

The more formal Moravian organization was to come into being in 1745 but prior to that the leaders had gone to several parts of the world to found Gospel witness communities. Nitschmann had been in the West Indies in 1732 and Greenland in 1738. Both Spangenberg and Zeisberger had been in America (1735, 1740) to help in the founding of Moravian centers and in preaching to the natives. Boehler had moved broadly about Europe and done practical missionary work in England. From 1749 to 1755 Zinzendorf himself was in England and afterwards in America where he found the native Lutherans not thinking of him as a Lutheran at all. His whole life and means were given to the cause and whatever else may be said, his commitment to the message gave great encouragement and perhaps even made possible the Moravian ministry.

### The Wesley Encounter

John Wesley had met the Moravians on board ship going to American shores and was amazed at their trust in God in the face of an ocean storm. He was drawn to them and was challenged most directly by Spangenberg with the personal implications of the Gospel while in Georgia. In London it was through Moravian influence that he heard the Romans-reading that led to his conversion and he actually sought out the fellowship of Zinzendorf for his edification. But Wesley found the movement too in-grown and with a limited vision so far as his world was concerned. While he had some mystical ideas of his own, he found the mysticism of the Moravians beyond him and so he sought to establish a system of Christian living in which holiness was more publicly proclaimed for all men in all walks of life. While Wesley always felt a kindred spirit to the Moravian causes, he could not become one.

### Summary:

The Moravians became enormously successful as mission planters. They did not fulfill the dreams of Zinzendorf for a church in a church but they pioneered in the expansion of the Gospel in parts of the world where the rest of the church seemed to little care. The modern Christian missionary film First Fruits is a faithful historical account of this and while the writer of the Syllabus is not much of a movie man... he thinks this work is worth your seeing.