

# SPANISH COLONIES

## I. Why did Spain want to set up colonies in the Americas?

### A. Money!!

1. extract gold and silver from Central and South America
2. **Encomienda** system – land grants that included the right to demand labor or taxes from Native Americans already living on the land
3. **Plantations** – farms so large they require forced labor to operate, often heavily rely on one cash crop
  - a. started by enslaving Native population; 2 problems
    - i. Native American have local knowledge and could escape or run away relatively easily
    - ii. Native Americans could blend in with other Natives who were not enslaved
  - b. relied more heavily on African slavery to avoid these problems

### B. Religion

1. **missions** – religious buildings
  - a. provide place of worship for **conquistadors** (Spanish colonists)
  - b. provided social services for Natives; once Native Americans elected to come into the mission though, they were not allowed to leave
2. convert Native Americans to Catholicism

This is VERY DIFFERENT from the approach taken by the French!