

How Were Spanish and British Goals Different in North America?

When Spain and Britain came to North America, they had different goals that shaped how they built their colonies. Both countries wanted power and success, but they went about it in different ways. Spain focused mostly on wealth and religion, while Britain focused on building settlements, trade, and in some cases, religious freedom.

The Spanish were mainly interested in finding gold and silver. After discovering these valuable resources in Central and South America, they hoped to do the same in North America. Spanish explorers came looking for riches they could take back to Europe. Along with that goal, they also wanted to spread Christianity. Spanish missionaries traveled with explorers to convert Native people to the Catholic faith. Because of this, many Spanish settlements were built around missions and religious centers.

The Spanish colonies were controlled directly by the king of Spain. This meant the government had strong control over what happened in the colonies. The Spanish also used a system called the *encomienda*, where Native people were forced to work for Spanish settlers in exchange for supposed protection and Christian teaching. In reality, this system often led to abuse and suffering for Native communities.

In contrast, British goals in North America were more focused on building permanent settlements. Some colonies, like Virginia, were started for economic reasons. People hoped to make money by farming and trading goods like tobacco. Other colonies, like those in New England, were started by people who wanted religious freedom. Groups like the Pilgrims and Puritans came to escape religious persecution in England and start their own communities.

British colonies were usually started by private companies or religious groups, not the government. This gave settlers more independence. Many British colonists brought their families and planned to stay in North America. Instead of working closely with Native people, the British often pushed them off their land, which led to conflicts and wars.

In summary, Spain and Britain had different goals in North America. Spain wanted to find gold and convert Native people to Christianity, while Britain wanted to build homes, farms, and communities. These different goals led to different kinds of colonies and had a big impact on the history of North America.