

Anabaptist History (Day 18) the Dutch Decline and the Russian Mennonite Fire

by Dean Taylor

The sermon explores the decline of the Dutch Mennonites and the rise of the Russian Mennonites, highlighting the importance of staying true to the faith and the need for balance between the letter and the spirit.

Duration: 1:26:50

Scripture: Psalm 78:4, Proverbs 3:5-6, Acts 1:8, Hebrews 12:1-2

Topics: "Mennonite History", "Church Missions"

Description

This sermon delves into the history of Mennonites, focusing on their journey to America, the various Mennonite groups, and the missions of Mennonite churches in different countries. It emphasizes understanding the martyrs and missionaries who paved the way, including the early reformers like Hans de Ries and Menno Simons. The sermon also touches on the geographical locations where Mennonite settlements were established, particularly in Poland and Russia.

Transcript

Here for you to read. I'm just going to book reading. We're going to be pretty much now just in Introduction to Mennonite history, and here's the pages, okay 256 to 260 talks about The coming to America and it ends there with a section on Burn, Indiana.

You'll appreciate that Lucas And then 302 to 316 The other groups in this book would be mainly where all of us come from and so I appreciate that Read that and then I really want you to take a look at even if we don't completely have time to cover it in detail is 317 to 394 and that whole section deals with the mission of The Mennonite churches in all these different countries and since a lot of our churches has missions in the Central America and Africa and India Even amongst different Mennonite groups that are out there. I think it'd be really healthy for us to understand the Martyrs and missionaries that were there before us. I mean there was Martyrs of these people at which we're pretty much completely ignorant to and I think it's a shame and so make sure you read 317 394 there is a couple themes that I'd like to hit on next week.

I'm not sure how I'm gonna do this I may do a day on I don't know. I'd like to make sure that I hit the revivals of America Mennonite revivals You know the ones that happen with funk and and the ones that happened amongst the George Brunk revival and all those sorts of things. I'd like to bring those to I have some nice recordings of Bronk and some of those things.

I think I'd like to see some of that and then I'd like to also talk about the missions and just the dynamic one of the points that I'd like you to pay attention in your reading is the stress between the church and the mission field and What's that stress and you're gonna see that I'm gonna try to get particularly From my own my own area, which I think influences of everybody in this room is the stress that Lancaster County went through with the Tazania At that time Tanganyika mission and the church and Lancaster Conference Mennonite Church and just those dynamics There's some interesting letters back and forth to the bishops and things like that and attitudes and again I think there's lessons for us today to learn from that, but I want you to have an understanding I've heard it said amongst our people all I've heard it a lot of us. Well Mennonites never were in the missions never did these things It's really it's really not a fair even if we may not agree with how all some of those missions Became nevertheless Wow, I mean of the tens of thousands of people in different countries that have been reached through missionaries and So I want to make sure that you you get that. All right for the essay questions.

That's you have a paper. That's due Monday And here are your three choices, okay A drink of water. I'm feeling a little sick today.

So I hope I can even make it through this whole lecture So if you see me sitting down and things, I don't know. Maybe it was a paint last night My office is getting pretty scary over there, but it's okay So here's the three ones, okay number one your choices are out of three is Discuss the rise and fall of the Dutch Mennonites What lessons are for us today? The rise and fall of the Dutch Mennonites. I'm gonna finish just a little bit of that today the fall part Number two essay question or if you want a little more time for that discuss the place of dreams visions and spiritual intuitions in the life of the believer All right Also discuss how Those things in the context of the church How do we balance the letter and the spirit? Examples from history would be great.

I Think you know where I'm going with that all the milk or Hoffman the Munster tragedy a lot of these visions and dreams that people got So again, I'll repeat that discuss the place of dreams visions and spiritual intuitions in the life of the believer also discuss how it in the con how it is affected in the context of the church and How do we balance the letter and the spirit examples from history would be great? The third one is discuss the idea of a brotherhood slash community model of mission Seen in the early Anabaptist Discuss the idea of a brotherhood slash community Model of missions seen in the early Anabaptist and contrast this with modern evangelical methods What can we learn from this? discuss the idea of a brotherhood slash community based mission model or a model of mission Discuss the idea of a brotherhood slash community based mission model as seen in the early Anabaptist You can bring anybody into that including what we're going to share today from the Russians Contrast this with modern evangelical methods. What can we learn from this? All right Y'all did great with your essays. I've really enjoyed them That's why I like to get in these dialogues with y'all with your insights that you're bringing out.

I appreciate them I very do much appreciate them It's it's it's been very neat for me to be here just to hear the different perspectives and people coming from different places Well, if we could Silas if you want to start us out with a word of prayer and we'll begin to look at the fall of or some of the Diminishing of the church in Holland and then the Russian Mennonites. Let's pray. Amen.

Thank you very much All right. Well as we look at Holland I Want us to today to look at some of the things that led to their decline now Here's the thing. I think we need to really pay attention to Holland.

It's my opinion I'd love to pretend like I'm in Switzerland and it's 1550 or even better. It's Moravia and it's you know, I don't know 1550 or 40 But I think the biggest lesson that we should pay attention to is Holland 1700s Because if there's any group that I think we look the most like it's Holland 1700 not Switzerland 1530, you know, I mean the kind of things they're dealing with the the intellectualism the materialism the splitting the Kind of lack of vision. I I see that in our in our Expressions of trying to find these things and so I don't want to throw stones at Holland today and their decline I want to have it to be a serious Time for us to look at ourselves and say hey, how does that apply to us? Okay But first before I do that I thought it would just be a shame if we left the Dutch Mennonites and didn't tell the story of Dirk Willems I know, you know the story, but it's good to tell the story and I found this nice little video I don't know who this is I appreciate the way the guy tells it And I appreciate some of his messages when I clicked on his site there But I'm gonna give the story of Dirk Willems and then I'm going to go to a little slideshow that I actually took from Holland when I visited the single Kirk Church there and we're going to use that to show the decline of Holland so here we go.

I'm gonna try to see how this works. Oh the speaker thing. That would be nice.

Where's the speaker thing? Oh, here it is if I can see it back here. All right, brace yourself Just Showing the different martyrs and Remember the spirit of Holland. There's some strong faith there outside of all the disappointments that we saw yesterday The church still was moving very powerfully during this persecuted time The Famous Dirk Willems story At the hands of the Roman Catholic Church, Brother Willems was found immovable in his state in Jesus Christ Dirk Willems had the chance to escape his capture as he was fleeing from the authorities sent to take him He was being hunted and pursued by the guard on one frosty morning as he ran across some very dangerous ice Dirk made it across the ice, but the guards sent to capture him broke through Dirk saw that the very guard who would bring him to be executed was in danger of losing his life Rather than continue to run and ensure his own safety, Dirk turned back and saved the life of the man sent to arrest him The guard was grateful and wanted to let Dirk escape But was given stern orders by the officer standing at a distance to capture him Dirk was immediately brought into severe imprisonment until he could be burned at the stake Strong winds prevailed at David's execution.

The fire was lit, but winds kept the flames to the lower half of Dirk Willems' body for quite some time Spectators heard him cry out, Oh my Lord, my God, more than 70 times as he lingered on in life as the flames slowly burned him At this, the prosecutor turned his back in shame on Brother Willems and commanded that he quickly be put to death Dirk Willems loved his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and took his commands very seriously Jesus said in Matthew chapter 5, Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, for whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn with him the other also Ye have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, hate thine enemy But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven Dirk Willems dared to love his enemies just as Christ did Would you be willing today to save the life of someone who wanted to kill you? Would you be willing to lay down your life in order to save your enemy? Amen, well done So I just felt that the the Dirk Willems story, I couldn't leave Holland, it would have been wrong. Don't you agree if If the story wouldn't have been told. All right, so now I'm going to bring in the This story, I wonder, I got this little thing here, I wonder if this works Question is how am I gonna be able to Ah Dale, do you mind, here we go When I nod to you just hit the down button right there, okay All right, well I guess it'd probably reach over there actually Yeah,

actually Dale, I think that that keyboard will reach over here Thank you All right.

So now what we're going to do is again is look at the the what happened in Holland and again as I said yesterday It's good to remember when you're studying history histories of war histories of Churches you tend to just look at the things that happen church splits church this and what we remember I kept trying to do yesterday was even in the midst of a lot of the very difficult things they went through There was still these brothers that were living for the faith when I was over at in Holland last Last summer we went into the single Kirk Church Which is remember the last split that I talked about yesterday the War of the Lambs between The Lamest and the Sun is to the very end while we were there We had they it was a it's a huge church It's but it's the most interesting thing about it is is you you wouldn't see it on the inside it's almost like an optical illusion when you go in and they did this because of the When they were allowed to build churches they still had to be very low profile But when you went in this thing could hold 2,000 people and it's amazing Well, they gave us a tour and then also they were very nice to us and gave us a slideshow of what how they interpret The decline of the Mennonite Church. I took that and I brought it. I ran and grabbed a Little memory card and I took it off his computer with his permission and I brought it to here today And I think it's interesting because this comes from them I did add a few slides in through the end and there was some that he had on the Amish itself which were in Dutch I went and I used the Google and interpreter to To bring the interpretation today.

So those may be a little archaic Interpretations, but I I had to get him because they were interesting pictures and I wanted to see what they were saying, but here it is straight from the single Kirk Church the History of the Dutch from the Dutch people themselves. Okay. Thank you.

All right the Golden Age After we got into the end of the persecution William the first the Of orange he gave some religious toleration and although all around them there were things happening People were still getting burned in Belgium and that type of thing. Nevertheless, like Steve Russell said yesterday. They did have a higher degree of Religious freedom than even the Swiss did even even later part of the 1500s But here we go through this Again, it just talks about how small this area is that the all of Holland would fit into this area.

It's trying to show us less than 1 3rd of Ohio or how to squeeze 17 million people in a triangle between Toledo Cincinnati and Cleveland. So if you can imagine everybody in Holland fits into that into that area. Oh Sure.

Yeah. Oh Yeah, we don't need that at all. Thank you Okay, they this is their slide I took one of them up is it's a it's a country of Contrast still to this day.

You see a heritage. This is how they drain. Of course is how they drained all their swamp waters But it's a also they have some very wicked things in Holland today extremely wicked It's but some of the most wicked things on earth that's done legally in the open is done in Holland There's also still memories of things of the past in Holland they talk about their Orange madness their patriotism with their sports in there.

There are sorts of things. It's in their country today They have the royalty there which is still like we talked about yesterday even the the Kings in England and a lot of the princes and stuff have their heritage here in Holland And so here again William of Orange the silent is he brought in this religious toleration and And early on they started building these churches and here's the one I was talking about this is the The single Kirk here and so it looks pretty plain on the outside you go in and it's just huge and it's it's kind of Amazing

architecture when you go in there, but they started quickly building pretty good sized church buildings Just the different things in the Golden Age that started to happen and they got rich with their shipping And I think it's one things they're going to bring out here Still there was different martyrs that were going through there This brother is actually one later on that was trying to reform things keep things in a godly way the different Didn't translate those different martyrs and that type of thing From ones there and here this was the one I one of the ones I translated So I didn't translate everything but it it shows again like we talked yesterday of the divisions these are all the different divisions that were happening during Holland during this time and it's a shame and that's what we spent our time yesterday looking at and Somebody had written the Babel of Reconstruction Baptists. I use that as a just a Google translation and that's what this document over there talks about Keeping all of this stuff as a as a Babel somebody said so it's kind of judgment on us for the All that splitting and everything But like I said a lot of times they did have some deep reasons when you start looking into them some different reformers we had talked about Hans de rice yesterday and they started using this was the the brother who they were on the first split when they were splitting over the strong shunning and They begin to be called waterlanders because they're in the district they were at and today they still use this terminology called dupe gazinden and Which simply means Baptist minded baptizing minded and they didn't want to be named after any particular thing or person so it became Baptism minded was there and still to this day.

You'll see that written around in Holland frequently All right, we heard about milk or Hoffman and milk your Hoffman and what he did and of course We heard about Munster and all that happened with them and We heard about the different Things I guess they have there's hard times terror and everything Middle Simons, of course, we heard we talked a lot about him And then here are some of those divisions again with the waterlanders the Frisians the Flemish and But still different things came on when I started getting more and more towards the later as part of these 1600s you started writing Martyr stories to talk about the older days and and that sort of thing reminded me I'm have how we lost something It seemed the church was going more and more into the ways of the world and many men And women sought to try to stop that progress Again, it's latest 1572 People were being killed All right. So when the church is divided here's where This is what I took straight from the Dutch slide and it was talking about in this time refugees started coming in from lots of different places and during the During the split these different churches had an active role in doing that and here is the single Kirk This is the church that the slide show this this the man was standing right here showing this very slide Not this one, but so this is the single Kirk still looks exactly like that today And the different churches that were were there. Here's the song that split with this church remember that and Another group here.

This would be one of the most I guess maybe old Flemish or old Frisian there Be more conservative Okay, one of the things I mentioned it a little bit with during the Amish time, but we're gonna say some things about their Materialism in there and there's some of their losing the faith during that time But it would be wrong to to not mention that if it wasn't for the help of these Dutch Mennonites I mean they helped the Amish. They helped the Mennonites. They sent money to the Hutterites and I will say that they were one of the first people who got this organization together Kind of like a cam is today of helping people that are in Terrible straits and hard times and and you have to this is where I said in somewhere in anabaptism in every way there's a sense of sharing and definitely you saw that middle said there will be no poor among us and and You have to appreciate that Of how they James Lowry has put together this book of documents of letters back and forth of thanking them For many of these things.

I have this book. It's it's nice Okay, so then we start to get into this period though where things are very lax open You can be out in the open you can have your church You can have your businesses you can have and they begin to grow more and more Here's the cloth gilda a painting by Rembrandt of and I suppose this would be one of the Mennonites that were part of this cloth Gilda people were their businesses were beginning to grow and grow more and more and so you started to become part of the upper class the People that made the difference in Holland in the social circles Again, you can see some of their their house houses in there There are different tapestries and things like that and there was hardly anything by 1663 that wasn't preventing the Mennonites to become very much in high society here in Holland Again here's one These would be paintings that the family would have had made and then they would of course show Some of the things that they would think would be important to them again paintings from Mennonites Mennonite families It was again during this time that the martyrs mirror and different martyr stories We're trying to remind them of the ways and said have we lost something yet Is there something that we're missing as this keeps going this way? And this was a slide I interpreted it was from there and they did this slide and I think it's it's it's very interesting a rough translation literally said a Mennonites in the Netherland ascend the social ladder in the 17th and 18th century and I And so they show this persecuted church down here Stepping up to here to here here here and to practically royalty here. One man was actually knighted because he had such a fabulous wealth and and he had so many employees and things that he was considered a knight and And just showing the progression of where the church was going and somehow somewhere Along this line.

He started to really lose out a lot of the vision of why they were there in the first place And they they gave this slide here There were some of the Orthodox that was there and this is the rough translation just what translated orthodoxy shrinks it begins to less and less people are are Considered Taking these things in an orthodox sense is the term they used and so anyway, that's a interesting slide in it. I mean, yeah That scares me, all right All right, here's one one of the fabulous mansions of one of the Mennonites And here's his gardens and his palace and and the different thing and he was a silk merchant And and again just showing you to the extent there was no lines or limits of of what these Mennonites Were able to get into at this time Again different paintings they had of their families Famous people part of the banking system and Here's the duplicates in financier So that they were you know bankers and such and again very much part of the elite of Holland with everybody else Rembrandt had painted they some people debated did Rembrandt ever become a Mennonite at least became close I mean he had lots of friends that seemed that were Mennonites But they don't never found a baptismal record of Rembrandt and here he painted this preacher Mennonite preacher and it does say you can't really understand him unless you hear him So apparently he still was a a good preacher Rembrandt said that about him There's the famous Mennonite preacher and They pointed this out. I'm not sure why they pointed out the candle snuffer.

I forgot. I'm sure he said, but I can't remember They pointed out that candle. She is exhorting this lady in the faith looking at the Bible here looking at the Bible You know, I'm sure all right, here's another one wrote some hymns and And Here's a here's a painting that someone had painted for their family, but they put themselves in this journey and he brings out how these different guys were people in the Alright, so the people of Holland began to mock the Mennonites, you know and say, you know You're hypocrites you're and here's a caricature of Mennonite morals and they're talking about the hypocrisy They're talking about the Mennonite lie the cake I'm not sure what that is the collar and the midnight wedding and don't look at it too long or you'll start and kissing offensive but It's a again.

It's just say gives you an idea of a lack of a vision I think of what was happening to the church in my opinion Some of the brothers tried to hold things back Peter Peters here Also was one of the people that said hey we got a we got to stop this Um Tobacco drinkers on the wide road was a literal translation there again Probably calling out against people smoking and different things like that Different documents that were given in those times by 1710 They're in burn Matter of fact right here along these docks right there The Mennonites and the Amish were put on to boats and finally just kicked out of burn This was like the final Get out of here from Switzerland, and I forgot the number but a lot in the hundreds perhaps over the whole period of years Were kicked out of burn and would have gone down this river And which would eventually found himself into Rhine went down the Rhine and had to go all the way to Holland again I mentioned I think when we talked about the Amish split I appreciate the the people of Switzerland's told Holland that they wanted to make sure from Holland then they get shipped to either like st. Thomas or or Barbados or America But they want them out of the way and fortunately the the the Mennonites from Holland We're riding the embassy here in and burn and saying look as soon as they set foot in Holland They're free and and so that's why a lot of the Mennonites and the Amish came to Holland. That's how they got there But something interesting When they got there You had this old world of persecuted Mennonites Coming walking into church of Now modern Mennonitism of the 1700s and how many times have you heard a preacher say or you said it? What would it be like if minnow Simons came? You know or what would it be like if Conrad Grebel well it happened here, so kind of you know what I mean They you had a chance of the old coming into the progress of the new and there was some responses Here's just remember how the other people were dressed.

This is some early Amish That's actually an Amish couple That that came to Holland from Switzerland Here's some of the some of the things they said This guy wrote kind of a poem Dealing with I can't believe what we're finding here in in Holland, and here's what he said Here we stand before a house where modest people dwell Alas of minnows folk at least they bear his name Here everything is grand. What an array of coaches. They are the fashion What's nothing in commotion? How properly the gentleman greets that lady and graciously leads her up the steps? Here we must go in with all the noise and crowds will likely not be noticed.

This is a great affair No amateurs are here, but masters in the art of worldly vanity here is much Complimenting favoring flattering the bride and the bridegroom show themselves with pride. What do you think? Well any of my sort be there our humility and good morals honored here instead of pride and vanity No, not at all Softly now move aside with rhythm of music and singing there will be skipping and dancing Herodias has returned she swings and glides moving around the floor as if she teaches how to use a sword on John the Baptist's neck and Offer the head upon a platter to her mother, but this is not her intention She only wants to spread a net to catch the birds She sees set her eyes upon how the wine goes to the young men's head Oh, pardon me there gentlemen how they glut on pastries and romping and of clothing What romping what feasting all pleasure? So they were very grieved especially the Swiss brother the Amish Were grieved when they got to Holland and saw they were there now that that's were very nice to them They gave them places, but when they tried to find communities for them to live I really didn't know how to deal with these people and they wrote some of these things he goes on This is from their slide. This is they they put this together How many a doll we see in gay attire when walking with our people on the street? See here comes one now strutting like a peacock for shame half-clothed with naked shoulders Shut children shut your eyes, but say where is she going? Oh? to the church Not for worship.

I surmise, but rather to display her fine attire and with seducing gaze attract Her lover who powdered white his womanlike hair ouch Just an insight on the conflict now of these these brothers who got to Holland and what they were seeing So they talked about this is from their slide the pilgrimage of a wandering Dutch Duke Cassandra, and they said the conservatives then left and came to America and they became this and this is totally this slide I just got to share this with you because it was hilarious So they were there and all of a sudden been you'll Esther's dad raised his hand and said just curious Where did you get that picture of that conservative family? Because it was been you if this was I was over there in Holland watching a slideshow And this has been you and that is little Esther. Isn't she cute? And this is a picture right they were showing us in the single Kirk church in Holland so there's little Esther and they are representing your family Esther as what became of the conservative voice of of the the The heritage there, so that's a pretty good legacy you have And that's a pretty cute picture, too. All right, so Daniel was pretty surprised when he saw that all right So again, they show just the simplicity of the way of life that was lost and here I just ask a few questions, and we'll leave this section Why did they drop many of their old convictions during that journey? I? Asked the question why? When you read their answers, it's the same kind of things we hear today I tried to make those fancy little flip ins, but I couldn't figure it out not offend When more converts from outside the church people said we don't we don't want to be a stumbling block show love and the fellowship Focus on what is really important were some of the things that you hear them say did it work? Look at this slide they made the slide 1650 70,000 1900 31,000 2010 8,000 and that's a generous number We were there in that single Kirk and it seats over 2,000 members and Esther's father been you'll ask the question.

I'm just curious like how many people were here last Sunday 26 so did it work? Hmm, so why would we want to repeat their mistakes? Phelan van brought says Writing at that time period these are sad times in which we live Nay, truly there is more danger now than the time of our fathers who suffered death for the testimony of the Lord Few will believe this because the great majority look to that which is external and corporal and to this respect it is now better quieter and more comfortable few only look to that which is internal and Pertains to the soul and on which everything depends as the introduction to the martyrs mirror For what is it a profit if a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul or what shall a man? Give an exchange for his soul last slide It grieves us to the heart that we must live to see these times and Therefore speak in this wise Oh Lord strengthen our faith Help thy weak trusting lambs that they may not be led into error nor move from the foundations of the most holy faith On the other hand through his instigation the world Now reveals itself very beautiful and glorious More than any preceding time in a threefold pleasing form the lust of the flesh the lust of the eye and the pride of life Almost all men run after her to worship her as Queen Supreme But all are deceived thereby yea many who have drunk of the poison wine of her lust from the golden cup of her iniquities and Deceptions die a spiritual death at the first design is aimed at the faith So this is dedicated directed against the true Christian life here lies great danger Who shall escape these snares he that would at no time be taken unawares by it must indeed be cautious Cautious and watchful if you don't want to be taken by this you must be cautious and watchful But our very flesh seems prone to it here must be fasting watching Praying and calling upon God for help. Otherwise, there is no escape This is their last slide ever all the they left this that all the godly people left So, all right, turn your light on. Let's take a break Let's come back and talk about the Russian Mennonites and that concludes our section on the Dutchman Your little ice cream place has gotten Around more than you know, I think It was just so funny because with been you'll there the guy was like, oh, sorry.

No, that's okay So, all right, let's talk about the Russian Mennonites now, here's a first I want to give a confession about my study of the Russian Mennonites because I'll tell you how it happened With the

Russian Mennonites. It's there's usually a general story of the way. We tell the story about the Russian Mennonites and for some reason This story gets repeated over and over again the the main history that came out during the 1900s was written by a couple of ex-Russian Mennonites and if you can imagine an ex-beachy or an ex-charity person or an ex-men and I or something writing a history of your Your you know, I mean it probably didn't come out.

They were children I think if I recall but nevertheless it didn't give it and Probably a fair as light as it it should have been and it kind of when you just mentioned the bad things that happened You can tend to miss a lot of incredible things I mean Dirk Willems is a perfect example of Holland if we would just look at the splits of Holland and say that's all they were Shining examples like Dirk Willems would suddenly just be faded away and that's the way it is for rush the Russian Mennonites There's some incredible things incredible mission activity revival preaching Prayer times and I'm gonna try to give you some of those I get a little bit more of my confession a few years ago. We had a mission conference and Someone had preached the witnessed or something up to the tribal of the German tribal people and Said a lot of things about the the Russian Mennonites and me being the editor of the remnant I'm not the editor of the mission paper But people assume that I am and it went around and I started getting this letter and particularly Peter Hoover wrote me and said How could you say these things? I said what things and so I said, okay, let me be honest with you Okay, I don't it's not just I hear Our mistakes saying these things I hear this everywhere. And so I want to hear some I want some facts I want to know I want to know some things.

I need I need some words of their people. I want their preachers Documents I want to know something so that I don't have to just keep repeating this old story because it's not just us I hear from different Mennonite churches. We all see here the lessons of the Russian Mennonites and we get a bad name on them so he sent it to me and I have to say it influenced me and And I felt I needed to repent a little bit of just sort of judgmental attitude I have of some of these people that maybe perhaps make myself feel better And and I think that when we do this where we could be hurting people more than we realize, you know When young people don't feel like their heritage is something worth standing for it can kind of be very demeaning the same thing happened to the Amish people and I appreciate Leroy Beachy's books and his new studies with looking at an insterlight books of Looking at some of the looking at the Amish in a different light when everyone's Everything has been written by you has been written by people who have left you or not with you anymore You don't always get you're certainly not going to get this drive of the passion of the people And so I think that I think the Russian Mennonites certainly of all the people have got a black eye Not to mention in many of your heritage with with Beachy and Amish as well But some of that is changing with some of the new honest research that I think is going into it So again, what I'm gonna try to do today is give you the Russian Mennonites in a short amount of time that I have in their own words Some of their own words I have a Have a lot more documents that I'm taking this this is during those Disputes back and forth when I was researching into the Russian Mennonites is where I took this from last night I do have all of those in a four part series on the study of the Russian Mennonites if you're interested in that I can Give that to you.

I gave a copy to Jacob because that's his heritage. And so You're if you're I'll be glad to send that to you or I can just email it to you as well But um, alright, so let's talk about it The Russian Mennonites in general, I'll sum it up like this as the different movements of persecution and and just Immigrations and things like that the they eventually found themselves into the into Holland. Excuse me into the What's now Poland and then from there found their way down into Russia and began to set up Churches and colonies there if you could turn your open your cup in the cross to page 176 and I want I want you to look at this because we it's

so much part of our culture We hardly even know where where's where is, you know, the Ukraine and And where is all this thing? So first turn to page 176 on your map and cup in the cross and I want you to have an understanding of where this is So again, here's Germany There's Holland way up there and then okay, so take that and go Go Holland from Amsterdam and just kind of stay on the north right along the ocean and Skim around all that stuff there and come into that little the Baltic Sea and you see right when you go into there That little valley is is a spot now Keep going all the way over and you get into Danzig.

You see that they're up far right there That's where a lot of this thing has started okay, and so that kind of gives you an idea also if you go to Holland You see that first Take the border of the Netherlands right there to the end and that first little notch that sticks up over Germany You see that that was one of the areas Where the early Mennonites were as well So but this was the beginning of the progress further and further to the east now turn your map over to 204 And let's look at this a little bit more So that's over there now, let's bring it over here Okay Find that notch there at the top the Baltic Sea again Danzig. See that there again now look now see that river that comes out From Danzig and over there. That's a a valley that a lot of the Mennonites ended up in and Melvin layman wanted me to make sure I mentioned that all this area and going into Poland and all this is where actually their missions has been and so Still there's remnants of things that were there and he said when he went there He hardly ever heard that before but this particular area Again was where some the early Mennonite settlements had come in and then keep going all the way down all the way down here until you get down to the Black Sea and then go way over to the very right you see way over there, and that's where we end up with short pizza and And the other different colonies that were there you see that there now Okay, that's where we end up.

It's pretty just the walk would have been long ways and Those are where the Russian Mennonites ended up, okay? First we'll get to the that the Delta Region there in pop and Holland excuse me in Poland okay very early on in the city of Danzig Was very friendly to the Mennonites in 1585 there were Mennonites living there already In the spring of 1535 200 Anabaptist family and about the 60 families were expelled from Moravia I remember that time when people were leaving Moravia and all that and a lot of them actually ended up in this region Some of those did not stay The significance of the refugee group here was so great that minnows most intimate co-worker remember Dirk Phillips He was one of our big people that we talked about and we looked at the the history and all that he actually lived There in Danzig and that became his his spot for the rest of his life in 1567. He made trips to Emden that was that little notch that comes right off of Germany right next to Holland and to mediate in a controversy between the Flemish and the Frisian Mennonites During this time the Mennonites suffered grievously under the attacks of hostile environments There was different wars and different things that went that went back and forth in it, and it affected them Eventually in 1642 they were given a privilege um a privilege a certain privilege to be able to practice their their Christianity with a matter of Freedom although still none of these people even in Germany with a Swiss brother and the Amish whenever they went Well, they would grant them a little bit of freedom. Of course.

It never included Prostituting your neighbors and so when that happened it always got them in trouble But no one got that kind of permission In those in those early days Okay coming into the later 16 and 1700s from Switzerland and southern Germany believers fled west to America There are a lot of Swiss brother and remember when they went to Holland and suddenly what they went to America So a lot of Swiss brethren then came here in the 1700s But from the Netherlands and the northern Germany they fled eastward into Poland and eventually into Russia And as they the Anabaptist people from the Netherlands by now called Mennonites made their way east They gradually lost their Dutch language because of the

people there was a dramatic people and that's where oh, you always wonder Why did the Dutch why do the Russian Mennonites not speak Russian or what Dutch particularly? but just because of all the Germanic area in there they began to pick up the language of their of the people and Began to put Plattdeutsch at that point was what they were learning Like the people around them the reason for this being was their continual stream of new people both low Germans and Slavs They saw the way of life many got converted and joined the church community in the space of not too many generations half of the family names of the Dutch Mennonites settled in the east were now low German and Slavic names and that alone is shows an example of their evangelism and how people ended up becoming Mennonites in this area and So what were these churches like now?

I'm going to give you some of the things from their own words Again, when you just give these facts of history I want to give you some letters and some sermons of things that of how they talk and here is a Convert in that area and he gives his account of his church life in a letter and he says one young seeker Heinrich Hess Who found the Lord and got baptized by the Mennonites and what is now northern Poland the Vistula Delta? That's that little river that you saw there Describes what he found Quietly and without complaint they the Mennonites of the Vistula Delta Prayed for their enemies in accordance with the will of God who helped them out of all difficulties The evil done them by those who denounced them before the government was repaid with good Heaping coals of fire on their head thus bringing them to repentance not infrequently such an accuser would come to the leaders of the church by night asking for forgiveness and Express the heartfelt wish to be received into their fellowship after having been instructed in the Articles of Faith the church would hear their testimony and Receive them through the addition of such Polish and German converts the church gradually increased its members Also worked diligently to support themselves and natural things But with even greater care and zeal they nourished their souls with the bread of life God the Father and the Son dwelt in their midst filling their homes with heavenly peace Anyway interesting letter from an early convert there to that area.

What about all those divisions in Holland remember these were Dutch Mennonites Not all remember not everybody was the elders having these fights and all these meetings the rest were Brave souls like Dirk Willems who were living the faith. Well, what do they do with that? Well, they did have to struggle for a while One of the problems of the believers in the in the Vistula Delta face However was that of the divisions that they had brought from them from the Netherlands Is there a is there a lesson we can learn from this?

All right Generations the generation early most of them belong to the large Flemish group remember them from the Belgium area that went up, but there is also the Friesians and Some smaller groups of the old Flemish of the new mark the fine or the loose Friesians, etc For many years these petty differences marred the witness of Christ Especially so since they claim to love peace and refuse to take war People back there have never said what sense does it make to refuse warfare their neighbors asked when you fight and divide amongst yourselves ouch All right, it didn't make sense.

And thankfully after all their hardship they faced setting in faraway Russia the Mennonites overcame their division not just one but all of them and eventually they'd be those divisions of Holland began to fade away and Again I think maybe the geography and being away from where all the hub of the division was was a blessing for them and Here's a little bit of a testimony of their relationship between the different groups. Even even with The relationship between the colonies and here's one of the colony minister Writes in his journal when he visits the Hutterite colony that eventually found its way in this northern area We arrived at Vishanka on Saturday 26 1794 and The Hutterites received us cordially since it was harvest time Most of

the people were in the fields in the evening. We attended the debates to the prayer meeting They held every day towards evening.

I preached in Luke 12, excuse me a loop 13 23 24 Concerning the necessity of true conversion and how everyone must arrive at such a new birth The audience was most attentive. I noticed the brothers and sisters had been greatly moved Get a little insight on both their preaching The things they would have talked about and the the way they worked amongst each other even in that in the group They remember in Holland. They were turning on each other for the destruction of their flesh.

And fortunately they got they got beyond that in 1660 there were soon charged for proselytizing and baptizing a Roman Catholic interesting by 1765 a new vision for missions was established and Mennonite churches from this area formed links with the Moravian Brethren It's an interesting little piece of history. And I'm by Moravian Brethren I mean like the count Zinzendorf brothers now if you look at your map on in Germany Hernhut was oh if I could vaguely draw Germany Hernhut's about here the Delta is about here. So it would have not been that far of Holland being over there and so around 1730s 1740s Zinzendorf and the the Moravians began to be very influential in this area and these Soon-to-be Russian Mennonites embraced this and it's interesting They even went into them for leadership It says here because there was no other Anabaptist in the Newmark The Groninger old Flemish for 30 years before they immigrated to Russia stood under the oversight of the unity of Brethren's the Moravian Church at Hernhut 200 mile to only 200 kilometers to the south this influence and the enlightened leadership of the convert Wilhelm Lange who led them to Russia in the 1830s brought much zeal and vision to the village of Grandifield where they settled in the Moloch not colony So it's interesting others close ties with the Moravians long before the coming of the Groninger people other Mennonites of Russia Had enjoyed a warm relationship with the Moravians Not just that group, but other groups of these Russian Mennonites at Hernhut and their mission worked throughout the world the elders binhard fast Of the large Flemish congregation on the Moloch not colony He has several letters back and forth in the Moloch not colony sending money to support the Moravian missions and the different things they did But here's a question.

I have to ask for you Why the Moravians when there was some pretty big theological difference between Zinzendorf Moravian ism and Russian Mennonites So the question that I have to ask is what was in their thinking that made them? Think that this would be a good person for leadership. What was what was some of the attributes of the Moravians the Zinzendorf Moravians? Some of the things that I happen to know is I don't know why but they They had some pretty differences like they baptized infants But on the other hand they had a very clear kingdom concept of the church the Moravians were very big on this as as in spreading entire brotherhoods in their mission And this and they also had believed in a very clear understanding as the brotherhood has Guidelines or ways that they believe people are when they're part of their churches they were big in discipleship big in training and they had a Fervent love of the Bible and they were also non-resistant, which probably was one of the biggest issues But they felt enough like this with them that they even use them in leadership So, okay. So in particular, how did they get to Russia and let's talk about Catherine the Great 15 years before the Hutterites 24 years before the Mennonites came to Russia.

It's the Moravian Zinzendorf Moravian pilgrims Interviewed the Empress Catherine the Great at st. Petersburg and got permission to establish a church community on the lower Volga At first the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church opposed the plan It was illegal in Russia to for Orthodox people to convert to any other religion Or for missionaries of another group to convert them the Moravians had a long record of missionary activity Would they refrain from working among the Orthodox? Was it legal for

them to bring ascetic tribes into Moravian communities instead of into the Orthodox Church? So the whole big thing we hear about this and one of the things usually frequently said about the Russian Mennonites was they signed this No evangelism clause. I mean how many people have heard that raise your hand? All right Yeah Well, actually what they did is they came under what the Moravians had established with Catherine the Great and the Moravians They had their strengths.

They had their weaknesses. They were actually very ecumenical and they worked with the Mennonites, too And they're dealing with people and so they're more concerned with me to the totally unreached people And so they signed this but again to keep it in perspective All of the that's interesting to keep it in perspective all of the all of the churches in the in this area It wouldn't it wouldn't have been legal So it's it's a little unfair just to heap that upon them But she did say this in the clause written straight in her paper Catherine the Great's though discussed about reaching the unreached people and she said now The brethren the Moravians do not need to fear about reaching the Muslims the the different tribal people the different pagan groups up there do not fear that they Will prevent from converting the heathen she and for them to the contrary I should be very happy if all my heathen subjects would become Christians And so that's that is part of that Document that you're always hearing quoted all the time. That's the other side of the story There she was very enthusiastic about them reaching the the total unreached people All right, so to Russia Let's talk about how they did things the first wave of immigrants from the Vistula Delta To respond to the Empress's Catherine the Great's invitation to Russia in the 1780s included No church leaders, but an alarming number of unconverted people poor folks Some of them alcoholics and quarrelsome fellows that only came along for the free land These emperors wanted to establish their countries they wanted there to be People there, you know It was good for them for people to do the work the land make money in that type of thing And so she would you would get a free if you go there you get a free farm Pretty good deal, huh? You go I mean how many countries would you not go to if right now today the the King would say? All right, y'all can come here as much as you want.

I'll give you a house We'll give you 160 acres and we don't have to pay taxes for six years I mean Yeah, I'm out of here. You know what? I mean And so that's the kind of thing a lot of these people had is it's actually the same thing happened in Ohio With the Amish a lot of the the first people that broke through the illegal zone to start Further West were Amish people who did not go there with the leaders of the church they just went for the the cheap land the free land and the Getting out of the hubbub of the other areas and so this happened there and some of that wasn't all that pretty It wasn't an established church and some of them that were there did some pretty discouraging things But sooner or later the or sooner the the church decided. Okay, we need to start and establish our our colonies there Okay, many who visited the colonies as they went there evidentially, including the czar himself took with them a spiritual blessing and the story of the Mennonites faith and Industry under a great hardship at the beginning became known throughout all of Eastern Europe Okay So as they went they began to set up these little societies now I'm going to give a little bit of background here, too It wasn't the Russian Mennonites choice Where they could go and it wasn't the Russian Mennonites choice of who they could intermixed with in those days if you were a Jewish people you live with the Jewish people if you are a Germanic people you live with the Germanic people and maybe there was a lot of ethnocentrism there in in society and That's how Catherine the Great won her society established.

So Some of that was by design of Catherine the Great what I mean is with a where they went to their particular spot in This place as you saw way down there And what's considered the Ukraine now is where they were they were told to go and so It was interesting but when they went there these societies that they

set up these Communities that they put up became very impressive even to the czar and he would come visit didn't say wow This needs to be a model. We could use this as a model for the how we're doing our developments even in Russia and it became to be Understood this is later a little bit later there. I'm gonna get to some of that Responding to Catherine the Great's invitation Mennonites settled in Russia actually in southern Ukraine on vast tracts of farmland along both sides of the deeper River These tracts they subdivided.

I'm going to give you the how the the Russians spelled out how it's going to be as They had earlier in the Vistula Delta into many small village blocks Every family got a modest house lot I wouldn't even try the different words in the village Enough of which to build a house in a barn and to make a garden and to keep their livestock then further from the village each family got about a hundred and seventy six acres not bad, huh, and That was away from the area of land parceled out so that they could have their fields nearby it and some at a greater distance How did they handle that?

Property and money I asked, okay While every family owned the land they farmed and the houses They lived in with permission to buy or sell one from another as they pleased legal ownership of the colony portrayed Property stayed in the hands of the Gemina the church community itself The Gemina decided where to build new villages how the farm should be laid out and what type of activities both? Economic or spiritual would serve the good of the whole every village had its overseer Chosen by the Gemina chosen by the whole community who could call a brother's meeting when necessary to decide on material things the coordinator of the the Brothers meeting in the colony was the overseer Who with his leaders of the Gemina stood responsible for the ordering and the well-being of them all it was sort of like a A cross between what we saw in Moravia with the Moravian Anabaptist and a Swiss Anabaptist the Russian Mennonites some from their design some from the design of Catherine the Great came into a This colony Mennonite concept was what we hear today, and this is the way they they organized the thing and it was a very interesting organization and like I said And I keep saying this through the five weeks The concept of the early end of the Anabaptist idea is in some expression one way another is a brotherhood that comes and brings life into the world as a people instead of so much as an individual although It must be made of born-again individuals that makes this community of people This is expressed in different ways obviously different expressed in the Hutterites the Swiss brother and the Dutch and now the Russian Mennonite But you see this coming out and other things I'm about to share here and the way of the understanding of what comes out of their Way that what comes out of the way they see the the Word of God and see their mission amongst these people Okay, when did the leaders meet every Thursday the entire teaching service of the Gemina that is the elders and the ministers of the word Met at the meeting houses of the colony to decide spiritual matters.

I find this interesting I'm just giving you the day-to-day life of how these colonies were ran every Thursday that all the ministers met They made decisions by consensus and confirmed them through prayer after the founding of more colonies in Russia all the elders from all the combined in the Flemish the old Flemish the Frisian and the eventually all even the Hutterites when they Remember how we met there through all their journey ended up in the same area that settled nearby met in periodic Ministers meetings to discuss issues that faced them all so there was a very healthy working of The network of how all these things happen there you had and you had your local ministers You had your and those local ministers met and the different community Leaders met and there was a working together of all these brothers together What they think of education and the center of every village Stood a schoolhouse the church elected one or more suitable brothers always brothers to educate the children in some villages a Larger building served

as the meeting house, but church meetings often took place in the school houses as well Okay, what about their wealth here? How many people have heard about the Russian midnight? Well, all right good. Yeah.

All right Well, it didn't start that way. Obviously just like it didn't didn't done for us and it didn't for Holland anybody else Did they come to Russia rich or poor in the beginning food was scarce And some of the years the Mennonites could not harvest enough even to survive there, you know throughout the winter Or make enough money to put bread on the tables in the colonies so following Joseph's example They built a collection place where they would put the grain Or during good years they could stockpile extra grain and where people could bring unneeded clothing shoes or supplies to be just To be distributed to the different people in need there So I do have an extra you want them from page eight So again, they're developing they're maturing it's coming it's it's looking pretty good I mean, they're they're working out the people that are in need They're helping people and now even when they start to now get a little excess look to see the way they respond What do they do with Jesus words about helping the sick and the poor I wrote Beyond this the combined in in Russia developed an orphans office To care for the widows the orphans and the poor brothers chose from every village collected funds and managed this charitable trust here they You can read that on your own They would bring in everybody had extra money that left over from what you needed for your for your day-to-day living and your household Everything you could bring it to this and it was used for orphans that we used for widows It was also used they would end up building entire Colonies out of just the extra voluntary money that the Russian Mennonites put put into that People were able to use that with little loans from that and it was a way that they were able to keep going And help the poor amongst them did their ministers get paid? No, none of them none of the servants of the church No matter whether they were preachers of the word councils to the council The we cared for the sick or handled money or even dealt with the czars Government got paid for what they did living among their brothers and sister these that loved the Lord expected to serve him through Serving the rest and considered it a privilege to do so. So that's just the basics of Everyday church life amongst these these colonies in in In this area.

So what was it like? Was there ever revival was there ever? Fiery preaching and those kind of things. Yeah, there was and this was one of the things that that shocked me the most Early on here There was a very impressive revival both the mulatch not and the old colony people especially those that moved to newer branch colonies had extensive contacts with the Lutherans and the Wurttemberger pietist neighbors from the beginning but by 1850 when the second generation of Russian Mennonites had begun to make the Take on the leadership of the colonies. These contacts had grown into weekly fellowships joint prayer meetings and the beginning of a massive revival That would change the life of the Mennonites in Russia forever Apparently it was it just swept through this area and a lot of people responded and there was a powerful revival in this area It says that not only did the German Protestants the Anabaptist people suddenly find themselves praying and preaching the gospel together Both of them found kindred spirits among the Russian neighbors at once many Russians worked on the Mennonite colonies Some of the Russians just around the area would get jobs and work on the colonies when prayer meetings began to take place everywhere Anywhere during the day in the evening the Mennonite factories and mills and the Mennonite village homes hundreds First dozens and hundreds and eventually a truly an awesome flood of Ukrainian and Russian villagers found the Lord I started to get a nickname the Russians called them the student tens Taking the Orthodox called them from making fun of their debating student their debate being their prayer meeting And they got this nickname that I guess the it's not a bad name if that means something like you're praying people or whatever I don't know What a student at it.

Can you interpret that? Like a meeting people or Prayer hour, okay. Okay. Okay.

Okay interesting Many not only many the converted Russians got dragged from their houses and thrown into unheeded the prisons the Mennonites that baptized them also did to they got persecuted for this revival much confusion broke out as Some pulled this way and that even in the colonies Which way and then how we can handle this even on the Mennonite colonies, but the power of light Triumphed and overcame the obstacles new fellowships of believers sprang up like mushrooms the scriptures Once printed and readily available in Russian got passed out on from the Mennonite colonies scattered Thousands of kilometers they began to have like a Bible League where they started spreading these Russian Bibles in several different places Revival had spread to the Arctic Ocean all the way to the northern border of Manchuria and the Russian borders with Japan So powerful powerful little piece of history that we hardly ever hear about Was it still illegal to bring Orthodox Church members to conversion?

Yes, it was still illegal but What do you do when that happens? They eventually by the 1860s begin holding annual mission conferences In both the Moloch not and the old colony settlements and when you do that, how can you do anything else? So they started to get a more of a burden for missions began to wanted to do this and they had an annual mission conference of how to Of what to do with all this So what was their view of missions? I go into the establishment of vibrant cities in the kingdom of God Gave the Russian Mennonites a sense of mission and fulfillment as it had ever since coming from the Netherlands to the Vistula Delta three centuries Ago when they started having these cities in the kingdom of God these little places They began to see that they were in their sense making a difference.

This is the wicked world and now they were planting the cities of the kingdom of God in this and some of the difference of the Anabaptist view of mission begins to come out in some of their words there For time's sake I'm gonna have to jump a little bit here Modern mission terms or the idea of missions as an institution staffed by career missionaries was Wasn't the complete way they saw missions they had this type of missionary spoof too, but their concept like that of the Hearnhut Moravians was mission by establishing church communities the Mennonites thought of missions mainly in the context of the gemindia the church community and for them every member of the gemindia was a Missionary everybody was called by God to build on earth working models of the kingdom of heaven Yes, the Mennonites visited and traveled and sought out seekers near and far They were not afraid of moving into the remotest village and set up these commanders as the Lord opened the doors but they understood the Great Commission as a corporate never as an individual or Institutional calling they believed this was the work of the church And I think that helped kind of prevent them from having the in the Hearnhut Moravians You see this certainly the Hutterites you see this as early Swiss brethren perhaps as well But the the concept of the conflict we see and are we going to concentrate on the church?

Are we going to concentrate on the mission? They would say well the church is mission and they would take that into the foreign lands and that's the way they kind of saw it and were Emphasized it in that way. And so everybody was part of what was going on Here you can read on your own there this one of this early Missionaries with a burden gives sort of this understanding in his letter there that I have It's it's interesting just the way he puts it Talking about he looks at the whole progress of through Abraham and through the nations of Israel Into Jesus into the people in the kingdom of God that the church is to represent God's kingdom on earth And that's the type of thing that that he gave Skipping down like the bottom of page 11 there I have by the 1850s the first generation of Mennonites in Russia had organized a mission society To bring the gospel to the heathen working closely with their fellow believers in the Vistula Delta and in the Netherlands they prepared their young people for mission service at home and abroad

and began to move in 1854 the Mennonites of Russia sent 300 German rock staller with the letter the dopest into sending out people to Foreign fields in Amsterdam interestingly enough.

There was a Dutch. He was Dutch Mennonite who wanted to bring the gospel to Indonesia But everybody kept getting persecuted they got converted so he then decided well He's gonna try any and he used the Russian Mennonite technique of bringing in a colony This is in your in your book on page 244. I think it is it tells the story That's in there you'll see it in your reading when you talk when I get to the different mission fields But as he as he goes in there 344 is where it's at page 344.

He decides people are getting killed. So he brings in a colony approach to the Muslims Ends up incredibly successful hundreds of Muslims are getting converted and Into the thousand now to the day and still in a district in Indonesia now There's many Mennonites that were converted from this from the the fruit of what happened from these people It's it's an interesting piece of Muslim history. I was just talking with Chris beforehand and looking at some of the facts of this Again this sort of thing kept going it began more More and more progress was happening from this they get into different areas.

Not only the job of the Sumatra They started sending the missionaries to Java the Sumatra to the missionaries go starting new works among the Muslims and the Hindus baptizing Thousands within the space of 20 years but also to India and while this was happening much had begun to happen at home as well I group a person and I dug this one out for you brother Jacob Johan Peters started to get a burden to take the gospel to Siberia and as he went to Siberia This is a little later in the 1900s But when they started getting into the revolution the Bolshevik Revolution and people were saying we're going to America He wrote a letter to the to the colony said don't go to America come up here He said there's freedom of religion up here. Let's preach to the let's preach to the To the far uplands of Siberia And and many of them did and he talks in letters of how 45 degrees below zero He talked about losing a 16 year old daughter on the journey and very impressive missionary Johan Peters who came from I think it's Malacca or no. No, it was the other one Yeah community Tortilla community, it's impressive impressive stuff.

They continue these different things and different activities and and and that just made a passion within these people that was very impressive a passion that we just don't usually hear about and in particular if you turn to page 13 You get to kind of a point within some of these people and and and all this type of going on where a lot of Things are coming together, which which really comes out, right and I have here when you mix top of page 13 when you mix strong kingdom communities with a mission outreach and revival preaching you get fire and Listen to this sermon preach at a mission conference in the colonies I'm preached by them when Hendrick Heinrich Dirk the brother sent to Sumatra by the groaning your old Flemish from Grand afield Returned after many fruitful years on that island eager churches throughout Russia colonies wait waited their turn to hear him preach Also another real quick note and that Peters when I was reading some of his letters some of the people were saying oh stay Here and preach to us more. I said no you've heard the gospel I'm preaching to someone who has it and he kept doing that But here's this mission conference his brothers back from Sumatra and he's now preaching in a Russian colony About his feeling on the passion of missions and he says this he says I came to cast fire upon the earth This is how the conference started and oh how I would it were it already kindled He quotes certainly the fire Jesus came to kindle on the earth was not a natural one No, it was a supernatural a spiritual fire the fire of the knowledge of God the fire of truth and love the fire of eternal Life and the Holy Spirit Taking the knowledge of God take truth and love take eternal life and the Holy Spirit together and the Jesus fire breaks out Amen This fire burned within him before the foundation of the world this fire brought him from heaven to earth It drove him while here to spark it and fan it and flame it in the hearts of his fellow men

Jesus fire already burns in many believers hearts, but oh May it burn in our hearts as well, and he goes on and on like this in a very impressive way I'll skip over it just for time's sake but Again, when a lot of these things started coming together. It was it was impressive I have here on 2014 was their preach.

What was their preaching like did they did they preach a clear conversion? I have from a letter when Isaac pinner a young schoolteacher in the old colony village in Rosengart had questioned about his soul salvation He wrote to Jacob dick the leading elder of that settlement who lived in new Ostrovich at the time elder dick wrote back and for time's sake I won't give it to you but he there he talks wonderfully about the meeting of the conviction of the sin of true repentance of Walking through your doubts of having assurance of salvation and walking through that. I encourage you to read through that letter I gave it to you there and it's passionate the way and finally he says there towards the bottom of 15 Therefore seek to love Jesus above all else and to obtain forgiveness of sin through the merits of his blood pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit who guards your hearts in God and Seek to order your whole life and according with his calling We will not lay a good foundation if we rely too heavily on the advice of others Do not bear your heart to someone that seems to be pious It will only bring you more unrest submit your self wholeheartedly to Jesus who will never regret it And if we endure to the end we shall reign with him. All right Wow, okay, you ever heard about that of the Russian Mennonites, did you I didn't I had to repent when I started reading some of These things because wow, you know, I mean, how dare we just wrap them up in some sort of prejudice when we could clearly see There was serious light fire and missions going on there.

So what about the problems? All right. I had just a few minutes and I'm after wrap it up the problems some of the problems came from different tugs First the Russian Ministry of the Interior the government they wanted to see these people as you know, this great Example to everyone and almost from the beginning they made regular visit to the colonies giving out advice and passing legislation The czar visited he started telling people about it and he really wanted to make this a model And so he started to make lift different things and this one well-meaning brother Johan corny's which remember in the Hutterite one was actually who helped the Hutterites come to this area and he was Extremely wealthy he the colonies were there but a lot of the more rich people would end up buying land outside of the colonies He started getting into these different things started growing more and more and more wealthy and some of the abuses that we hear about things That are happening Especially with the wealth and the people owning people that were living there were some of these rich people who had gathered out even beyond the the area of the of the colony Corny's made some good agricultural changes, but he wanted to bring everything very Very much in a money-making type of thing and it had its effect on them So they So then this czar said well came to do this type of industry industry Those people who don't have land we're gonna have them go work in the factories over here And then they can pay and they're like we don't want to work in the fact Work with the Brotherhood and and as these types of stress began to be from the influence and the patting of the back that happened from the from the Russian government switch over to 17 And so that was a stress on them. The second was the second direction became that of Excuse me.

Oh, the next one was the the pietism Though some of that revival is and some of those those things that they were with the people Was good, but a lot of those guys that they joined hand-in-hand with the revivals and all those different things begin to say It's kind of quaint that y'all are all living here like this It's it's odd that you have strange views of non-resistance and things like this and what's really important is our revival and and begin somehow their understanding of the church as a kingdom a kingdom of God and that revival revived a people suddenly started very Strangely turning into an evangelical ism of their revival and they end up started sending their children to evangelical Bible schools Protestant Bible schools and

suddenly just the way of Thinking the worldview instead of seeing it as a kingdom planted in this world began to be a get saved revival type of an experience and that began to have influences on it and they had to work their way out through those different things the different problems of that cause And then of course there was those who wanted to continue the third way the way they they went as those pressures began to go more and more things developed and The the the colonies that they planted from them spread and the different directions of those different ways Particularly in some of those ones that took a more capitalistic if you would or more How do you what do you say business minded one became very very wealthy and some of the records that we heard about the areas Of some of the abuse did happen in those sort of colonies and some of it was very bad I did read that even at the places that Okay, and in these areas and the way the Czars kept trying to mess with them.

They they became a state within a state They didn't really try to do that But some of Catherine the Great's influences and some of the way they had to work things out They became a state within the state. So they needed a Mayor there and some people that ran the things I read that those people were not brothers You'll read this in the complete document that the Tsar government would bring those people in but the way that worked back and forth with Some of the colonies got ugly and there's some scenes in there that are frankly very ugly Building up to the Bolshevik Revolution we come into the 1900s and more and more they start to be Losing their right to have non-resistance and to have to not go to war They begin to have stresses with that some of them started to leave then the others started to stay At the late 1800s many of them came to Manitoba and one an entire colony Came during that time and it was very impressive for them to stick together through all that By the time you get to the Stalin by the time you get to the Communist Revolution It was disaster and he let that Stalin let for no exemptions No one's gonna do what you're gonna do it my way or the highway And so they tried the best they could to get on the highway But Stalin didn't want them to go and so they had to go in Moscow for a while They tried to get out and it became a very rough history of that and there's some terrible stories there's actually a little interview on I noticed on the internet of people that stayed and Tried and during the the Ukraine between the white They're the Bolshevik Revolution between the white army and the Red Army and there was a man You see the picture of on the last page who was working in one of the colonies and he became this is morating warrior who came in and just wiped out the many of the colonies that were there and lots of stories like what we read from the Hutterites with during the 30-year war and the Turkish-Russian War was some of the scenes that happened there and there's still people today you can hear on Online of giving these testimonies of children of Remembering that day when people came in and killed their mothers and their and their fathers and things like that.

It was terrible times and then finally bit by bit these people poured in the late 1800s and then later in the 1920s and 30s into America and then finally once again when Hitler came in and Made as an advancement there when he Hitler got kicked back out from the Russians a lot of these German people came back to Germany during that time into the tens of Thousands now even up to the 80s into the 90s came into Germany. So When we get to America, we'll talk to a little bit about how these people came to Canada They and their tenacity stayed with them They did some very impressive things for the protection of their children when they were in Canada stood up for things against non-resistance And yes, they there was many scenes. I don't want to just say it was all great.

They had some serious problems What do you do with people in your area particularly in that kind of a Russian area when they were disciplinary people or people were not converted and how to deal with that and some of the scenes were very were very poor but I think I wanted to bring it from a lot from their own

words and hear some of the the stories and we can understand a Little bit of the soul and the plight of the Russian Mennonites. Thank you for letting me run a little late again Let's close with prayer Dear Lord, I thank you again for another example of good things and bad things God I pray again today that you would plant your church within our hearts You planted Lord so the gates of hell would not prevail And we'd not fall to the left hand or to the right. We thank you Lord for your word We ask you to do it in our generation.

It's in Jesus name. We pray. Amen

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