

[90] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 157.

[91] Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, 166–67.

celebration of Congregation Days, the way they organized themselves as a community, and the frequent and sober-minded appeals to the missionary field. The twenty-first century church would do well to see some of these practices, like missionary reporting, directly applied to their discipleship strategies. Others might not serve the church as well directly transmitted, such as the use of the Lot, but nonetheless beg for suitable and more healthy replacements to maximize the formation of a missionary sending culture. Some may have been predictable, such as regular appeals to go on mission and childhood indoctrination, while others less expected, such as a slower, more public commissioning process. It is my hope that this exercise engenders a desire for further understanding of the way the practices of the local church form or deform a missionary sending culture, as well as an interest in the example of one of the best missionary sending churches of all time.

CHAPTER 5

HOW SHALL WE THEN SEND?

In this dissertation, I am seeking to demonstrate how to build a culture of missionary sending in a local church based on the example of eighteenth century Moravians. A culture of sending, I have written, is the observable phenomenon of behavioral patterns and norms that demonstrate missions as the foregone conclusion of a significant portion of a local church community. While few if any Christians would disagree that this kind of culture is ideal, many might call it *idealistic*. Such a culture would undoubtedly generate a formidable missionary force, but few churches seem to have such a culture. Enter cultural liturgies.

In my second chapter, I spent a great deal of time defining cultural liturgies, based on Smith's and Bourdieu's models. I summarized the ability of cultural liturgies to shape the imagination, which Smith defined as a vision of human flourishing.[1] Then I summarized how the habitus, or history turned into nature, is formed.[2] Following that, I demonstrated how practical sense is generated—when social necessity is turned into nature and converted to motor schemes.[3] Then I showed how all of these steps resulted in native status, a state of learned ignorance, when a member of a culture can no longer imagine things being otherwise.[4] I believe that these ideas can be used to generate

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[1] James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies, vol.1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 58.

[2] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 78.

[3] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 69.

[4] Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 18–19.

missionary sending liturgies that create a culture in which the possibility of being sent as a missionary is a viable option for every member of the community.

After establishing missionary sending liturgies as a model for building such a culture, I wanted to show how the eighteenth century Moravian Brethren had built one. But before I could do so, I needed to show that it was not yet a missionary sending culture until Zinzendorf's time to prove the validity of missionary sending liturgies, so I gave a brief history of the Brethren prior to the eighteenth century. In the process, I also showed that if a missionary sending culture could have been brought into existence through outside influences and circumstance, it would likely have happened to the Brethren prior to the eighteenth century. Yet, history does not tell of a missionary sending movement of any comparison prior to the Zinzendorfian period.

Chapter four listed and explained a number of cultural liturgies the Moravians had put into place that created an incomparable missionary sending force. These liturgies included such things as a missional understanding of work, expected missionary participation for children, the use of the Lot and the Text Book, the organization of the community around the choir system as opposed to the nuclear family, the regular observance of missions-focused congregation days, and regular appeals. I also showed the part each liturgy played in creating a missionary people. In what remains, I will guide application of the principles learned from the Brethren about missionary-sending liturgies by illuminating pitfalls to avoid, enumerating values to emphasize, and invoicing the cost of implementing missionary sending liturgies.

Pitfalls to Avoid

A reading of the way of life of eighteenth century Moravian Brethren, especially under Zinzendorf's leadership, could create some cause for concern. Much of their practices and postures could be seen as even cult-like, despite several theological

and methodological examinations.[5] Because of these cult-like practices, and for other reasons, it seems prudent to outline a few unhealthy or unproductive practices to avoid when considering the implementation of missionary sending liturgies of the eighteenth century Brethren, or of cultural liturgies in general. The pitfalls I will describe here include unhealthy leadership, historical isolationism, and uncritical adoption.

Unhealthy Leadership

The cult-like feel that eighteenth century Moravianism exudes is largely due to the charismatic leadership structure. By charismatic, I mean the single-leader structure with little to no accountability and a structure which is based on gifts or status of the leader. Early in Herrnhut's history, Zinzendorf gave himself the title of warden of the congregation, likely to do with his ownership of the property and initiative to incorporate.[6] By the time the Count felt the call to travel to Pennsylvania, his position had become entirely irreplaceable. As a matter of fact, out of desperation for determining who should replace Zinzendorf as "head elder," it was determined that only Christ himself could hold this position.[7] So, only after panic, deliberation, and lot-casting could the community determine that Christ is the head of the church, something they should have gathered from a read of the Epistle to the Ephesians. Upon returning from Pennsylvania, the Count was immediately restored to leadership with all the rights and privileges

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[5] Repeatedly, Zinzendorf both requested and received theological and methodological examinations of the community he led from Lutheran divines and governmental authorities, all of which affirmed their orthodoxy and gave approval to their practices. For an example of such an examination, see August Gottlieb Spangenberg, *The Life of Nicholas Lewis, Count Zinzendorf, Bishop and Ordinary of the Church of the United (or Moravian) Brethren*, trans. by Samuel Jackson (London: Samuel Holdsworth, 1838),179.

[6] John R. Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church*, Archives of Czechs and Slovaks Abroad. (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Church in America, 1989), 76.

[7] Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church*, 152–53.

therein.[8] Later in his life he gave himself the title "disciple," which, despite the ostensive attempt at humility, became a term of even more veneration.[9] Even if the Count's intentions were completely above board, and he was simply doing what he thought was right by the community—even if there was no pride of place in his heart whatsoever—this type of leadership structure is not healthy for a myriad of reasons. If Mike Cosper has taught us anything about Mark Driscoll's life and ministry in "The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill," it is the inevitable result of absolute power corrupting absolutely, even in church leadership.[10] Even if the Count did not experience the corruption of Mark Driscoll, this charismatic leadership structure is certainly not a healthy model to emulate.

The intentional implementation of cultural liturgies of any kind could easily default into a kind of manipulation. They can even seem like a kind of brain washing. If it is possible to shape someone's thinking through repeated actions, then that kind of power could potentially open the way for abuse. More specifically, pastors and church leadership are particularly susceptible to this kind of power because of the way they exercise authority and control over the liturgies of the church. For this reason, great care must be taken in the selection and accountability of leaders who can install these kinds of liturgies. In God's providence, he has protected the Church from those who would wield the power of cultural liturgy for harm. 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 2 describe the qualified elder, mostly so-qualified not based on leadership ability or charisma, but based on his character. The New Testament also provides the norm of a plurality of elders, as well as a congregational understanding of church government, both of which provide perpetual accountability for the elders of the church. But even with these safeguards in place, it is

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[8] Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church*, 187.

[9] Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church*, 211.

[10] Mike Cosper, *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill*, produced by Erik Petrik, podcast series, June 21, 2021–November 20, 2022, https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/who-killed-mars-hill/.

important to keep a constant sobriety when it comes to the implementation of cultural liturgies because of their ability to shape human beings for good or for harm.

Historical Isolationism

A commitment to the implementation of cultural liturgies in the sense I have described risks a historical isolationism to a degree far worse than simply reinventing the wheel. What I mean by historical isolationism is that when the local contemporary church adopts practices that have never been done by the church universal or historical, they risk heterodoxy or heteropraxy. One of the values of presenting these ideas the way I have is because I have done so through a historical lens. The Moravians give us not only positive examples of missionary sending to emulate. They also give us cautionary tales to avoid.

The scandal within Moravianism that became known as the "Sifting Period" is a cautionary tale that proves the point of all of the worst parts of the Count's leadership. Allow a brief synopsis to suffice.[11] In the 1740s, a theological fever struck Zinzendorf and other leaders within Moravianism brought on by mysticism run rampant. This period, lasting nearly a decade, was characterized by an obsession with the blood and wounds of Christ to a nearly erotic level, as well as an over-realized understanding of childlike faith. Hymns were composed by Zinzendorf and sung that expressed devotion not to Christ, but to his wounds from the cross, most commonly that produced by the spear in his side. The Count himself, and increasingly his followers, exhibited and encouraged others to exhibit behaviors that were increasingly childish with accompanying vocabulary and mannerism. Belle Brain put it eloquently: "surpassing the style of the Song of Solomon, [they] 'rung the ideas of the bride and bridegroom in keys unpleasant to the ear.'"[12]

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[11] For a more extended treatment of the Sifting Period, see Paul Martin Peucker, "The Songs of the Sifting: Understanding the Role of Bridal Mysticism in Moravian Piety During the Late 1740s," *Journal of Moravian History* 3 (2007): 51–87. See also Weinlick, *Count Zinzendorf: The Story of His Life and Leadership in the Renewed Moravian Church*, 198–206.

[12] Belle M. Brain, "Zinzendorf, Father of Modern Missions," *Missionary Review of the World* 23 (1900): 339.

Although this particular episode is not necessarily tied to missionary sending practices, the eccentricities of Zinzendorf are a warning to those would listen that good intentions and devotional aims do not excuse unorthodox behavior. In other words, missionary sending is not an end by which all means are justified. When a desire for greater missionary sending produces an idea for a cultural liturgy to implement, the extent to which that practice is unprecedented should give pause. It must be asked why this practice has not been done before. It could be that the technology had not previously existed, as with the ubiquity of video calls. It could also be that such extreme measures had been avoided in the past to avoid sinful overindulgence or feared harm to the church. Whenever implementing missionary sending liturgies, church leaders should always keep an eye on the practices of the church throughout history to keep them from harmful or excessive innovation.

Uncritical Adoption

It must also be said that just because something proved effective for the missionary sending of the Brethren does not mean it should be adopted wholesale today. One example of such a practice for the Moravians was the emphasis on learning and working a trade. While carpentry and weaving were trades that a missionary could have found useful upon arriving on the field, very few learn these trades today. Further, such trades are becoming decreasingly helpful in the twenty-first century because the need for them on the field is decreasing with the advance of the textile and manufacturing industries globally. Further still, expecting to work a particular occupation on the field could risk the replacement of native job seekers, which would be counterproductive to mission work.

Having assessed the risk of hoping to enter a mission field as a day-laborer, there are some ways to vocationally prepare for business-as-mission in leveling up credentials and education. Whereas laborers may be plentiful in a particular field, the

availability of training and improving technology may not. One might prepare for the mission field by matriculating to masters- or doctoral-level degrees in an industry, preparing them to teach, train, or innovate the industry on the field.

In addition, some of the liturgies practiced by the Moravians might prove effective in some environments and not in others. One such consideration could be the idea of boarding children to free up parents for missionary labor. Some occasions still require this practice today, as in the case of a lack of quality schooling in a particular mission field and circumstances that prevent homeschooling from being an option. However, sending children to boarding school would likely not be appropriate in every missionary sending situation. In many cases, the presence of children actually expedites missionary activity, as childrearing and education often present opportunities for evangelism.[13] As missionary sending liturgies are considered, they must be contextualized.

Values to Emphasize

If the local church is able to avoid unhealthy leadership, historical isolationism, and uncritical adoption, employing missionary sending liturgies would likely generate a missionary sending culture in that church. As I begin to draw this dissertation to a close, I would like to provide a few values for a local church to emphasize as they begin to think about these kinds of practices. If the hearts of church members are to be inclined toward missions, then these values must be emphasized to shape those hearts. These include the value of corporate worship to shape the culture and the value of seeing the Great Commission as the Great Relationship.

[13] I recall the story of a missionary friend in Europe who said that a large portion of his evangelistic opportunities came on the heels of situations when one of his children had gotten into trouble at school.

Corporate Worship

The gathered worship of the local church can be the primary source for acquiring missionary sending liturgies. Smith spent a great deal of time in the *Cultural Liturgies Trilogy* stressing the value of worship to formation, calling corporate worship a kind of construal training.[14] Later Smith articulates "Worship isn't just something we do; it does something *to* us."[15] Smith describes the ability of liturgies—the word here used in its more traditional sense of corporate worship forms—to shape us by their repetition. Here he criticizes Protestants in particular for their allergy to repetition.[16] When we think of our corporate worship only in its vertical component, we can dismiss all repetition as vain in the sense of Matthew 6:7. This is largely what has led many local churches to jettison historic worship forms. But what of the New Testament instruction of addressing, teaching, and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs? (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16) There is a comparatively small body of songs and hymns for the church on the subject of missions. Most hymnals include a missions section in their thematic index, and a few useful songs have been written in the last few decades.[17] The value of the practice of regularly singing missionary songs, based on what Smith has shown, is inestimable. And the significance of gathered worship—and especially singing hymns—to the formation of the Brethren as a people cannot be understated.

By regularly singing missionary songs, I actually mean that they need to be

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[14] James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works*, Cultural Liturgies, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 51.

[15] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 173 (emphasis original).

[16] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 181.

[17] As the worship pastor in my local congregation, I lead our church every week through a rotation of congregational songs about mission including "We Are Not Ashamed" by Doug Plank, Eric McAllister, and Neil Degraide; "I Will Follow" by Reuben Morgan and Chris Tomlin; "Let Your Kingdom Come" by Bob Kauflin; "Build Your Kingdom Here" by Rend Collective; "Mighty to Save" by Ben Fielding and Reuben Morgan; and "May the Peoples Praise You" by David Zimmer, Ed Cash, Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, and Stuart Townend. As of the time of writing this, we have plans to introduce "Facing a Task Unfinished" by Ed Cash, Fionan DeBarra, and Keith Getty and "Hear the Call of the Kingdom" by Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, and Stuart Townend.

done every single week in the regular gathering of the local church. Missionary sending needs to be the *end* of corporate worship in two ways. First, in a philosophical sense it is the *end*, as in the *telos* of worship. Smith puts it this way: "Christian worship culminates with a sending ('Go!') accompanied by a promise ('And as you go, you go with his blessing')—the benediction that is both a blessing and a charge, a co-*mission*-ing accompanied by the promise of the Spirit's presence."[18] So the benediction—in churches that choose to employ such an element—serves as a commissioning to go into the world outside the church and make disciples.

Secondly, mission should be the *end* of worship in a very practical, chronological sense. The benediction happens just before the congregation is dismissed to leave the campus. All last words carry within them a certain intrinsic import. Jesus utilized this kind of liturgy when he saved the Great Commission as his last words before ascending to the Father. Often, these last words of a service, at least within the free church tradition, are used for announcements so that congregants remember the coming weeks activities on their way out the door. Would this time not be better utilized as a corporate commissioning, along the lines of J. D. Greear's famous "You are sent" benediction at the end of every worship gathering at Summit Church in Raleigh, North Carolina?

At Hebron Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky, nearly every service ends with a report from one of the church's mission partners, mission-focused instruction for the collection of tithes and offerings, and collecting the offering as a missions-themed song is sung congregationally. The congregation departs still singing the song on the way to their cars. Since this practice of ending the service began, missions giving and participation in short-term missions trips have been the highest on record.

Smith also addresses the connection between corporate worship, God's

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[18] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 152–53.

presence, and mission. Says Smith, "Worship is not merely time with a deistic god who winds us up and then sends us out on our own; we don't enter worship for the 'top up' refueling to then leave as self-sufficient, autonomous actors. . . . Instead, the biblical vision is one of co-abiding presence and participation ('I in you and you in me').[19] This idea seems particularly relevant in contemporary Western Christian culture in the wake of the Charismatic movement, when the presence of God is increasingly the subject of songs and prayers of the church. When we participate in corporate worship, we partake in the presence of God among the people of God—the body of Christ. The Great Commission ends with Christ's promise of his presence with all Christian disciple-makers, even to the end of the age (Matt 28:20). What better way is there to experience this encouraging presence then in the gathered worship of the people of God?

The Great Relationship

In addition to God's presence in corporate worship as a motivating force for missions, the people need to value the Great Commission as their contribution to a relationship in an epic love story. When Smith refers to the idea of imagining the kingdom, he is using the term imaginary not as synonymous with fictional or fantastical, but in similar ways to Charles Taylor's understanding of social imaginary.[20] For Smith, imagining the kingdom is an aesthetic concept.[21] The kingdom is something that draws us into it; it is something toward which we are inclined.

A look at the history of the Brethren, especially under Zinzendorf's leadership, gives the historian a sense of that to which the Brethren were drawn. Their vision of the "good life"—their understanding of human flourishing—was usefulness to God. They

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[19] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 153.

[20] See Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).

[21] Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 17.

could imagine no higher elevation than to be an asset to God in any capacity. The Brethren jumped at the chance to serve, even in manual labor. This gets at what their social imaginary was. For the Moravians, their missionary fervor was a logical extension of their desire to be of use to God.

Perhaps a more compelling social imaginary for twenty-first century Americans is to see making disciples of all nations as a way to experience nearness with their loving Creator. The Great Commission is punctuated by a great promise—God will be with us all the way to the end. In other words, by participation in the Great Commission, we find ourselves as close to God as we could ever want to be this side of heaven and Christ's return. If the pietists prized good deeds for every Christian, our post-Charismatic-movement Christianity might prize nearness to God's presence just as much. So we need to see making disciples of all nations as a means of closeness with God, that such a desire might drive us to obedience, even at great cost.

This kind of social imaginary also affects how other missionary cultural liturgies function. There is consistent effort to give examples of how the money collected during a service at Hebron Baptist Church will be used to further God's kingdom. Givers in this context want to know by giving to kingdom causes, they are joining God in what he is doing around the world. So their hearts are inclined toward greater missionary giving as they hear of what God is doing through the International Mission Board in places like Buenos Aires, Argentina, or London, England. Thus the missionary cultural liturgy of giving reinforces the social imaginary of working alongside our Creator.

Cost to Count

And so I have established that missionary sending cultural liturgies lead to a missionary sending social imaginary, producing a missionary sending culture similar to that of the Brethren in the eighteenth century. What will it take to begin implementing such cultural liturgies in the local church? I would like to end this dissertation by drawing

attention to three costs associated with implementing missionary sending cultural liturgies. These costs include the cost of doing nothing, the cost of doing too much, and the cost of doing the right thing.

If Smith has conclusively proven anything, it is that human beings will be shaped by cultural liturgies one way or another. The world around Christians inundates them with formative practices that push them away from evangelism. In many cases, *going native* means feeling uncomfortable about discussing spiritual matters. Practical sense leads many Christians to not be able to imagine reality in which they would feel comfortable sharing their faith at all, much less doing so cross-culturally. This counter-liturgy needs to be overcome. The cost of doing nothing is succumbing to the world and not participating in the Great Commission.

Secondly, there is a cost associated with doing too much. This is what might be called opportunity cost. Church members only have so much time and attention they can devote to anything, including missionary activity. Taking up time during the local church's corporate gathering means either eliminating other liturgies, or lengthening the total time. On the one hand, church leaders need to be sensitive to the limited availability of the church members. On the other hand, the Great Commission calls us to a kind of missionary monasticism. We need to make time and grow our capacity for attention to missionary purposes, which will mean sacrificing other things to which we could be devoting our time and attention, trading good things for best things.

Lastly, the local church needs to adopt the main idea of J. D. Greear's book *Gaining by Losing*.[22] Church leaders need to keep in mind that the cost of implementing missionary sending cultural liturgies means that some of their members—often their best and brightest—will go out from their midst to join in the Father's mission far from home.

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[22] J. D. Greear, *Gaining by Losing: Why the Future Belongs to Churches That Send* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017).

After all, is that not what the Father did with the Son? “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” (John 20:21)

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have argued that building a missionary sending culture can increase sending, both in numbers and in quantity. I have shown that the eighteenth century Moravians built such a culture, sending more missionaries per capita than any missionary sending organization in history. I explained a way that their sending culture might be replicated through studying their cultural liturgies and translating them into twenty-first century practices. And best of all, the application of these liturgies, or others like them, does not require vast financial or human resources. I believe that the adoption of even one of these liturgies could make a difference to the missionary sending capacity of even the most normative-sized churches. May God bless the formation and deployment of missionaries of every age, from every church, from every nation, to every nation, until Christ returns.

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ABSTRACT

MISSIONARY SENDING AND THE MORAVIAN BRETHREN

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There is an increasing number of larger churches today taking back their New Testament responsibility of missionary sending from the agencies to which many had outsourced this task in the previous century. While this task seems more possible in churches with a larger staff and more plentiful resources, how can the more common small- to medium-sized churches take part? By even the most conservative estimates, the Moravian Brethren of the eighteenth century sent a remarkable quantity and quality of missionaries given their size. In this dissertation, I argue that cultural liturgies among eighteenth-century Moravians resulted in their remarkably high per capita sending rate, and that these cultural liturgies can be translated and exercised by twenty-first-century churches, creating a more conducive culture for missionary sending. The research I have compiled determines how the Moravians built a culture of sending within their communities and what processes they used to raise up and send out so many missionaries. I begin by building a model of Christian formation based on James Smith's concept of cultural liturgies. Then, to distinguish the effects of the inherited culture of the Moravian Brethen from their eighteenth-century contemporary practice, I offer a history of the Brethren from their origins to the time of their underground period, specifically noting the effects of outside influences that led to missionary-culture-inducing values. After that, I provide a snapshot of eighteenth-century Moravian sending culture, giving particular attention to missionary sending cultural liturgies. Lastly, I give a distillation of

contemporary missionary sending applications that can be contemporized and contextualized for local churches in the twenty-first century.

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