The story of Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians of the 1700’s, I believe is truly one of the greatest in church history! God used these humble, simple believers to launch the first Protestant 24/7 prayer movement and the first Protestant missionary movement, taking the gospel to the ends of the earth …

Count Zinzendorf was a wealthy aristocrat, a nobleman by birth. Some described him as the rich young ruler who said Yes, giving up his wealth for the sake of the gospel to follow the Lamb wherever he goes. Zinzendorf was born in Dresden, Germany May 26th 1700 – he had a godly praying grandmother. Spiritually sensitive, even as a child of just six, young Nikolaus would often write love letters to Jesus, climb the castle tower, and toss them out the window. It was to be a precursor to how Zinzendorf would be used of the Lord to ignite one of the great missionary enterprises of history

He was often found in prayer meetings, in his youth following in his grandmother’s footsteps. When he was a teenager, he had a powerful encounter with the Lord. In a gallery in Dusseldorf, he saw a painting of the crucified Christ in a museum. He stared at it for many hours…he saw the blood dripping from every wound, he saw love glowing in every tear, he saw grace shining in every brushstroke…. the artist of the painting had been saved by Jesus from a life of deep darkness and sin, and now he painted mercy in every line, forgiveness in every blood drop…. at the bottom of the painting were the words, “This is what I have done for you, what will you do for me.” Zinzendorf fell to his knees, sobbing, and with all his heart he promised that for the rest of his life he would glorify the Lamb for what he had suffered on the cross! He had been wounded by the wounded one, pierced through by the Pierced one, and scarred by the revelation of the sacrifice of the Son of God!

Flowing out of Zinzendorf’s passionate love for Christ came a life disciplined in prayer.

“Count Zinzendorf had early on learned the secret of prevailing prayer. So active had he been in establishing circles for prayer that on leaving the college at 16 years of age, he handed his professor a list of seven praying societies” (David Smithers).

He had chosen from an early age as his life-motto the now famous confession, “I have one passion; it is Jesus, Jesus only.” Zinzendorf committed to give his life to prayer and to see the gospel reach the ends of the earth where it was most needed!

The Moravian brethren had sprung from the labors and martyrdom of the Bohemian Reformer, Jan Hus in 1415…. They had experienced centuries of persecution. Many had been killed, imprisoned, tortured or banished from their homeland. A few centuries later, in 1722, a group of Bohemian moravians from modern day Czech republic, had fled for refuge to Germany where the young Christian nobleman, Count Zinzendorf, offered them asylum and refuge on his estates in Saxony. They were descendants of the Waldensians, whose motto was a simple life, the Bible in their own mother tongue as their highest authority, walking in personal relationship with the Lord in prayer, no swearing allegiance to the King (state) and bread and wine for the Lord's Supper.

This group was led by Christian David, a carpenter. Christian David was called the Moravian Moses, escorting families back and forth from Moravia to Zinzendorf’s estate ten times.

When Christian David fell the first tree to build the first home, on June 17th 1722, he offered a prayer of dedication for this little town, quoting Psalm 84:3, “Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD OF HOSTS, my KING and my GOD!” This land was first dedicated to be a dwelling place of the Lord, an altar for the Lord of Hosts!

When the moravians first arrived, Zinzendorf was out of town, but they connected with a godly man named Heitz, who was Zinzendorf’s manager, and in writing a letter to Zinzendorf he gave the name of this place ***Herrnhut***, meaning Watch… which had a double meaning…first it would a place under the Lord’s ***watchful*** care, a place of refuge under the canopy of the Lords’ presence. Secondly, it would be a place where the Moravians would keep ***Watch*** before the Lord, in prayer and intercession. A key verse for Zinzendorf was Isaiah 62:6,

“On your walls O Jerusalem, I have set ***watchman***; all the day and all the night they shall never be silent, you who put the Lord in remembrance, take no rest and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it a praise on the earth.”

When Zinzendorf returned to his home in Berthelsdorf, he saw a light up on the hill, and fell to his knees, dedicating in prayer this little community to the Lord!

For the next five years from 1722 to 1727 this small community struggled in many ways often experiencing dissension, bitterness, judgement against one another and even false teaching. When Zinzendorf caught wind of this, he moved from Bertlesdorf to Herrnhut in 1727. Zinzendorf was just 27yrs of age. He went home to home, preaching the cross of Christ, and the blood of the Lamb and pleading with the young community to forgive one another, reconcile and grow in love for one another…

On May 12th, 1727, after a lecture by Zinzendorf, they signed an agreement, called the *Brotherly Agreement* to dedicate their lives to the service of Jesus Christ. It was at this point that the Spirit began to move in a deeper way among them. On July 22nd the community covenanted to meet often in prayer and worship, beginning what would later be referred to as the ‘summer of revival,’ for this small Moravian community.

At the time of the revival in Herrnhut in 1727, there were 220 people living in 30 different homes in Herrnhut, and 87 of them were children. Since Zinzendorf had experienced God much in his youth, he had a passion to disciple the children and the youth in prayer and the study of God’s word… asking God in prayer to pour of his spirit on a young generation!

Over the course of the summer they had come together in unity and one accord, emptied themselves of idolatry and now they were ready to receive a fresh in-filling of the Holy Spirit…

On August 5th Zinzendorf and 14 others spent the night in prayer to God…

On August 10th, Pastor Rothe was so overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit that ‘he sank down in to the dust’ under conviction of the presence of the Lord. The entire community followed and continued until midnight in prayer, singing and weeping…

On August 13th, 1727 they walked from Herrnhut to the Lutheran church in Berthelsdorf to share in communion together. Zinzendorf shared a powerful sermon on the cross of Christ. After further confession of sin, and reconciliation amongst the brethren, they came to the communion table and the Holy Spirit fell upon them! It was so powerful that many referred to it as a Moravian Pentecost, a baptism of love. As they received the LOVE of God poured out into their hearts by the Holy Spirit, it spilled out in extraordinary love for one another!

"After August 13th, there was such a movement in the fellowship, that the bushes on the Hutberg were filled with brothers, sisters, and children day and night, who on their knees or prostrate, were praying, weeping, and singing.”

Another journal entry,

"On the 23rd August, there was such a spirit of prayer that gripped the boys and girls, that no one could listen to them without being moved to the heart, and there was an extraordinary move in their meetings through Susanna who daily became more faithful and serious. On the 29th August, from 11pm until 1am in the night, there was heart-moving praying and singing from the girls. At the same time the boys were lying in another place in prayer. It was such a powerful move of the Spirit amongst the children, that words fail to describe it.”

The revival amongst the children had a great influence on the parents and the rest of the inhabitants.

**I believe it is a powerful testimony and something we need to hear today, that God not only responded to the prayers of adults but of children and youth as well, in releasing an outpouring of the Spirit that led to the first 24/7 prayer and mission’s movement amongst Protestant churches…it was truly was an intergenerational prayer movement!**

**The first mark of this outpouring of the Spirit was “love for one another” When they had been divided before, now they were united in love, bearing one another’s burdens, forgiving one another, honoring one another, and praying for one another. The Joy of the Lord was present…**

After this outpouring of the HS, the Lord spoke to Zinzendorf from Leviticus 6:13, that the fire should never go out on the altar! Because of the sacrifice of Christ, they should respond with unceasing night and day prayer because of the absolute worth of the Jesus, he truly is ALL DESERVING! On August 26th they launched a canopy of night and day prayer with 24men and 24women, committed to an hour of prayer a day. They would commit to pray the same hour each day. They called this “Hourly Intercession” in response to Christ’s exhortation to Peter at Gethsemane, “Could you not watch with me one hour?” (Matt. 26:40). The list included 7 names of the revived girls, committed to praying 1hr a day and eventually increased from 48 (24 men and 24 women) to 77. Most of these pray er’s were simple ordinary believers, housewives, craftsmen, bakers, and even children.

This committed prayer chain swept through the community lasting over a 100plus years! They didn’t pray just in one location, but in their normal lives at homes, on walks, and during work breaks. They would often be praying in 2’s and threes during their committed hours of prayer! Their mission statement was, “one on the field, one at home, one to pray and one to go.” They didn’t permit anyone to go to work unless someone was first praying!

During an evening service, May 3rd, 1728, Zinzendorf gave them a verse from Scripture, a watch word for the next day. The Moravians who had been at the service took this word to the 30 plus homes and exhorted them to use this verse for the next days’ prayer and worship focus. These watchwords were compiled and eventually published in 1731, one for each day of the year, called the Daily Text. So they were praying in agreement with one another and praying through the Scriptures together!

Zinzendorf would also gather the committed ‘hourly intercessors’ once a week to share prayer points. Prayer was primarily outward, kingdom focused prayer. Rather than simply praying for individual needs, they would cry out for other communities, for missionaries on the field, and for the gospel to go forth in power.

This was also a singing community. They would often meet together in the mornings and evenings to start and end their day in songs of praise … Zinzendorf was a prolific songwriter, writing and composing 1000 plus gospel centered hymns!

It was under this canopy of day and night worship-saturated prayer that God began to mark missionaries to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth! As Zinzendorf’s passion for Jesus grew, so did his passion for the lost. He became determined to evangelize the world with a handful of saints, equipped only with a burning love for Jesus and the power of prayer. A seal was designed to express their new found missionary zeal. The seal of the Moravian church has in its center the white Lamb of God. He holds a staff with a victory banner displaying the cross. In a circular band on the outer edge it says:

*“Our Lamb has conquered, let us follow Him!”*

Missions proved to be Zinzendorf’s greatest achievements. Attending the coronation of Christian IV of Denmark in Copenhagen in 1731, Zinzendorf was introduced to a black slave from the Danish West Indies. The slave’s name was Anthony Ulrich. Zinzendorf invited Anthony to Herrnhut to share his story. Anthony had a profound impact on the community. A few months later, after an unforgettable service on August 18th, John Leonard Dober, a potter, and David Nitschmann, a carpenter, were commissioned and sent out by the congregation to reach the West Indies slaves with the gospel of Jesus Christ

On October 8th, 1732, John and David left in a Dutch ship from the Copenhagen harbor, bound for the Danish West Indies. Both men were skilled speakers, and ready to sell themselves into slavery to reach those already bound in the West Indies. As the ship slipped away, John and David let out a passionate declaration that would eventually become the battle cry for all Moravian missionaries: “May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering.”

When these two men set out in 1732 to take the gospel to the West Indies, William Carey, the “father of Protestant missions,” was yet to be born. It would be another 150 years before the missionary pioneer Hudson Taylor would arrive in China. John Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann were the first missionaries sent out by the Moravian community. Within twenty years, Moravian missionaries would be found in the Arctic among the Eskimos, in southern Africa, among the Indians of North America, in Suriname, Ceylon, China, India, Persia, Algeria, Romania, and beyond. Writes Steve Addison: By the time other Christian missionaries arrived, fifty years later, the Moravians had baptized 13,000 converts and planted churches on the islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados and St. Kitts. The Moravians were the first Protestants to treat world missions as the responsibility of the whole church. Under Zinzendorf, the Moravians became an intense and highly mobile missionary movement.

From a community of approximately 500 residents in Herrnhut during the years 1732-1742, some 70 missionaries had already been sent out. As these missionary movements began to spread, persecution increased, including the banishment of Count Zinzendorf from Saxony in 1736. Despite the increasing persecution, another Moravian missionary settlement was established 350 miles to the west in Herrnhaag. Herrnhaag soon surpassed Herrnhut, sending out 200 missionaries over a two-year period. Christian History magazine reported that “the decade of 1732–1742 stands unparalleled in Christian history in so far as missionary expansion is concerned.” Moreover, Steve Addison writes that, 26 “Within two decades the Moravians sent out more missionaries than all Protestants had sent out in the previous two hundred years. The rapid deployment of so many young missionaries around the world was remarkable.

The radical devotion and consecration of these missionaries is astounding. One amazing story recorded the Moravians who began their work in South Africa among patients of leprosy in 1818 when the colonial government of South Africa asked them to take over the pastoral care of patients at the newly built hospital… When the government decided to close the hospital in 1845 and move patients to a more isolated location on Robben Island, the patients petitioned the government for the Moravian missionaries to come with them. On January 6, 1846, Moravian missionaries Joseph and Friederike Lehmann arrived at the hospital on Robben Island to continue their work among the patients. According to one Moravian source the Lehmanns were welcomed as “the whole company of lepers broke forth in songs of praise to the Lord, for sending these missionaries who had brought restoration, hope and healing to them through the gospel of Jesus Christ!”

Burdened to reach the Native American in North America, Zinzendorf moved to America to help establish a few missionary settlements from 1741 to 1743. He founded the towns of Bethlehem and Nazareth in Pennsylvania, and Salem in North Carolina. It was reported during a Christmas Eve service that Zinzendorf named the first town Bethlehem in light of the Christmas story. Zinzendorf helped begin churches in major cities such as Philadelphia and New York. His daughter Benigna founded one of the earliest schools for girls in the country. The American Indians called the elder Zinzendorf “Johanan”, meaning blessed through grace. When Zinzendorf and his travel company sailed back to England in January of 1743, his followers continued the work. They founded a settlement in Moravian Falls, North Carolina, established 24/7 prayer, and also reached out to the neighboring Cherokee Indians with the love of Jesus. In North Carolina, the Cherokee Indians were forced to move out from Georgia to Indian Territory in 1838, walking what would later be called the Trail of Tears. The Trail of Tears was a series of forced displacements of around 60,000 Native American Indians. The territory to which they were forcibly displaced was in present-day Oklahoma. From these events, the Cherokee knew for sure that they had no real protection from the U.S. Constitution. Many of the Moravian missionaries left their homes to walk the Trail of Tears with their friends, the Cherokee Indians. Although along this tragic journey, more than 4,000 Cherokees died from the hard conditions they faced, hundreds gave their lives to Christ, having seen the powerful witness of the Moravian missionaries’ sacrificial love. The Moravians left an unmistaken and indelible mark on the culture of early America.

Often these Moravian missionaries would build their own wooden caskets knowing they wouldn’t’ be returning. Some families would hold memorial services in the graveyard understanding they would give their lives for the sake of the gospel. A quote from Zinzendorf’s journal I think sums it best, “Let my name and honor fly into the wind, including all my worldly possessions and temporal gain. I have only one petition to my Lord: Let me die while I win souls for the Lamb”

In total, 226 missionaries scattered around the world under this canopy of day and night prayer. Each were tent-making missionaries going to serve communities first with their trade and working among the people. It is estimated that these missionaries helped to establish over 5000 missionary settlements across the globe! It’s staggering the impact of this small community…

**Bell story …**

The Moravian’s passion for souls was surpassed only by their passion for the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. **The Moravians had learned that the secret of loving the souls of men was found in loving the Savior of men**.

By no means was Count Zinzendorf’s life flawless, but one cannot help but be moved by his consuming passion and pre-occupation with the person and supremacy of Jesus Christ. A glimpse of his burning love for Jesus can be caught in the following letter. Listen to this…

“Our method of proclaiming salvation is this: to point out to every heart the loving Lamb, who died for us, and although He was the Son of God, offered Himself for our sins… by the preaching of His blood, and of His love unto death, even the death of the cross, never, either in discourse or in argument, to digress even for a quarter of an hour from the loving Lamb: to name no virtue except in Him, and from Him and on His account; to preach no commandment except faith in Him, no other justification but that He atoned for us, no other sanctification but the privilege to sin no more, no other happiness but to be near Him, to think of Him and do His pleasure; no other life but in Him.”

The source of Count Zinzendorf’s success was bound up in his total allegiance and love for JESUS CHRIST! At the end of his life, Count Zinzendorf would triumphantly say,

“I am going to my Saviour, I am ready. There is nothing to hinder me now. I cannot say how much I love you all. Who would have believed that the prayer of Christ, "that they all may be one," could have been so strikingly fulfilled among us”

In an amazing account from John Wesley, the great evangelist and founder of the Methodist movement who had visited “this happy place” was so impressed that he commented in his journal. “I would gladly have spent my life here . . . Oh, when shall this Christianity cover the earth as water covers the sea?”

The Moravian movement had provided leadership to the world for 200 years. But by the 1930s and 40s, sadly the town of Herrnhut had followed the rest of Germany in providing tacit—if not eager—support for Adolf Hitler’s Nazi party. The Soviet Army captured the town of Herrnhut on the final day of the Second World War, at which time the church building and the heart of the town were set ablaze. It was a scene that caused locals to wonder if this was the Lord’s judgment. The only edifice in Herrnhut still standing after the flames went out was the church courtyard’s bell tower. Every other wall of the church was at least partly destroyed, but miraculously, the bell tower remained intact. Zinzendorf had inscribed on the bell the words - “Herrnhut should only continue as long as the purposes of God go forth unhindered.” That fact that the bell tower was the only structure left intact reveals that God wanted this message to sound as clear as a bell to future generations. When the purposes of God ceased to go forth unhindered, of united prayer, family, and missions are for the Lamb of God - Herrnhut ceased to exist ..

Like the Moravians, may we return to our first love, to the Lord Jesus, our Lamb of love. We need to ask Him to ring of bell of awakening in these days. Let us cry out for a Lamb’s awakening movement, where the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to reawaken the people of God to the Lamb of God for all that He is! May the Knowledge of the Glory of the Lamb cover the earth as the waters cover the sea!

Jason’s Story – House of Prayer in the Spirit of the Moravians -

So what would an expression of this Moravian movement look like today? According to Dick Eastman the former President of Every Home for Christ, “Every spiritual indicator suggests there is a re-birthing of a new Moravian-like movement of continuous, global, harvest-focused prayer growing in the womb of God’s presence worldwide. It is certain to transform nations” As he says, “the prayer mobilized …

First the Moravians were committed to strategic missions, to see the gospel go the unreached peoples of the earth, no matter the cost! And these missionaries were tent-making missionaries ..

Second, the moravians built a canopy of united, strategic and sustainable prayer that endured for 100plus years, of ordinary believers, men and women, young and old in regular committed times of prayer! They understood that God releases his power in response to the prayers of his people!

Third, Humble community

Fourth, they experienced a powerful move of the Holy Spirt, it was a Spirit-led, love-motivated prayer and mission’s movement! The love of God had been poured into there hearts by the Holy Spirit and compelled them to walk together in John 17 unity, together as family – this helped them continue in day and night prayer, and making disciples of all nations!

Fifth and most importantly, the moravians were all about the slain Lamb receiving his due reward! I think the verse that most fully captures the essence of this Moravian lampstand is Revelation 5 verse 12, “ Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” Amen let’s prayer…

**Let’s Pray**,

Father, we believe that the hour has come for your Son, the Lord Jesus to be honored, and treasured as the Worthy Lamb who was slain! Even as the Lamb is in the center of the throne in Heaven, we pray and ask that the Lamb to become the center of the throne on the earth, exploding in the hearts of your people…

Father, we ask for a ***Lamb’s Reformation*** in the church that would wake us up again to his cross, to bring your Son the reward he deserves for giving his life as a slain Lamb!

Father we ask that you would release a spirit of prayer upon every family and every local church that we would become a house of prayer for all nations!

Father we ask for a fresh baptism of love where your love would be shed abroad in the hearts of your people by the Holy Spirit and spill out in extrordiary love for one another!

Father would you raise up and send forth messengers of the Lamb, voices like John the Baptist who will cry out, *“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world”*

Father, send forth ones like the apostle Paul who will resolve to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified and that alone!

Father raise up ones like John the apostle who will look until they see the slain Lamb standing in the center of the throne in heaven, and then reveal him here on the earth!

Lord of the Harvest thrust forth ones like the Moravians who cried out, *“May the Lamb who was slain receive the due reward for his sufferings!”*

**Father we ask that you exalt your son in the nations of the earth! We ask for the spread of his Fame, that his name would be made great in every nation on the earth! Father glorify your Son that your Son might glorify you! Father of Glory, would you come and pour out your Spirit and unveil the beauty of Christ Jesus , Father we ask for a wave of your Glory to come crashing in upon every unreached people group… Father give you Son the nations as his inheritance!**

**We pray in Jesus name and for his renown, Amen!**

*POWER OF THE CROSS… Revelation 5:12 …*

*Litany of Wounds, blood and wounds theology of the Moravians… 1746*

It divides naturally into two parts: the sufferings and death of Jesus and the hymns to the wounds.2