

# **The Origins of Religious Liberty in Post-Franco Spain: A Baptist Perspective**

an Honors Thesis submitted by

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Approval Sheet

The Origins of Religious Liberty in Post-Franco Spain: A Baptist Perspective

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## **Chapter One**

### **The Origins of the Spanish/Roman Catholic Alliance**

Due to the Spanish government's alliance with the Roman Catholic Church, forms of religious liberty in Spain have been sporadic occurrences, and complete religious liberty is still not a reality. The government of Spain is deeply connected with the Roman Catholic Church. It is this relationship that perpetuates a favoritism of Catholicism and has contributed to the denial of the rights and liberties of other religious groups over time. In order to understand the ways in which this lack of religious liberty has affected people of the Baptist faith, a detailed look into Spain's church-state relationship is necessary. To discover the origins of the Spanish-Roman Catholic alliance, we must start in the year 589 C.E., when Spain officially became aligned with the Church, and then move forward accordingly. The state of religious liberty in Spain can be traced through various councils, as well as the country's much-revised and adapted Constitution.

### **Reccared and the Alliance with the Holy See**

Prior to 589 C.E., the area known today as Spain was occupied mainly by *Hispano-Romans* (Claude 11) who were distinguished by their Latin dialect. The Visigoths arrived in Spain in the year 414 C.E. and this meeting of distinctly different cultures and religions caused political upheaval and religious turmoil for the Germanic Visigoths and the Catholic Church. Namely, two very different styles of confession were at work in Hispania, Nicene Catholicism (Roman), and Arianism (Visigothic), which denied the divinity of Christ and therefore a Triune interpretation of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Ferreiro 100-103).

Leovigild, the Visigoth king at the time, sought to make Arianism more appealing to the dominant Catholic clergy, and offered them the option of converting to Arianism, in order to become bishops, without having to be re-baptized. Leovigild believed that political unity could be achieved through religious unity. His plan back-fired however, when the Catholic majority flatly rejected his offer. Leovigild was never able to achieve the political unity he desired, but his son, Reccared, was able to do what he could not, albeit at the expense of the Arian faith. Reccared converted to Catholicism and was able to sway many of his Arian clergy to do the same. From his conversion onward, many Visigoth clergymen became leaders in the Catholic Church, especially in the city of Mérida. This is an early indication of just how much Spain would come to intertwine political unity and religious conformity.

Reccared's conversion to Catholicism in 589 C.E. marked the beginning of a long and complex relationship between Spain and the Catholic Church. Through his conversion, Reccared

formally aligned himself as a leader, and Spain as a country, with the Holy See at the third Council of Toledo in 589 C. E. The alliance of Spain with the Church at this time also marks the beginnings of church-state mandated laws and regulations against non-Catholic religious minorities. In this case, these laws applied to the Jewish population living in Spain at the time.

Although the situation for Jews living in Spain prior to this time was not ideal, they had more or less been left alone; however, with Reccared's ascension to the throne, and his conversion, persecution took on the form of a restriction of civil (though not necessarily religious) liberties. For example, the Council of Toledo dictated that no Jew could marry a Christian or hold public office. These restrictions did more than make the daily lives of the Jewish people difficult. The exclusion of Jews from public life, whereas they had before been considered Roman citizens, became the starting point of the Catholic state mentality (Ferreiro 126).

A Catholic king aligned with the Holy See, Reccared instituted not only laws, but the mentality that Spain was a strictly Catholic nation. A direct government alliance with the Church eliminated any chance for religious pluralism due to the deep-seated mentality that Spaniards are, or should be, Catholics. The third Council of Toledo also intertwined many of the powers of the church and the state. For example, after the Council, excommunication from the Catholic Church could be used as a "political sanction," (Heather 338) forcing magistrates, governors, and bishops to adhere to the same state laws, as well as the Nicene Creed.

A series of subsequent councils at Toledo further blurred the relationship between the church and the state. Records of the councils at Toledo show an uneven mix of ecclesiastic and

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secular power: “In their evolution we find moments when the king seems subject to the will of the Council... and others when those gathered act as puppets of the monarch” (Heather 339). The Council was made up of bishops, magistrates, direct representatives of the papal office, governors, and many lay priests and secular nobles. Due to the mixture of status and ecclesiastic versus secular power, it is difficult at times to determine who exercised control over whom. Despite the confusion, it is clearly visible that Spain was first and foremost a subject of the Holy See.

Thus, through the unification of Spain under the Holy See by Reccared in 589 C.E., the church-state relationship between Spain and the Roman Catholic Church was established. This relationship laid the foundation for the varying degrees of religious liberty present in the country even in modern-day Spain. Reccared’s conversion resulted in the mentality that Spain, and therefore, Spaniards, ought to be Catholic. This mentality can be seen over the years through the various laws passed, the constitutions ratified, and the state-sanctioned persecution of “heretics.” Understanding this relationship is critical to understanding the current status and viewpoint of Baptists living in Post-Franco Spain. Although the arrival of Protestants would not occur for many years, the *Catholic* church-state mentality was laying the groundwork for a controversial, and often hostile, reception of Baptists.

### **Muslim Spain and Religious Plurality, 711-1492**

In the year 711, Spain was invaded by the Muslims of North Africa. This army was led by the General Tariq, and the presence of the Muslims remained strong until 1492 (Fletcher 1).

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While the Muslims ruled Spain, ideas regarding scientific advancement and religious discrimination were continually at war with one another. However, while much of Europe was trapped in the dark ages, Spain was flourishing, intellectually at least, under the rule of the Muslims. The years between 711 C.E. and 1492 C.E., are referred to as the “Convivencia” of Muslim and Jewish Spain. This period showed a marked distinction from the Roman-Catholic rule that preceded it, most notably with regards to the status of the three major religious groups that lived in Spain during the time.

Despite the Convivencia assumptions that are associated with this time period, complete religious liberty was not the reality. Muslim rule was characterized by Muslim superiority and the relegation of Christians and Jews to the status of second-class citizens, but citizens nonetheless. It is difficult to determine the extent to which non-Muslims were restricted in their daily lives, but there are two conflicting assertions that are made about this time period regarding the status of Christians and Jews. The first is that Christians and Jews were able to live quite comfortably in this time period, being able to practice their own faiths without hindrance, take (almost) any job for which they were qualified, and live where they wished. The alternative view is that Christians and Jews were forced to live in a state of “dhimmitude,” or, one who is not a slave, yet who lives a severely restricted lifestyle and lacks the same rights as their Muslim rulers (Jeffries 1-3). Both views have valid points, as well as points of contention, and must be explored for further understanding of the significance and historical origins of Spanish religious liberty in Post-Franco Spain.

According to Alexander Kronomer, director of the documentary, *Cities of Light: The Rise and Fall of Islamic Spain*,

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“At its best, the history of Islamic Spain is a model for interfaith cooperation that inspires those who seek an easier relationship among the three Abrahamic faiths. At its worst, it's a warning of what can occur when political and religious leaders divide the world.”

With this in mind, we can better understand the significance of Islamic Spain.

Arguably the best indicator of the state of religious liberty in a country is the quality and quantity of civil rights given to the non-ruling group(s). Islamic Spain, while far from perfect, did offer the Jewish community more rights than its Roman-Catholic predecessors. Namely, under Muslim rule, Jews had the same rights as Christians, but not the same rights as Muslims. Both Jews and Christians were banned from carrying weapons, and were required to pay a special poll tax, known as a *jizya*, as well as a tax for their freedom, known as a “*dhimma*” (Vose 27). Despite the extra taxes, Christians and Jews were allowed to practice their religions without persecution. Many Christians and Jews were also permitted to hold public office, most notably in the court of Khalif Mu ‘awiyya, who also furthered the integration of the three Abrahamic faiths through his marriage to a Christian woman.

The state of relative peace and protection in Islamic Spain can be attributed to two main causes. First, the roots of the tolerance lie in the monotheistic natures of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity; and secondly, these ties were reinforced due to a philosophical and scientific golden age. Each of these religions can trace their histories back to one man and one God, who is the Father of all. Also, as the quality of life improved due to educational and scientific advances, the desire to oppress was beaten out by the desire to progress.

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Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are known as the “Abrahamic faiths,” since each can trace its origins back to Abraham in the Hebrew Scriptures. These common roots allowed for some measure of understanding in Medieval Spain. The ruling Muslims considered Christians and Jews to be “People of the Book,” and thus, deserving of protection (Ma’oz 31). As People of the Book, Christians and Jews were allotted some measures of protection (although a tax, the *dhimma* was involved), and were considered humans, if not always equals. The Qur’an called for the protection of the People of the Book, and during much of the Islamic rule of Spain, this call was heeded. Muslims drew many of their political and policy-related prescriptions from Jewish scholars, as well as from the Hebrew Scriptures. This intermingling of ideas, as well as a “shared” God and various common texts allowed for some of the peaceful interactions between the three Abrahamic faiths during this time.

The second cause of this “Pax-Hispano” was the emergence of Spain as a philosophical and scientific center of advancement and progress. The Convivencia of Spain was not merely characterized by the more or less peaceful interactions between Jews, Muslims, and Christians, but also by the great intellectual advances of the age. This intellectual progress is also significant for the state of religious tolerance in Spain. The most important piece of evidence for this claim is the abundance of prominent Jewish literature that was written during this time. Moses Maimonides, Hasdai ibn Shaprut, Yehudah HaLevi, and Solomon ibn Gabirol were all (incredibly) influential Jewish writers, theologians, and philosophers that lived under Muslim rule (Rudin 190). While the rights of the Jewish and Christian peoples of Spain were not on par with those of their Muslim rulers, the intellectual powerhouses that were the rabbi-scholars are almost unparalleled in modern influence.

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Along with the Judeo-Christian scholarship that survived, Muslim scholarship from this time period was a significant contribution to the maintenance and expansion of Hellenistic knowledge. The areas of math, science, and Hellenistic philosophy were the fortes of Muslim scholars. While Muslim scholars of this time period have been criticized for a supposed lack of originality, their contributions are undeniable. In the areas of mathematics and geometry, Hispano-Arab scholars “made algebra an exact science and laid the foundations of analytical geometry; they were indisputably the founders of plane and spherical trigonometry...” (Demming 91). In the sciences, Arab scholars were the stewards of Greek knowledge and wisdom, but played a key role in the expansion of understanding the foundations of Greek science. Muslim scientists can be credited with the creation or perfection of instruments like the “sundial, armillary sphere, astrolabes, and the concept of quadrants” (Demming 91). While books and scrolls were being burned in other parts of Europe, Muslim scholars in Spain were recording the works of ancient Greeks and translating them into Arabic, thus carrying the knowledge forward another generation.

This emphasis on culture and knowledge fostered a more socially advanced society. Although Islamic Spain had its flaws, the flow of thoughts and ideas continued despite repressive measures taken by the ruling class. As history demonstrated in the years following the fall of the Islamic Empire, Spain knows first-hand the trials and dangers of establishing the State as the interpreter of God’s will. These trials can be seen more clearly when we consider the contrasting view of Muslim Spain.

On the opposite end of the spectrum lies the idea that Islamic Spain was an oppressive, and often dangerous, place to live for a Jew or Christian. While the Iberian Peninsula flourished

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intellectually, various laws and policies were far less than ideal for the non-ruling groups, i.e. Jews and Christians. This restriction of rights, especially the right to practice one's religion freely is part of the early groundwork, laid by the Visigothic/Roman-Catholic kings, and perpetuated further by the Muslim rulers. It is important to note, however, (with regard to the Islamic Empire), that the treatment of Jews and Christians varied considerably from ruler to ruler, and even from province to province.

Thus, while not uniform across Andalucía or the larger Iberian Peninsula, the mistreatment of Jews and Christians did occur. The most common complaints about religious freedom dealt with the nature and place of worship for Christians and Jews. During some of the five distinct periods of Islamic rule (there were five distinct periods), Jews and Christians were unable to build new synagogues or churches, or remodel older buildings. Worship was also a very subdued event, since loud or boisterous celebrations could result in the shutting down of the service by authorities. Periodically, Jews and Christians were also required to wear distinctive colors to differentiate themselves from Muslims (Ma'oz 6). These restrictions and requirements were not always strongly enforced and often depended on the officials of the various provinces and their particular biases and preference. While these restrictions might be deemed completely unacceptable in modern-day Spain, during this time period, especially when compared with the rest of Europe, it was quite tolerable. The status of the Jews in other parts of Europe was particularly difficult.

Islamic Spain was characterized by an affluent, educated culture; however, it was also a time of religious restrictions and second-class citizenry. The dual views showcase the constantly changing and fluid nature of Spain with regards to religious liberty. Whether it was the heavily

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embedded Roman-Catholic Church, or the seven centuries of Islamic rule, Spain was and is a study in contrast and changes. The status of religious liberty can be traced through these varied rulers, empires, and constitutions. However, through the analyses of the plurality of religious leaders in Spain, one factor has remained constant: religious liberty is never guaranteed.

### **The Inquisition and the Halt of Protestantism**

The Spanish Inquisition was a tortuous manifestation of a long-held goal of the Spanish monarchy: to unite the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula under one faith, preferably (or in this case, forcibly) Roman Catholicism. After Spain was taken back from the Islamic rulers at the end of a long decline from power, the Spanish monarchy was quick to re-establish its relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon sought to re-establish these ties through the introduction of the Inquisition to Spain. The Inquisition was a multi-wave program of persecution and execution of Jews, Crypto-Jews, Lutherans, Muslims, and other “enemies” of the Roman Catholic faith. While the goal was to urge the “non-believers to repent, change their ways, and return to God” (Perez 5), torture, sentencing without trial, and execution were often the end result.

The Inquisition was able to expand and gain wide-spread support due to three rulings by Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon that were made between 1478 and 1502. Firstly, the rulers persuaded the Pope to create a specifically Spanish Inquisition, therefore giving the enforcers of the Spanish Inquisition the blessing of both the Spanish royalty and the Holy See; then, the Jews were expelled; and finally, the Muslims of Castile were forced to convert.

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While the main focus of the Spanish Inquisition was to identify crypto-Jews and crypto-Muslims (Rawlings 135-140), this project will emphasize the little-known activities and subsequent persecution of so-called “Lutherans” in Spain. Protestantism was not widely understood, except by the elite “clergy and liberal professors” (Rawlings 101-103). The Inquisition was used against “Lutherans” mainly as a means to eliminate criticism of the Catholic Church, “to reinforce social cohesion, and promote adherence to a regulated ideology” (Rawlings 103). At times, it appeared that some individuals were targeted because they were not “good” Catholics, or because their participation in the Church was minimal.

Unfortunately for those affected by the Inquisition’s violent and deadly tactics, many of the so-called “Lutherans” were no more Protestant in formal theology than their Catholic counterparts. With regards to the emergence of Luther’s ideas, being accused of Lutheranism often meant little more than making “a careless religious statement,” or having an apparent apathy toward Catholic institutions, ceremonies, and holidays (Rawlings 103). According to Helen Rawlings, the Church created a list of seven indicators or “errors” that made one a “Lutheran”:

- 1) The denial of the existence of purgatory
- 2) Opposition to the worship of saints or the Virgin Mary
- 3) Ridicule of the authority of the Pope and his bulls
- 4) Non-acceptance of clerical celibacy
- 5) Refusal to confess to a priest
- 6) Non-observance of fasting during the holidays or during Lent
- 7) Denial of the real presence of Christ’s body in the Eucharist (Rawlings 103)

Any of these cardinal errors could indicate that one held Protestant ideas, even though Spain considered itself a closed fortress of Catholic purity. Each of these “errors” placed an individual in defiance of Catholic dogma, but did not necessarily mean that the individual was a convert. Those who were accused of being “Lutheran” initially faced little in terms of punishment, at least when compared with the fates of many crypto-Jews and crypto-Muslims. However, as the ideas of Martin Luther permeated further south, the Inquisition began utilizing the *auto de fe* (Spanish for “act of faith”) as a means of punishment.

The first auto de fe took place in Valladolid in 1559 and 14 of the 31 who had initially been accused of the heresy of Protestantism were burned alive in the town center (Watson 344). Valladolid would see two more autos de fe, with 15 more accused persons burnt. Later, Seville would be the center of attention with a total of 37 persons burnt over the course of two autos de fe. Granada, Toledo, and Barcelona, as well as various other cities in which the Holy See held an Inquisitorial Office, also witnessed the horrors of the auto de fe (Prescott 345).

Over time, the various trials of affluent priests, scholars, and ruling elites caused quite a stir in the Spanish/Roman Catholic relationship. The citizenry of Spain finally (after numerous tortures, accusations, and autos de fe), declared that the Inquisition had overstepped its bounds, and some semblance of ease among neighbors was restored. Although the effect of the Spanish Inquisition on the lives and livelihoods of so-called “Lutherans” was (numerically) negligible, the violence of the Inquisition put a quick end to what little Protestant thought and action was taking place in Spain at that time.

While only a small number of people were accused of being “Lutherans” during the Spanish Inquisition, the fury with which the Inquisitorial Offices stamped out those few stopped the growth of Protestantism... at least for the time being. The dissenting ideas that permeated among the intellectual elite would later trickle down from the various Calvinist and Reformed churches of southern France. The establishment of Protestant churches would not occur for many years, but the seeds of Martin Luther’s ideas were planted in every major city in Spain. Accusations of the heresy of Protestantism ended around 1580, as did the reach of power of the Inquisition (Rawlings 113). This does not mean that the entire Inquisitorial body was eliminated or stopped functioning; simply that it became a shadow of its former self but “found a way to survive right up to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century” (Perez 93).

### **The Constitutional Validation of Catholic Singularity**

In the nineteenth century, the frequently altered, extended, and/or ratified Spanish Constitution showcased the varied attitudes toward the church-state relationship. The Constitutions of 1812, 1837, 1845, 1869, and 1876 are key examples of the monarchy’s relationship with the church until the monarchy’s fall and the establishment of the Second Republic in 1931. Despite the various changes and extensions, the Catholic Church remained the driving force behind the Spanish government’s enforcement of Catholic morality.

The Constitution of 1812, known as the “Cadiz Constitution” exemplifies the Spanish complacency toward remaining deeply intertwined with the Roman Catholic Church (LaCroix). This constitution shows that the Catholic faith and its many invocations, prayers, and creeds were a critical part of every level of state business. Despite the influence of the Enlightenment

on Spanish thought during this time, Catholic singularity was the norm with regards to religious liberty in this Constitution. The Constitution itself begins with an “invocation to the Trinity” (Dugan 1), as it was/is understood by the Catholic Church. Other sections declare that “Catholic Mass must be said before electoral meetings;” however, the most striking example of the permeation of Catholic singularity is Article 12. Article 12 “declared that Catholicism ‘is and perpetually will be’ the religion of the Spanish nation” and that the state “must protect it ‘by wise and just laws’ which prohibit the exercise of any other religion” (Dugan 1).

Although changes were made to Article 12 of the Constitution of 1845, little actually changed with regards to religious liberty. The Constitution of 1845 dropped the provision regarding the prohibition of other forms of religious exercise, however, many of the “changes” were simply observances of the state of religious liberty in Spain; that is, the state of the church-state relationship. Due to social unrest caused by polarized liberal and conservative factions of government, the Constitution of 1845 remained strong until 1869.

The Constitution of 1869 was the first constitution to recognize religious liberty as a civil right. Along with the freedom to worship, this constitution also declared the “freedoms of association, education, press, and assembly to be protected” (Eaton 158). Although individuals were granted the freedom to worship, the state was still required to support (in the forms of taxation and ideological collusion) the “worship and ministers of the Catholic religion” (Dugan 1).

While the Constitution of 1869 meant Baptists and other Protestants could practice their faiths under the protection of the State, Catholicism was still the dominant cultural and political

force. By this time, there was a small number of Protestants in Spain. Unfortunately for these non-Catholics, the protections were withdrawn in the Constitution of 1876, when Article 12 banned public demonstrations of religious belief, as well as the performance of non-Catholic ceremonies. This Constitution signifies a regression back to the Constitution of 1812, since Catholicism was once again the only protected and promoted religion of the State.

Each Constitution of the nineteenth century demonstrated the varying (or unchanging) attitudes of the government toward the church-state relationship. Whenever an attempt was made to guarantee religious freedom to non-Catholics, it was only temporary, and the State reverted back to its comfortable Roman Catholic singularity. The protections offered, or not offered, by the Constitutions later played a significant role in the rights of Baptists to hold property, worship publically, proselytize, or be fairly taxed.

### **The Second Republic: Religious Tolerance at Last?**

The monarchy fell in 1931 and a republic was instituted in its place. The Republic was unique among the various governments of Spain in that it did not try to gain unity through a common set of religious beliefs. Rather, the Second Republic was harshly anti-clerical (Gunther 20). The most striking example of the Second Republic's anti-clericalism is found in the Law on Confessions and Religious Congregations. This law impacted the Catholic Church at every level, but also restricted the practices of all religious groups. All church and religious buildings became national property, "although religious groups could retain the use of these buildings for strictly religious purposes" (Payne 83); any excess in property by a religious organization could

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be seized and the proceeds contributed to decreasing the national debt; clergy members were forbidden from teaching in schools (thus, virtually eliminating private education in Spain), and the clergy were forbidden from participating in commercial, industrial, or governmental work (Payne 86).

Despite these restrictions, individuals who felt that their religious rights were being violated were, during the Second Republic, permitted to appeal to the Catholic Church or “denominations of particular importance” (Torrón-Martínez 718). These appeals marked a significant shift in recognition since more denominations were accepted and included, beyond those that were already “registered” as official religions in Spain. Also, the Second Republic recognized denominations, other than Roman Catholicism, as having legitimate “legal standing” (Torrón-Martínez 714). This allowed non-Catholic churches to defend themselves from persecution due to their faith.

The restrictive laws and practices of the Second Republic, along with an anti-clerical attitude that alienated members of government, ultimately led to the downfall of the Second Republic and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. The end of the Spanish Civil War also ushered in the era of General Francisco Franco. Franco re-instated the Catholic Church as the “true Church” of Spain, and “outlined the principles for church-state cooperation in accordance with Church doctrine” (Paz 686). At this time, Spain was both a geographically and politically divided nation, with some provinces attempting to remain separate from the rest. Franco attempted to make the nation uniform in religious belief with the hope that the uniformity would result in a more solidified government.

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This system eventually caused problems not just for the State, but for the Church as well. The Second Vatican Council, known as Vatican II, “mandated autonomy and independence from civil power” (Paz 669). In order to comply with Vatican II’s statements and doctrine, the Church in Spain was forced to disentangle from Spain in general, and Franco in particular. Vatican II eliminated many of the State’s previous powers in Church affairs, such as the power to name bishops, but also demanded religious freedom as a civil right (Paz 688).

### **The Impact of the Spanish Civil War on Church-State Relations**

The rise of the Second Republic was marked by a strong commitment to the secular state and the exclusion of religious elements from political and public life. The exclusion of religion was so severe that many historians have called the “religious question” the key cause of the Spanish Civil War, which took place during 1936-1939 (Suner-Raguer 15). Regardless of the various religious, political and social issues that caused the Spanish Civil War, in the end General Francisco Franco and his Nationalist party emerged victorious and established a authoritarian state with close ties to the Roman Catholic Church.

The Church was relegated to a position outside of political life during the Second Republic. General Franco made returning the Church to its former seat of power and influence one of his first, and most significant duties (Moran 18). Roman Catholicism was once again made the official state religion, with no other religions being recognized as valid. During this time, the status of Protestants was severely threatened in Spain. The brutal and often criminal

tactics used by both sides during the Civil War were not so far from Spanish memory, and non-Catholics felt threatened.

Prior to the re-establishment of the Catholic Church as the State religion, Protestants, especially evangelicals, suffered at the hands of Nationalist “insurgents.” The treatment of missionaries and aid workers during this time was called “appalling” according to the Spanish and Portuguese Church Aid Society (McGarry 159). Since Protestants were unlikely to be in favor of the Nationalist government, many of the pre-Republic restrictions against non-Catholics were re-instated. These restrictions were especially difficult for the emerging evangelical movement that was taking place in other parts of Europe. In Franco’s Spain, Protestants found it difficult to hold “government jobs, teach school, or become officers in the armed forces. In businesses, they {were} rarely promoted, if not actually demoted for their beliefs” (TIME archive).

Whereas the Second Republic had demoted the Roman Catholic Church to the private sphere, Franco’s regime demoted all non-Catholic religious practices to the purely private sphere; a process known as the “new clericalism” (Dugan 8). New clericalism in Franco’s Spain allowed the Catholic Church to “nullify laws or judicial decisions” contrary to the doctrines of the church, and made the external expression of non-Catholic beliefs illegal (Dugan 8). This aspect of the law was especially difficult for Baptists living in Spain at this time. While national Baptist conventions in America in the 1800’s were formed mainly to fund missionaries, missionaries and new converts faced an especially difficult time in Franco’s Spain. Since neither outward expressions of faith (the singing of psalms, the public preaching of sermons), nor the

evangelism of non-Protestants was permitted, Francisco Franco's regime forced the evangelical movement to pause when it reached Spain.

An unforeseen outcome of Franco's dependence on the Church was the eventual regression of the Catholic Church from public life in Spain. It was the Second Vatican Council that declared the need for the Catholic Church in Spain to return to its true purpose (being a Church) and to step away from government matters. The Church recognized that separating itself from the secular government would actually guarantee the Church more rights, since it would no longer be subject to the secular whims of politicians or Franco himself.

This separation of church and state was finally realized in the Constitution of 1967. This Constitution instituted the 1967 Spanish Law of Religious Freedom, which guaranteed religious freedom to non-Catholics. Despite the religious freedoms enjoyed by Protestants and other groups, the Catholic Church still retained many of its "special" privileges, and continued to be the dominant social force in Spain. The Roman Catholic Church began to embrace the opportunities of religious tolerance as General Franco began to succumb to the will of the government. By the time of his death in 1975, new approaches to religious liberty were being explored, but in relation to more than just the rights of the Roman Catholic Church.

Spain then entered a transitional period that ended with the ratification of a new Constitution by King Juan Carlos in 1978. This Constitution guaranteed three tenets of religious liberty. Under Article 16, "1) Freedom of religion and worship, as well as philosophical and ideological expression is guaranteed, with the only limitation being the public order protected by

law, 2) No person can be compelled to declare his or her religious beliefs” (Dugan 1). A later addition declared, “no faith may designated as the State’s own.”

Despite the freedoms guaranteed under the Spanish Constitution, complete religious liberty is not a modern reality in the year 2010. Following the ratification of the Constitution were several acts and laws that elaborated on Spain’s ever-present relationship with the Catholic Church. This relationship played a critical role in the development of Baptist churches and unions in the years that followed.

## Chapter Two

### Baptist Growth and the Importance of Unity

After taking a historical look at the deep and long-standing connection between Spain and the Roman Catholic Church, it is now possible to look at the origins of Spanish Baptists in more recent history. It is a complicated history, rooted in a desire to bring Baptist thought and practice to Spain, along with a Spanish desire for church autonomy and freedom of practice. According to Máximo García Ruiz in his book, *Los Bautistas en España*, (The Baptists in Spain), one of the principal characteristics of a Baptist is the defense of religious liberty for every person (Ruiz 26). Part Two of this project will look back into the 19th-century for the origins of Baptists in Spain, profile several of the key players in this growing movement, and analyze the legal and political repercussions suffered by Baptists due to laws that restricted religious liberty.

### **The First Baptists in Spain**

The Spanish government has pursued a long and deeply complicated relationship with the Roman-Catholic Church. This relationship has played a significant role in Spanish law making, and therefore, has played a role in church-state and interdenominational relationships. To understand how this relationship has evolved over the years, especially in relation to the development of Baptist churches, one starts at the beginning, with the first documented Baptist missionary to arrive in Spain.

The first Baptist missionary to firmly establish himself in Spain was William Ireland Knapp who arrived in 1867 (Ruiz 27). While Knapp was a dedicated, independent missionary, he was first and foremost a linguist and academic, a profession that would later play a role in Knapp's departure from Spain. Knapp previously had served as a professor of Spanish at Yale University, and was described by his Spanish ministerial colleagues as a dialectically perfect speaker of Spanish (Ruiz 30). Knapp founded the first Baptist church in Madrid in 1870, with 48 members, on a street called Lavapiés (Wardin 1).

The Reverend Doctor Knapp had support from newly baptized Spanish pastors, growing congregations, and the support of a French missionary society called the Committee of Orthez (Ruiz 35). Despite this support, the establishment of Protestant churches in Spain was not an easy task. The years following 1870 demonstrated the fervor with which Baptist churches had the potential to grow. Knapp, along with the Spanish pastors Ramon Bon Rodriguez and Martin Benito Ruiz, were instrumental in the establishment of Baptist churches in Cadiz, Alicante, Linares, Valladolid, and Valencia. By 1876, almost 250 Baptists lived in Spain (Ruiz 40).

The establishment of churches and the ministerial work of Knapp continued, but the religious environment in Spain was decidedly hostile to other religions. The Constitution of

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1845 had established the Roman-Catholic Church as the supreme (and only protected) religion in Spain. That fact was not changed until the year 1869, one year before Knapp established the first Baptist Church in Madrid. The Constitution of 1869 gave non-Catholic religious groups the freedom to assemble, print proselytizing and educational material, establish schools, and proselytize openly (Eaton 160). This freedom was short lived, and in the year 1876, the same year Baptist numbers reached the high 200's, the Constitution of 1876 overturned the rights that had been granted in 1869. While Catholicism had remained the mainstream denomination and had not lost much of its political clout, other denominations, like Baptist and Presbyterian, grew significantly.

The Constitution of 1876 was especially restrictive to Baptist groups who had been dependent on an open forum for evangelism and the right to assemble. The new Constitution, specifically Article 12, banned the expression of non-Catholic religious belief, the performance of non-Catholic ceremonies, and many of the rights to assemble in large groups. The Baptists also suffered another blow in 1876. The Spanish Baptist fellowship recognized that William Knapp was first and foremost an academic, and not prepared for the political and factional difficulties that would only get worse in Spain. For these reasons, they were not surprised when Knapp returned to the United States to assume a position at Yale University in 1876 (Ruiz 41).

The predominant attitude in Catholic Spain opposed religious plurality because pluralism was viewed as the road to economic, social, and political downfall. According to a 1949 Barcelona newspaper, "We had rather have ten million Communists than 1 million Protestants. The worst thing that could happen to this country would be religious division" (Hughey 1). In such an environment, the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought both Baptist struggles and Baptist growth to Spain.

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### **Everett Gill and the Formation of the U.E.B.E.**

The effort expended to stabilize and expand the Baptist faith and message in Spain would only become more difficult in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Second Republic, the rise and fall of Francisco Franco, and Vatican II all played critical and very different roles in the growth of Baptists in Spain. However, despite the trials presented by a changing and revolutionary government, two World Wars, and general political unrest, the Baptist faith did manage to grow during this time. One reason that the Baptist presence was able to remain strong in the face of staunch opposition was the formation of the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union, the U.E.B.E. To fully understand this organization, one looks at the life of an American pastor who made expanding the Baptist faith in Spain his mission. This man was Dr. Everett Gill, a missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Dr. Everett Gill Sr. was born in Huntsville, Missouri in 1869. Prior to serving as a missionary on behalf of the Foreign Mission Board, Gill received his undergraduate degree from William Jewell College and both his Master of Theology and Doctor of Theology degrees from Southern Seminary. He received the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Georgetown College in 1910, and a second honorary doctorate from William Jewell College in 1937 (Bailey 2). The author of several books of several books, Dr. Gill was frequently quoted when addressing matters of missionary work and denominational unity in Europe.

Gill arrived in Spain 1921 with the goal of unifying the Spanish Baptist churches. At this time, there were 22 Baptist Churches with a combined 667 total members (Sarrias 2). Despite their growing numbers, Baptists were not unified geographically or denominationally. Gill's goal, and the goal of the Foreign Mission Board, was to take direction to organize and

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homogenize the various mission activities" of the different Baptist groups present in Spain at this time (Sarrias 2). Thus, the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union (U.E.B.E.) was formed and the Union set out to rectify the perceived problems of Baptists in Spain.

Despite the harsh political climate, a major problem that plagued the Spanish Baptists and their missionaries was the lack of qualified pastors, specifically, Spanish pastors. A major goal of the Foreign Mission Board was to train Spanish Baptists in theology and congregation care. Nils J. Bengston was named director of Spanish Baptist publications in 1922 (Ruiz 100). These publications included *El Mensajero Bautista* and *El Eco de la Verdad*, which were instrumental in solidifying the unity and spreading the thoughts of various Baptist pastors and scholars.

In order to educate and train Spanish pastors, the Theological Institute (formerly the Spanish Baptist Seminary) was established in Barcelona. Classes began on November 22, 1922 with six students (Ruiz 107). Despite the financial difficulties suffered by the Foreign Mission Board and the U.E.B.E., classes were offered in theology, biblical geography, mathematics, music, English, Spanish composition, Old Testament, and New Testament. Many Baptist churches also declared the first Sunday of October to be "Institute Sunday, with all proceeds of the offering going toward the maintenance of the Seminary. Also, the churches helped supply food, clothing, medicine, and home goods to the seminarians, a practice that is still in place today. Each month, La Iglesia del Buen Pastor delivers boxes of bread, milk, rice, eggs, candy, and cleaning supplies to the seminary students, now housed and educated in Madrid.

The first graduating class of the seminary graduated earlier than planned, a fact that was attributed to a high demand for trained pastors in Spain. Despite this promising beginning, the Seminary was closed in 1929 due to financial difficulties. The Foreign Mission Board was

suffering from a lack of funds, and was unable to appropriate the necessary amount to the U.E.B.E. Despite this temporary road block, courses continued by correspondence (Ruiz 109).

The ultimate goal of unifying Spanish Baptists under a national organization was being achieved, and Baptist churches were growing despite the political sanctions and laws against the expression of a non-Catholic faith. Baptists were not just growing in numbers, but growing in the confidence that came from maintaining a unified front against the forces that would detract from religious freedom. John David Hughey reported 895 members of Baptist churches by the end of the 1920's (Ruiz 145).

### **Baptists and the Second Republic**

Since part one of this project detailed briefly the history of prominent church-state relations in Spain, it is now possible to contrast the position of the Baptists with the rule of the Second Republic, which began in 1931 with the overthrow of the monarchy. The Baptists hailed the Second Republic as the bringer of state-protected religious liberty for Protestants. The Constitution of 1931 centered on three main tenets that fundamentally changed the Constitution. First, according to Jose Antonio Souto, this Constitution established the separation of church and state; second, the Constitution gave recognition to religious liberty; and third, the Constitution mandated state laicism (Souto 2-3). Despite the seemingly protective lines the Constitution of 1932 had drawn, there were repercussions for the Baptists.

The Second Republic was marked by a strong anti-clericalism (Stanley 83). Initially, Baptists viewed this as positive because the Catholic Church, and its control within the government, had been viewed as hostile to other denominations. However, the Constitution of

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1931 also made special laws for religious groups, and not in a progressive manner. As Souto described it:

“1) All religious groups that presented a danger to state security were to be dissolved; 2) all groups had to be registered in a special registry within the Ministry of Justice; 3) groups could not acquire and maintain possessions, excepting those specifically designated for the groups' upkeep and special needs; 4) groups could not engage in industrial, commercial, or proselytizing activities; 5) groups were subject to all tax laws and were required to inform the state annually of any investments of resources furthering group purposes; and 6) all group possessions were subject to nationalization” (Souto 3).

While this Constitution served to separate the Catholic Church from State affairs, it also demonized the clergy and decreed that any Order which required vows to an authority other than the State be outlawed (Souto 5). Spain traveled from one oppressor of religious liberty to the other. While the monarchy sought to affirm only the Catholic Church, the Second Republic sought to remove all religion from the public sphere. While the provisions decreeing religious property to be state property (if needed) were rarely enforced, the simple placement of those words in the Constitution laid the groundwork for oppression.

Despite the shaky foundation of the Constitution of 1931, there were some benefits to the removal or separation of religion from the government. For instance, prior to 1931, Baptists could not hold public office, be married or buried without Catholic rites, nor serve in many public-sector jobs. Even soldiers were not permitted to have a Baptist funeral (Ruiz 150). During the Second Republic, however, Baptists were able to “emerge from their situation in the margins to be considered for various institutions and public entities” (Ruiz 153). Not only did

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this new situation allow Protestants to become more financially stable (more so as a people, than a denomination), but it also allowed a group that had been historically marginalized to hold public positions of power. While the State did not recognize a person's religious affiliation as having any bearing on his/her employment, it was beneficial for Protestants to be a presence in civil service.

### **Franco, the One True Church, and Baptist Life**

The anti-clerical, anti-religious discussion of the Second Republic did not last long. After the Civil War, General Francisco Franco re-established the Catholic Church as the state religion. While many supporters of religious freedom viewed this as a tragedy, it was Franco's extreme pro-clericalism that eventually pushed even the Catholic Church to self-evaluate. The Church discovered that the Church-State system in Spain not only inhibited the state, but also inhibited the Church. Two powerful entities were attempting to check and balance one another in matters beyond their control or understanding.

In 1958, the State made a statement, known as the Principles of the National Movement, that read: "The Spanish Nation considers it an honor to faithfully comply with the laws of God according to the doctrines of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, the only true Church, the faith inseparable from our national conscience, which faith inspires our legislation" (Halsall). As a result of this strong relationship between church and state, the Spanish legal system became subject to Catholic doctrine and morals, meaning that any laws or judicial decisions that did not

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comport with Catholic doctrine could be nullified” (Souto 5). This statement effectively placed the laws and teaching of the Catholic Church on the same level as the Spanish Constitution.

Despite the initial support for this doctrine, it was the Catholic Church and more specifically, Vatican II, which contributed to the separation of Church and State that is still in place today: “As a result of Vatican II’s doctrinal pronouncements, Spain had to modify fundamental laws to replace the existing system of religious tolerance with recognition of religious freedom” (Souto 6). Prior to Vatican II, the Catholic Church in Spain had recognized the Catholic Church as the “one true Church,” and felt that the promotion or protection of other denominations/religions by the State would violate Catholic doctrine (and therefore, Spanish law).

After Vatican II, Spain recognized religious freedom with the 1967 Law of Religious Liberty. This law was critical in designating protections for non-Catholic persons, but it also allowed the Catholic Church to retain its place as a privileged counselor, but with the power to govern itself (Moran 537). By 1967 there were 240 estimated Protestant places of worship in Spain. Despite their growing numbers, “only 47 had government approval, and 141 did not have government approval and were merely tolerated by public officials. Out of the other 52 places, 30 operated in private homes and 22 had been closed” (Moreno 8). The 1967 Law of Religious Liberty led to increased freedom to meet and worship, without persecution, for Protestants. However, in 1980, this law was rescinded and replaced with another, which fully guaranteed religious freedom and eliminated some of the “privileges” of the Roman Catholic Church.

In order to more effectively guarantee the protection and unity of Protestants, the Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain (FEREDE) was formed on November 12, 1986 (Moran 18). The FEREDE is the social and legal representative of the estimated 1.2

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million Protestants in Spain. Originally established to protect the legal rights and liberties of Spanish Protestants, and originating from the Evangelical Defense Commission, the FEREREDE now acts as a provider of information and as a watchdog group for Spanish Protestant religious liberty. The FEREREDE seeks to collect and provide information for member churches and protect the rights of Evangelical churches and individuals. If an individual or church is discriminated against on the basis of religion, the FEREREDE collects information and offers mediation, legal counsel, and legal representation as the situation requires. With the protection and information provided by FEREREDE, other Protestant groups flourished and Evangelical churches continued to grow.

Although the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union has been mentioned previously, in order to understand the organization of Spanish Baptists today, a more thorough investigation is needed. The Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union, abbreviated as “la U.E.B.E.” in Spanish, is the unifying force behind many missionary, church-planting, and educational forces in Spain. Spanish laws have affected the U.E.B.E. and FEREREDE in both subtle and extreme ways, leading to growth, roadblocks, and the building and rebuilding of lives.

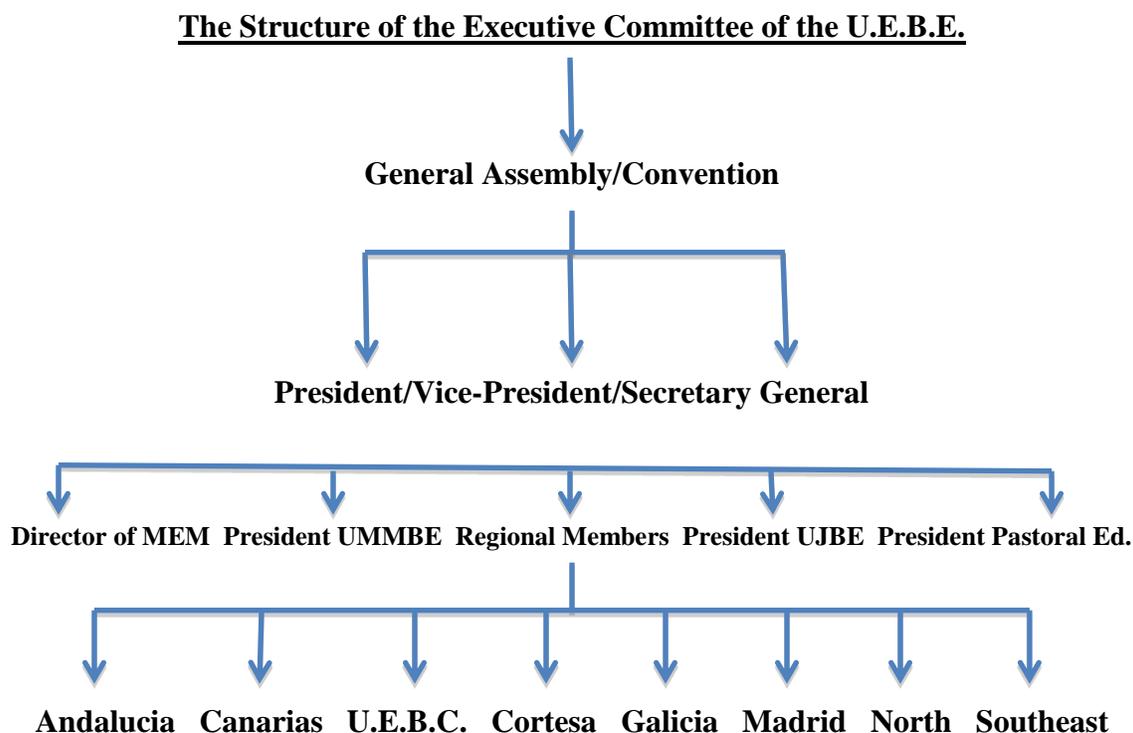
### **The U.E.B.E.: Structural Formation and Organization**

The formation of the U.E.B.E. was a necessary stage that led to the now thriving community of Baptists in Spain today. In order to understand the lives and struggles of the many pastors and missionaries that work within this organization today, background information on the creation and growth of this organization is needed. Therefore, it is necessary to outline the structure and work of the Baptist Union in Spain.

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As previously discussed, the U.E.B.E. was formed with help from Everett Gill, a Baptist Missionary from the Southern Baptist Convention of the United States. The formation of the executive committee, a publication committee, and a school of theology were three achievements which produced entities that continue to play a major role in the work of the U.E.B.E. today.

The executive committee of the U.E.B.E. is organized with the General Assembly, or Convention, at the top. This is followed by the President, Vice-President, and Secretary General; then, specific ministry categories, such as Women's Missions, Children's Education, etc., and their leaders. Finally, the various leaders of geographic areas (provinces, or cities, in the case of Madrid), follow. This structure allows for the many and varied works to be addressed while also providing regional and national leadership.



The current work of the U.E.B.E. involves domestic and international missionary work, education, and pastoral leadership. Each of these categories is then divided and administered by the various committees and leaders listed above. For example, the category of educational ministry can be divided into Sunday school, or in-church education, elementary and secondary education, and also seminary education. Also of note is that the U.M.M.B.E. (Union of Female Baptist Missionaries of Spain) is not the only Spanish Baptist Women's organization, and there is a growing multitude of Baptist organizations that focus on women, students, and youth.

The international work of the U.E.B.E. is widespread and varied. According to the organizations' International Missions Page, the U.E.B.E. has missionaries serving in "Camerún, Guinea Ecuatorial, Malawi, Mozambique, República Centroafricana, Sierra Leona y Sudáfrica" (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi, Mozambique, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leon, and South Africa.) The work in Africa centers on the building of schools, hospitals, clinics, and technical centers, the education of pastors through church-planting and the building of seminaries, and AIDS/HIV education, as well as work with orphans and organizational projects.

In South America, work is taking place in Cuba, Brazil, Bolivia, and Argentina. Here the U.E.B.E. missionaries work with orphans, the aged, pre-schools, and biblical study centers, as well as general work in churches and pastoral care. The U.E.B.E.'s work in Portugal is focused mainly on children and education; while in Azerbaijan the training of autonomous, native pastors is considered to be of great importance. Internationally, the U.E.B.E. is also working in Iraq and India with a focus on the education of children and the training of pastors.

The domestic work of Baptists in Spain is never ending. Currently, an in-depth missionary program is being planned for the summer of 2011. The U.E.B.E. plans to go to areas

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with little Baptist exposure. The planned locations are Toledo, Feluco, Valencia, Zaragoza, Vigo, and Cosecha. While a Baptist church or multiple churches are present in these areas, the main focus of these summer mission trips will be evangelization, community building, and work programs in areas like building and cleaning.

Spanish Baptists are working with the Baptist World Alliance, the European Alliance of Baptist Missionaries International, and many other groups to utilize their schools and expand their vision. Part Three of this project will deal directly with several Baptist pastors and leaders in Spain. This interaction will cover areas such as missionary work (domestic and international), projected areas of growth in the community, the personal effects of religious liberty (or a lack thereof) on these individuals and their churches, and the thoughts and beliefs of some of the most prominent Baptist leaders in Spain, about Spain.

After outlining the political and social implications of the various government changes Spain has undergone, we can better understand how this has affected Spanish Baptists. However, their stories, as written by historians and politicians are not enough to explain fully the current political and social climate for Spanish Baptists. Therefore, utilizing both pastoral case studies and the publication materials from the U.E.B.E. and their affiliates, a modern picture of what it means to be Baptist in post-Franco Spain emerge.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Baptists in Modern Spain: Education, Missions, and Enduring Issues**

In this final section of this study, we will examine the results of years of struggle for religious liberty. Protestantism, Islam, Judaism, and at times, Catholicism, have all suffered and flourished under Spain's continually changing laws of religious liberty. While the 1978 Constitution solidified religious liberty as a constitutional right, Baptists and other religious minorities in Spain are struggling for equal treatment. This examination of their struggle will focus on the education provided by the Theological Seminary of the U.E.B.E., current domestic and international mission work, statistical church data, and the current state of interfaith relations in modern-day Spain. Most interestingly, the results of three case studies of different Baptist pastors in U.E.B.E. will be analyzed in light of Spanish religious liberty, as it is understood in the social conscience.

## The Seminary

The training of Spanish pastors has long been an important objective of the U.E.B.E. As noted earlier, one of the original goals of Everett Gill and John Knapp was to teach and train Spanish pastors and missionaries. In order to do this, a seminary was established. The Theological Seminary of the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union is located in the suburb of Alcobendas, (Madrid) Spain. The Seminary is close to parks, schools, recreational facilities, and various, metro, train, and bus stations. The Seminary building is both residential and educational. The library, chapel, meeting space, and classroom facilities are located on the first floor and apartments for singles, couples, and families are located on the second and third floors. Office space is also located on the second floor. The Seminary's course offerings equip Spanish pastors to minister and serve in communities all over Spain.

The Seminary has four objectives in the training of pastors, according to their website. These concepts are: 1) To become familiar with the concepts, theories, and methods most important to the field of theology; 2) To know how to apply these concepts to real life problems; 3) To know how to amplify these resources through dealing with new problems; 4) To know how to transmit the acquired knowledge, argumentation, and the methods of competent communication through different modes of teaching and diffusion. With this in mind, the different course offerings, lectures, distance-learning options, and leadership in the Seminary seek to aid students in reaching these objectives (<http://www.stuebe.org>)

The Seminary offers courses in five categories: languages (Koine Greek and Biblical Hebrew), sacred writings, history, theology, and pastoral studies. Among the courses offered are Koine Greek, Biblical Hebrew, Old Testament, New Testament, Hermeneutics, Philosophy, History of the Church, Discipleship, Homiletics, Systematic Theology, Ethics, Christian

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Education, Evangelism, Mission Studies, Christian Worship, Exegetical Methods, the Parables of Jesus, History of the Baptists, Sociology, Pastoral Ministry, Research Methodology, History of the Protestant Reformation in Spain, Theology of the New Testament/Old Testament, Contemporary Theology, and Pastoral Counseling. This list, along with tables of the course schedules for each year of study, are listed on the Seminary's previously cited webpage under "Información General: Oferta Académica."

The faculty and leadership in the Seminary are multi-talented. The director of the seminary is also a professor and participant in seminary life. Julio Diaz Pineiro is the director of the seminary and also the resident professor of Church History. Professor Diaz has served as pastor (of El Buen Pastor, 1989-1994), professor, and administrator (as Vice-president of the U.E.B.E., 1997-2001). Since the pastors, teachers, and administrators are all very involved in Seminary life, it is an environment of constant learning.

The Academic Dean of the Seminary is Dr. David Dixon, who received his doctorate from Southwestern Theological Seminary. He currently serves as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Madrid and as professor of Systematic Theology, Research Methodology, and Koine Greek. Dr. Dixon's wife, Susie Dixon, is also a professor in the Seminary. She teaches courses in Christian Education and development. The faculty also includes twelve more professors who work diligently in the formation of pastors and educators in Spain.

The Seminary's website, <http://www.stuebe.org>, includes not only educational and spiritual objectives, but also biographical information about the faculty and current students. The Seminary's link to the U.E.B.E. is clear, as can be seen from the multitude of Baptist pastors and leaders that graduated from the seminary. Much like the Baptist community at large, the Seminary suffered a series of hardships and difficulties over the years. Nevertheless, the

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Seminary is now a lively, thriving environment filled with families, individuals, and young couples who are studying how to best serve God in the beautifully complex country of Spain.

### **Current Mission Work**

Missionary work is a critical part of Spanish Baptist life. After many years without an outlet for evangelization, the U.E.B.E. has made spreading their message and helping others a priority. The current missionary work of the U.E.B.E. spans the globe, as well as the Spanish mainland and various islands. Mission work in Spain is directed by the Ministry of Evangelization and Missions. The offices of the MEM, as it is known, are located in San Sebastian de los Reyes, a suburb that neighbors Alcobendas, where the Seminary is located. The director of this organization is Pastor Xoan Luis Castro. Along with aiding missionaries and planning missions, the MEM also maintains recent data regarding the membership and baptisms of Baptists in Spain. The table below, from the MEM website, <http://www.ctv.es/USERS/mem/>, details the growth in the Baptist denomination since 1989.

Year	Baptisms	Members
1989	293	7000
1990	328	7405
1991	308	7552
1992	309	7700
1993	246	7928
1994	356	8065
1995	283	8092
1996	235	8159
1997	126	8100
1998	188	8365
1999	287	8401
2000	236	8471
2001	350	8844

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As the table above illustrates, while the rate of baptisms was varied, the number of church members has been steadily growing. To put this growth into perspective, we must counter the data with numerical indications about Protestant growth in other nations. Spain is considered one of the least evangelical countries in the world. The table below (also from the MEM website) shows how Spain compares numerically with China, Brazil, India, the United States, Guatemala, Colombia, and Zimbabwe.

Country	% Evangelicals
China	5%
Brazil	17.8%
India	1%
United States	30.30%
Guatemala	20%
<b><u>Spain</u></b>	<b><u>0.23%</u></b>
Colombia	15%
Zimbabwe	14.30%

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The work of the Ministry of Evangelization and Missions extends to nearly every corner of Spain. The following is a list of geographic locations, but since similar work is being done in many areas, the description of overall goals is critical as well. The MEM is currently working through specific projects in the cities of Alcobendas, Almazora, Almeria, Alendralejo, Badajoz, Benidorm, Eurovillas, Gandia, Guadalajara, Huesca, La Linea de la Concepcion, Merida, Orihuela, Oviedo, Valladolid, Vigo, Vitoria, Requena, Santander, Tarragona, Turo de la Peira, Toledo, Tres Cantos, Vall de Uxo, Xativa, and Zafra.

The city of Eurovillas is a particularly interesting mission point for the Ministry. Led by Antonio Martín y Martha Pérez , the Comunidad Cristiana Emanuel has 15 members that meet every week. Their goals include evangelizing in the streets at least one Saturday of every month, and establishing a radio station. They hope to reach others in the neighboring "urbanizaciones" (housing developments) through personal contact and through the radio station. Also, with the help of Hermana Cristina, a member of the Comunidad Cristiana Emanuel, they are able to offer the service of psychological counseling to church members and others in the community.

Guadalajara is a city of about 72,000 inhabitants with a strong Catholic tradition. The goals of Jose Ramiro Gomez Nova Esposa and Esther Bouret, husband and wife co-pastors in Guadalajara, include door to door visitation, establishing courses in discipleship, and organizing courses in worship leadership. They also plan to develop stronger ties to Toledo and Cuenca in order to maximize resources. Many pastors and missionaries are located in areas similar to Guadalajara. These smaller communities often have no Baptist churches. Therefore, these missionaries must take the initiative to form new and promising communities of Baptist believers.

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One of the frequent prayer requests seen on the Ministry of Evangelization and Missions webpage is a request for the immigrants in their communities. Although the number of immigrants entering Spain began to slow in 2009, across the previous decade Spain's immigrant population rose from just 1% to 12% of the country's total population (Worden). As reported in the case studies completed by Baptist pastors working in Spain, immigrants also make up a large portion of the congregations of many Baptist churches in Spain.

Despite the small size of the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union, its churches share a focus for mission work not only on the national level, but also on the international level. Along with the international mission work mentioned in part two of this project, the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union recently saw more churches commit to supporting its mission in Equatorial Guinea. As the following case studies indicate, this support, along with support of many other missions both in Spain and abroad, has the potential to contribute to the growth of Spanish Baptist churches in the future.

### **Religious Liberty in 2011: Insights from Three Key Leaders**

The following section consists of three case studies from prominent Baptist pastors in Spain. The responses from these three pastors are varied and complex, stemming from different churches with different congregation sizes, but revealing similar goals. Each of the churches is a member of the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union. All three churches are also members of international organizations which focus on missions, education, and pastoral training. Since most responses were submitted in Spanish, they have been translated into English to serve

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English-speaking students seeking to learn more about Baptists in Spain or the Seminary. The case studies deal with several subject areas pertinent to the current growth of the Baptist denomination in Spain, but also deals with past struggles caused by laws directed at non-Catholics. Each respondent answered the same questions, but the responses are incredibly varied due to the pastors' personal views, opinions, and locations.

**Case Study: Dr. David Dixon, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church, Madrid, Spain**

*1. What demographic group is growing most rapidly in your churches? (For example, immigrants, adults, young people/youth, or individuals from other denominations?)*

“Since our church is international and English-language, it is composed primarily of immigrants, so that growth is natural and expected. Also, we receive a lot of people from other denominations because of being an English-language church in a Spanish country. The age group that is especially notable among us for its increasing numbers is the young adult group (singles & married, approximately from university age [19-20] to 40+).”

*2. Are there advantages to being part of a larger group, like the U.E.B.E.?*

“Definitely. It helps keep our focus from becoming too narrow; it keeps us thinking about Spain’s need for evangelization and church planting, as well as participating in the common effort.”

*3. Are there disadvantages?*

Since Dr. Dixon’s church, Immanuel Baptist, is an English-speaking church, he believes that they occasionally face the problem of having different goals and needs than the other member churches. Specifically, they face the disadvantage of “keeping the congregation informed and of staying connected with a union of Spanish-speaking churches when our situation is so different from most of theirs.”

*4. What are some of the challenges faced as a Protestant in a Catholic country?*

Pastor David Dixon believes that a lack of dialogue and understanding is the cause of many of the struggles faced by Protestants in Spain. He states, “Too often we don’t understand the Catholic perspective, just as they don’t understand ours. So we tend to put each other ‘in a box.’ Of course, this has especially been the historical treatment of the Spanish state toward the Protestant church, so that even with the religious freedom we now have in Spain, the weight of social acceptance and favor still lies heavily with the Catholic Church. Overcoming that social prejudice and the overall indifference to religion generated by centuries of Catholicism is probably the greatest challenge we face.”

*5. Were you or your church personally affected by Spanish laws that limited religious freedom in the past?*

Dr. David Dixon tells us that despite the many restrictions of the past, his Church escaped some of the harassment that other churches dealt with because of the language barrier. Basically, because the church is English-speaking, many Spaniards did not understand the message well enough to be bothered with objecting to the message. However, Dixon notes, “Yes, Immanuel felt the same restrictions as other Protestants in Spain. But the leadership of the church in that period appealed to government authorities to let the church put a sign out front advertising our name and service schedule. Because of our English-language status and our ministry to ex-pats, the church was allowed to put up a public sign with the basic information about the church – because it was in English and the authorities assumed it would not be understood or of any

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interest to Spaniards. Immanuel was the first Protestant church in all of Spain to be allowed to put up such a sign.”

*6. Do you feel comfortable expressing your faith outside the walls of the church?*

Dr. Dixon elaborates on the Spanish “comfort zone” and expresses the need for an outlet to share faith among other believers. While comfortable expressing his faith, Dixon notes that, “There are some places where it still feels ‘out of place,’ because of Spaniards’ strong sense of ‘separation of church and everything else in life.’ Sharing one’s faith in God outside the walls of the church definitely goes against the Spanish grain socially. That’s why evangelicals are trying to ‘create spaces’ where it can be socially acceptable to explore the spiritual basis of life – camps, retreats, excursions, coffee bars, etc.”

*7. Do you anticipate growth in your church, or among Baptists, in Spain in the next 15 years?*

*Why or why not?*

“Yes, even though our church will have to weather the closing of the NATO base here in Spain, with all the ex-pat military people that go with it, we still expect to keep growing through the large international population that is naturally attracted to a huge metropolis like Madrid, as well as through the growing numbers of Spaniards (and others) who are attracted to Immanuel because of English. We also expect Baptists to continue growing, even if at a gradual rate, because of our open style of relating and living out the Gospel.”

*8. In what areas do you focus the missionary work of your church? Is it national or international?*

Pastor Dixon and Immanuel Baptist emphasize both national and international missions. He describes first the national work being done, and then the international work when he states, “On the national focus, we have occasional bilingual services, as well as Spanish small groups, that are intended to help our people reach out to national friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Also we have an evangelistic group that goes regularly to the markets to pass out Christian literature and engage people in spiritual dialogue. We celebrate spring and fall festivals, VBS (Vacation Bible School), family hikes, blood drives, etc., to invite friends and reach out to people around us, whatever their national origin.

On the international focus, we recently sent a mission group to Morocco for several days, primarily to share “good will” and pray (since a direct witness there is not possible). We help support an international church plant in Panama City. We have had special emphases to collect food and clothes to send to several places in Africa (primarily where we have members here from those countries). We also help support our UEBE international missions focus on Equatorial Guinea, taking up an annual offering, as well as supporting the building of schools and their breakfast program for the children.

*9. Please describe your church’s relationship with Baptist churches and organizations in other countries.*

Being an English-speaking church, Immanuel Baptist Church has many international ties. Dr. Dixon elaborates on the importance of this when he states, “Being an international church, we

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are also part of an international convention of English-language churches, with its headquarters in Germany. We cooperate with these other churches primarily in terms of missions, but we also promote their special assemblies, summer programs, leadership training, etc., among our congregation. We are also a participating church in the Baptist World Alliance, cooperating with yearly fees to help support their work (especially in relief) and with an annual hunger offering.”

**Case Study, Pastor Elías Roselló Díaz, Iglesia Evangélica Bautista de Murcia, Spain**

*1. What demographic group is growing most rapidly in your churches? (For example, immigrants, adults, young people/youth, or individuals from other denominations?)*

In the Evangelical Baptist Church of Murcia, Pastor Elías Roselló Díaz notes that immigrants to Spain are the most rapidly growing demographic in his congregation. He notes, however, that many of these immigrants are not coming from other churches or denominations. In his words, “Conocen al Señor en la nuestra.” Basically, “They come to know the Lord in our church.”

*2. Are there advantages to being part of a larger group, like the U.E.B.E.?*

Díaz states that the principal advantage of being a part of the U.E.B.E. is the reality belonging to a larger body. With the larger structure, smaller churches can multiply their efforts to participate in national and international missions. This also allows believers to amplify their individual view and become part of a large and diverse family.

*3. Are there disadvantages?*

Díaz notes that excessive programming can be a disadvantage to being part of a larger organization. He says that the many meetings and activities can often overlap, even at the local level, making it difficult to attend to everything.

*4. What are some of the challenges faced as a Protestant in a Catholic country?*

Díaz tells us that it is difficult to be recognized as a Protestant in Spain. Spanish culture identifies being Catholic as being Hispanic. To not be Catholic, you must be a ‘freak from beyond the grave!’ (He later notes that this is a joking exaggeration.) However, due to simple

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ignorance, Baptists are generally viewed with suspicion. He also states that the media does not help matters because they generally are wary of Baptists, assuming that they are a cult. Happily, Baptists are increasingly seen as a valid Christian group apart from Catholicism, a perception which is garnering more sympathy.

*5. Were you or your church personally affected by Spanish laws that limited religious freedom in the past?*

Díaz's congregation was founded in the 1950's. This was a time of turbulence and unrest. It was also a time before the Spanish law of Religious Liberty was passed. In what seems like something out of World War II conspiracy movie, he tells us that Franco's secret police sometimes came to spy on sermons. He also states that it was very difficult for former pastors of his church to perform weddings, since non-Catholic marriages were often not recognized.

*6. Do you feel comfortable expressing your faith outside the walls of the church?*

Díaz notes that since there is liberty, comfort is not an issue.

*7. Do you anticipate growth in your church, or among Baptists, in Spain in the next 15 years? Why or why not?*

Díaz is not optimistic about any rapid growth of Baptist churches in Spain in the next 15 years. The church is growing, he notes, but slowly. With regards to the U.E.B.E., Díaz believes that the organization must change its structure in order to continue functioning. He believes that instead of facilitating the larger mission, organizations like the U.E.B.E. can sometimes "corset" a

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movement. Also important to note is the growth of Pentecostals, which he believes will outpace that of Baptists.

*8. In what areas do you focus the missionary work of your church? Is it national or international?*

The Evangelical Baptist Church of Murcia focuses much of its attention on a particular international mission. They have supported the missionaries to Equatorial Guinea for nearly 30 years.

*9. Please describe your church's relationship with Baptist churches and organizations in other countries.*

Díaz's congregation works mainly with the U.E.B.E. to relate to other churches and organizations. They have a direct relationship with the Sagemont Church ([www.sagemontchurch.org](http://www.sagemontchurch.org)) in Houston, Texas.

**Case Study, Pedro Gil Lloreda, Pastor, Primera Iglesia Bautista de Getafe, Spain**

1. *What demographic group is growing most rapidly in your churches? (For example, immigrants, adults, young people/youth, or individuals from other denominations?)*

Immigrants.

2. *Are there advantages to being part of a larger group, like the U.E.B.E.?*

Yes.

3. *Are there disadvantages?*

Gil tells us that it is entirely possible for an institution to become an institution for its own sake.

4. *What are some of the challenges faced as a Protestant in a Catholic country?*

Pastor Pedro Gil voices the idea that Spain is a nominally Catholic country, in the sense that only a small percentage believe in all the creeds and dogmas. He states that the Protestant church has an important challenge: showing individuals that it is important to accept Jesus Christ without intermediaries. Gil tells us that Spain is seeing more distrust in the Catholic Church, in light of recent scandals involving clergy. The responsibility of Protestants is to be a light and to promote openness, transparency, and fidelity.

5. *Were you or your church personally affected by Spanish laws that limited religious freedom in the past?*

Pastor Pedro Gil states that he was not personally affected by Spanish laws that restricted religious liberty, but his parents were. His parents were persecuted for being evangelicals and

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for attempting to spread their faith. His church also dealt with intolerance from the community and a restriction of freedom in Madrid. He notes that the American missionary, William I. Knapp, was personally harassed by the mayor of Madrid. He continues by stating that this harassment, along the political environment of the time, contributed to the closing of his church for a time.

*6. Do you feel comfortable expressing your faith outside the walls of the church?*

There is liberty, so comfort is not an issue.

*7. Do you anticipate growth in your church, or among Baptists, in Spain in the next 15 years?*

*Why or why not?*

Gil is optimistic about the growth of Baptist churches in Spain. However, he believes that the testimony of the local churches is what will lead to this growth. This growth, Gil believes, is due more to the smaller congregations than the larger U.E.B.E. body.

*8. In what areas do you focus the missionary work of your church? Is it national or international?*

Gil and his congregation support the Equatorial Guinea mission, but they also work with larger international bodies to facilitate international missions. Through the European Baptist Mission, Gil's congregation supports missionaries in Cuba, South America, Africa, and many Eastern European countries.

*9. Please describe your church's relationship with Baptist churches and organizations in other countries.*

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Pastor Gil and his congregation have also had close ties with different congregations in Texas, Alabama, and Oklahoma. Despite these ties, he notes that his church is currently theologically opposed to the views of the Southern Baptist Churches of the United States, particularly with regard to the role of women in the church and the activity of the International Mission Board. He notes that the European Baptist organizations are closer to his congregation, theologically.

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Each of these case studies analyses several of the key issues discussed in this project. Direct responses, like those of Dixon, Gil, and Díaz, can shed light on the ways in which religious liberty (or a lack thereof) affects the daily lives of individuals in Spain. Their responses also deal specifically with the legal difficulties encountered by Baptists in the past.

### **An Enduring Issue: The Church Tax**

From the case studies of Baptist leaders, the statistical data maintained by the U.E.B.E., and the shifting tide of Constitutionally-protected religious liberty in Spain, it might appear as though Spain is now in a comfortable state with regards to the question of religious liberty. This, however, is not the case. Although religious liberty is guaranteed by the Spanish Constitution, Spain is still not a completely secular state due to various enduring issues. In order to understand the relationship between Church and State in 2011, one must acknowledge what is quite possibly the most controversial piece of Spanish tax law: the Church tax.

Prior to 2006, the Catholic Church received a direct subsidy from the Spanish government, guaranteeing the Church's yearly budget needs would be met (McLean 3). In 2006, Spain ended this subsidy. However, since the government had contracted to provide sufficient funds for the Church until it was self-sustaining, conflict arose. In order to avoid directly subsidizing the Catholic Church, Spain increased the amount Spaniards can allocate directly to the Catholic Church. The amount increased from 0.52% to 0.70% on the Spanish income tax. The same legislation also required the Catholic Church to begin paying Spain's Value-Added Tax (McLean 3).

The church tax is still in place today. While this is a cause for much controversy among Protestants, many feel that receiving this benefit (if it were offered) is contrary to their theology. Accepting a "church tax" could compromise the Protestants' hard earned sovereignty by requiring a closer affiliation with the Spanish government. According to a 1990 edition of the *New York Times*, Protestants refused to have their own "church tax." The protesting Protestants

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stated, “A non-confessional state should value religion, but not subsidize it,” and, “Every church that receives money from the state compromises itself with the state” (McMahon 5). This mentality is echoed and extended when we consider the generally-held views of many Baptists regarding church-state relations. According to [www.baptistdistinctives.org](http://www.baptistdistinctives.org), in an article from the *Baptist Faith and Message*, “the Baptist belief in religious liberty, and its corollary, the separation of church and state, come from the Baptist commitment to the authority of the Bible.”

Although the government in Spain is slowly stepping away from directly supporting the Catholic Church, the option to give taxpayer euros to a single and particular religious organization (the Catholic Church) still exists. As long as the government of Spain supports taxation methods that favor any religious group (especially at the exclusion of others), true religious liberty cannot be found. As Pedro Gil noted in his survey response, Protestants, especially Baptists, are viewed as a sect or cult, but they are gaining sympathy and attention due to their transparency and openness. Taxation and media problems will continue to be enduring issues in Spain, but this beautiful country is well on its way to becoming a society that does not only embrace a single religion, but supports all believers, non-believers, the confused, and the disillusioned in their journey to be productive, Spanish citizens.

## Conclusion

From the day the first alliance with the Holy See was established, Spain effectively solidified its position as a Roman Catholic nation. The mentality that to be Spanish is to be Roman Catholic still persists today, as evident from both public policy and from the survey responses of Baptist pastors. However, as Baptists and other Protestants, Muslims, Jews, and other religious groups increase in number in Spain, the country's diversity of thought will also surely expand. This is already evident in the relatively new Constitutional protections of religious liberty.

The protection of individuals, especially those with minority views, is a trademark of a democratic society. According to Anthony J. McGann in his book, *The Logic of Democracy: Reconciling Equality, Deliberation, and Minority Protections*, "There are other values we need to take into account besides political equality, notably, the protection of minorities and the protection of rights" (McGann 89). Protecting religious liberty even during political turmoil, government takeovers, war, and general public unrest must be insured constitutionally, if it is to be insured at all.

Spain guarantees the protection of religious minorities to worship, evangelize peacefully, perform wedding ceremonies, and buy property. By tracing the many and varied Constitutions of Spain, we have seen the effectiveness of permitting liberty and outlawing discrimination. From the time of Muslim Spain, to the Second Republic, to the hard hand of Francisco Franco, Spain has witnessed an astoundingly large variety of governing styles. In the end, both the

Catholic Church and the Spanish government concluded that separation guarantees more freedom than collusion.

The outlook for Spain's Baptists is decidedly optimistic. As Spain attracts more immigrants and the Baptists continue to promote their transparent and loving lifestyle, the Baptist churches from Madrid to Murcia to Barcelona expect continuous growth. The passion displayed by the Spanish Baptist Evangelical Union, the Ministry of Evangelization and Missions, and the increasing popularity of student organizations guarantees a vibrant and diverse outlook for Spain's Baptist residents. Furthering one's theological education through seminary study, small group discussions, and mission opportunities is now a possibility in Spain in a way it never was before. The transparency, education, and kindness offered by the Spanish Baptists opens this nation to even more opportunities for interpersonal communication, interfaith community building, and dialogue regarding the protection of all faiths.

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### **Number of Baptist Churches by Province**

- The following provinces have one Baptist/U.E.B.E. member church: Almeria, Belears, Gulpúzcoa, Orense, Pontevedra, Santander, and Valladolid.
- Two member churches: Alava, Asturias, Cáceres, Granada, Guadalajara, Huesca, Lleida, Navarra, Sevilla, Tarragona, Toledo, and Zaragoza.
- Three member churches: Córdoba, Las Palmas, and Málaga
- Four, five, or six member churches: A Coruña, Albacete, Badajoz, Cádiz, Castellon, Girona, Murcia, Vizcaya
- Tenerife: nine member churches
- Alicante: 11 member churches
- Madrid, Valencia: 22 member churches
- Barcelona: 27 member churches

## **Case Study Responses: David Dixon**

**Nombre:** David C. Dixon

**Iglesia:** Immanuel Baptist Church

**¿Cuál es su posición en su iglesia?** (Senior) Pastor

**¿Cuál grupo demográfico está creciendo más rápidamente en su iglesia?** (Por ejemplo, inmigrantes, adultos, jóvenes, personas de otras denominaciones) Since our church is international and English-language, it is composed primarily of immigrants, so that growth is natural and expected. Also we receive a lot of people from other denominations because of being an English-language church in a Spanish country. The age group that is especially notable among us for its increasing numbers is the young adult group (singles & married, approximately from university age [19-20] to 40+).

**¿Hay ventajas en ser parte de un grupo más grande, como la U.E.B.E?** Definitely. It helps keep our focus from becoming too narrow; it keeps us thinking about Spain's need for evangelization and church planting, as well as participating in the common effort.

**¿Hay desventajas?** Only the challenge of keeping the congregation informed and of staying connected with a union of Spanish-speaking churches when our situation is so different from most of theirs.

**¿Cuáles son los retos de ser Protestante en un país Católico?** Too often we don't understand the Catholic perspective, just as they don't understand ours. So we tend to put each other "in a box." Of course, this has especially been the historical treatment of the Spanish state toward the Protestant church, so that even with the religious freedom we now have in Spain, the weight of social acceptance and favour still lies heavily with the Catholic church. Overcoming that social prejudice and the overall indifference to religion generated by centuries of Catholicism is probably the greatest challenge we face.

**¿Estaba usted o su iglesia personalmente afectados por la legislación española que limitaba la libertad religiosa en España en el pasado?** Yes, Immanuel felt the same restrictions as other Protestants in Spain. But the leadership of the church in that period appealed to government authorities to let the church put a sign out front advertising our name and service schedule. Because of our English-language status and our ministry to ex-pats, the church was allowed to put up a public sign with the basic information about the church – because it was in English and the authorities assumed it would not be understood or of any interest to Spaniards. Immanuel was the first Protestant church in all of Spain to be allowed put up such a sign.

**¿Se siente cómodo expresando su fe fuera de los muros de la iglesia?** Yes, but there are some places where it still feels "out of place," because of Spaniards' strong sense of "separation of church and everything else in life." Sharing one's faith in God outside the walls of the church

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definitely goes against the Spanish grain socially. That's why evangelicals are trying to "create spaces" where it can be socially acceptable to explore the spiritual basis of life – camps, retreats, excursions, coffee bars, etc.

**¿Se prevé un crecimiento en su iglesia, o entre los Bautistas, en España en los próximos 15 años? ¿Por qué o por qué no?** Yes, even though our church will have to weather the closing of the NATO base here in Spain, with all the ex-pat military people that go with it, we still expect to keep growing through the large international population that is naturally attracted to a huge metropolis like Madrid, as well as through the growing numbers of Spaniards (and others) who are attracted to Immanuel because of English.

We also expect Baptists to continue growing, even if at a gradual rate, because of our open style of relating and living out the Gospel.

**¿En qué área se centra la mayor parte del trabajo misionero de su iglesia - nacional o la internacional?** Hard to say, as we emphasize both. But on the national focus, we have occasional bilingual services, as well as Spanish small groups, that are intended to help our people reach out to national friends, co-workers, and neighbors. Also we have an evangelistic group that goes regularly to the markets to pass out Christian literature and engage people in spiritual dialogue. We celebrate spring and fall festivals, VBS, family hikes, blood drives, etc., to invite friends and reach out to people around us, whatever their national origin.

On the international focus, we recently sent a mission group to Morocco for several days, primarily to share "good will" and pray (since a direct witness there is not possible). We help support an international church plant in Panama City. We have had special emphases to collect food and clothes to send to several places in Africa (primarily where we have members here from those countries). We also help support our UEBE international missions focus on Equatorial Guinea, taking up an annual offering, as well as supporting the building of schools and their breakfast program for the children.

**Por favor, describa la relación de su iglesia con las iglesias u organizaciones Bautistas en otros países:**

Being an international church, we are also part of an international convention of English-language churches, with its headquarters in Germany. We cooperate with these other churches primarily in terms of missions, but we also promote their special assemblies, summer programs, leadership training, etc., among our congregation.

We are also a participating church in the Baptist World Alliance, cooperating with yearly fees to help support their work (especially in relief) and with an annual hunger offering.

### **Case Study Responses: Elías Roselló Díaz**

**Nombre:** Elías Roselló Díaz

**Iglesia:** Iglesia Evangélica Bautista de Murcia

**¿Cuál es su posición en su iglesia?** Pastor

**¿Cuál grupo demográfico está creciendo más rápidamente en su iglesia? (Por ejemplo, inmigrantes, adultos, jóvenes, personas de otras denominaciones)**

Inmigrantes no procedentes de otras iglesias. Conocen al Señor en la nuestra.

**¿Hay ventajas en ser parte de un grupo más grande, como la U.E.B.E?  
¿Hay desventajas?**

La principal ventaja denominacional es la de sentirte parte de un cuerpo mucho más grande en el que podemos participar en las misiones nacionales e internacionales. Además, la comunión entre las iglesias posibilita que los creyentes amplíen su mirada y se sientan parte de una familia amplia y diversa.

A veces los excesivos programas existentes pueden ser una posible desventaja. Como denominación podemos alcanzar objetivos que individualmente nunca lograríamos pero , a su vez, exige esfuerzo de tiempo y económico. Hay muchas reuniones y actividades que, en ocasiones, se solapan con otras definidas a nivel local.

**¿Cuáles son los retos de ser Protestante en un país Católico?**

El reto de darse a conocer a la sociedad como lo que somos. La cultura española identifica el catolicismo como algo hispano. Si no eres católico debes ser un bicho raro venido de ultratumba por lo menos (esto es una exageración, ¡claro!). Lo cierto es que nos miran con recelo por desconocimiento general. Los medios de comunicación no ayudan mucho en ello y suelen desconfiar de nosotros, creyendo que somos una secta.

La obra social nos ha ayudado mucho en los últimos años a comenzar a cambiar este paradigma. Comienzan a vernos cada vez más como un grupo religioso diferentes del católico y, en general, empiezan vernos con cierta simpatía.

**¿Estaba usted o su iglesia personalmente afectados por la legislación Española que limita la libertad religiosa en España en el pasado?**

Si. La congregación se fundó en la década de 1950. En ocasiones acudía la policía secreta espiando lo que se decía en el sermón y hubo más de una dificultad a la hora de intentar realizar una boda.

**¿Se siente cómodo expresando su fe fuera de los muros de la iglesia?**

Si. Hay libertad. No hay problema en ese sentido.

**¿Se prevé un crecimiento en su iglesia, o entre los Bautistas, en España en los próximos 15 años? ¿Por qué o por qué no?**

Desgraciadamente no veo que la tendencia sea de experimentar un gran avivamiento. La iglesia va creciendo, pero a un ritmo lento. Sí, creemos que habrá crecimiento porque ya lo está habiendo, pero no escandaloso.

En cuando a la UEBE como denominación soy de la opinión de que debe cambiar su estructura y las personas que la hacen funcionar. En lugar de facilitar la misión, a veces creamos “corsés” que la estrangulan. No creo que los bautistas vayamos a crecer tanto como pentecostales (por ejemplo). A mi entender falta una definición de objetivos clara, cohesión interna, agilidad en la organización y renovación de las personas que están involucradas en los órganos directivos.

**¿En qué área se centra la mayor parte del trabajo misionero de su iglesia- nacional o la internacional?**

Misiones Internacionales: Guinea Ecuatorial y las Misiones Nacionales con el apoyo a los casi 30 puntos de misión.

**Por favor, describa la relación de su iglesia con las iglesias u organizaciones Bautistas en otros países:**

Por lo general se realiza a través de la UEBE. Como Agrupación de Iglesias del Sureste (ámbito regional de la UEBE) tenemos relación con la congregación de Sagemont en Houston.

## **Case Study Responses: Pedro Gil Lloreda**

**Nombre:** PEDRO GIL LLOREDA

**Iglesia:** Primera Iglesia Bautista de Getafe

**¿Cuál es su posición en su iglesia?** PASTOR

**¿Cuál grupo demográfico está creciendo más rápidamente en su iglesia?** (Por ejemplo, inmigrantes, adultos, juvenenes, personas de otras denominaciones) inmigrantes

**¿Hay ventajas en ser parte de un grupo más grande, como la U.E.B.E? SI**

**¿Hay desventajas?** Los años hacen que las instituciones se conviertan más en un fin en sí mismo que una ayuda a, por, con, en y para, las iglesias.

**¿Cuáles son los retos de ser Protestante en un país Católico?** España es un país católico de forma nominal, es muy pequeño el porcentaje de fieles que cumplen con “todos” y “cada uno” de los dogmas y credos de la iglesia católica. La iglesia protestante tiene un reto importante y es ofrecer a la gente la convicción de tener salvación si aceptan a Jesucristo sin intermediarios. La iglesia católica deja siempre al devoto católico en una sirtuación de incertidumbre y le obliga a cumplir con un sistema de misas, costumbrtes etc... a pesar de que al final de ese recorrido sigue sin estar convencido de su salvación y de la vida eterna. Por otro lado en España comienza la desconfianza en la iglesia católica en cuanto a su ejemplo y testimonio en relación con la jerarquía piramidal. Asuntos de pederastia, escándolos sexuales... intromisión de la religión en la política y la economía etc.... El reto de la iglesia protestante en relación con la católica está en ser luz, transparencia y fidelidad a lo que dice creer, y ofrecer no solo la Palabra de Dios sino tambien ser ayuda y apoyo en las necesidades y circunstancias humans, comprometerse más con la sociedad en la que está y ser referente social.

**¿Estaba usted o su iglesia personalmente afectados por la legislación Española que limita la libertad religiosa en España en el pasado?** No, pero mi familia sí. Soy protestante de cuarta generación y mi familia vivió la persecución en el Sur de España por ser evangélico. Mi iglesia, sufrió intolerancia y recorte de libertades durante su etapa inicial en 1870 en el centro de Madrid. El misionero americano William I. Knapp sufrió el acoso del alcalde de Madrid en la época y eso, unido a otros factores (falta de liderazgo, ambiente político etc...) la iglesia tuvo que cerrar en 1879 y no hay constancia hasta 1914 de una re-fundación de la 1ª Iglesia Bautista de Madrid.

**¿Se siente cómodo expresando su fe fuera de los muros de la iglesia? SI**

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**¿Se preve un crecimiento en su iglesia, o entre los Bautistas, en España en los próximos 15 años? ¿Por qué o por qué no?** Personalmente soy muy optimista en eso. Creo que va a ver crecimiento y éste será debido sólo a la vivencia y testimonio en las iglesias locales. No creo que con la ayuda de las instituciones bautistas a nivel nacional ese crecimiento se produzca hoy por hoy.

**¿En qué area se centra la mayor parte del trabajo misionero de su iglesia- nacional o la internacional?** La UEBE (unión Evangélica Bautista de España) tiene abierto solamente un programa misionero en Guinea Ecuatorial que lleve de forma directa con misioneros nacionales. Pero a nivel internacional colabora fraternalmente y con apoyo económico a través de la Misión Bautista Europea en programas misioneros en Cuba, Sudamérica, Africa, países del Este de Europa etc...

**Por favor, describa la relación de su iglesia con las iglesias u organizaciones Bautistas en otros países:** Ha habido hermanamientos con Texas, Alabama, Ocklahoma, y nos gustaría realizar otros hermanamientos evangelísticos y fraternales en el futuro. Actualmente estamos posicionados teológicamente con opiniones muy contrarias a los bautistas del Sur e EE.UU. en lo que respecta al papel de la mujer en la iglesia y en la forma en la que realizan la actividad misionera el International Mission Board. Nos sentimos más cercanos a la familia bautista europea y sus instituciones, que vemos más afines a nosotros.

Espero que le haya servido mi contestación a sus preguntas, si desea alguna cosa más, cordialmente estoy a su disposición.

Pedro Gil Lloreda, pastor  
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[www.iebgetafe.es](http://www.iebgetafe.es) visita nuestra página, en ella puede encontrar un poco de historia de las iglesias bautistas en Madrid.

**Modern History Sourcebook:****Principles of the Spanish National Movement, According to the Act of May 17, 1958**

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I Spain is a unity of destiny in the world order. The service of the country's unity, greatness and freedom is a sacred duty and a collective undertaking for all Spaniards.

II The Spanish nation regards it as a mark of honour to obey the law of God, according to the Holy Catholic Apostolic and Roman Church, the sole true church and the faith inseparable from the national consciousness which will inspire its legislation.

III. Spain, the root of a great family of peoples, to whom she feels bound in indissoluble brotherhood, aspires to the restoration of justice and peace between the nations.

IV. The unity between the land and men of Spain is inviolable. The integrity of the country and its independence are supreme demands on the national community. The Armed Forces of Spain as the guarantee of her security and the expression of our people's heroic virtues, must possess the strength required for the best service of the country.

V. The national community is founded on man as bearer of eternal values, and on the family as the basis of social life; but individual and collective interests will always be subordinated to the common welfare of the nation, formed of past, present and future generations. The law supports the rights of all Spaniards equally.

VI. The natural entities of social life-Family, Municipality and Guild - are the basic structures of the national community. Such institutions and corporations of other kinds as meet general social needs shall be supported so that they may share efficaciously in perfecting the aims of the national community.

VII. The Spanish people, united in an order of Law informed by the postulates of authority, freedom and service, form the National State. Its form, within the immutable principles of the National Movement and the provisions of the Succession Act and the other Basic Laws, is that of the traditional, Catholic, social and representative Monarchy.

VIII. The representative character of the political order is the basic principle of our public institutions. The people's share in legislation and the other fundamental tasks of general interest shall be provided through the Family, the Municipality, the occupational Guild and other bodies that the laws may recognize, having organic representation for the purpose. All political organizations of whatever kind, apart from this representative system, shall be deemed illegal. All Spaniards shall have access to public office and functions in accordance with their merits and abilities.

IX. All Spaniards are entitled: to independent justice, which shall be available free to those without financial means; to a general and professional education, which none need fail to obtain through want of material means; to the benefits of social assistance and security; and to an equitable distribution of the national income and of taxation. The State policy and laws shall be inspired by the Christian ideal of social justice, as reflected in the Labour Charter.

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X. Work is recognized as the origin of the rank, duty and honour of Spaniards, and private property in all its forms is recognized as a right conditioned by its social function. Private enterprise, the basis of economic activity, shall be encouraged, canalized, and where necessary supplemented by State action.

XI. The Firm, an association of men and means for the purpose of production, forms a community of interests and a unity of aims. The relations between its components must be based on justice and mutual loyalty, and economic values shall be subordinated to those of the human and social order.

XII. The State shall endeavour, by all means in its power, to improve the physical and moral health of Spaniards and to ensure them the best conditions of work; to promote the country's economic progress by the improvement of agriculture, the extension of irrigation work and the social reform of the countryside; to seek the fairest use and distribution of the public credit; to safeguard and encourage prospecting and mining; to intensify the process of industrialization, to patronize scientific research and to promote maritime activities, as befits the large sea-faring population of Spain and her record as a sea power.

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**Source:**

Text of the Principles of the National Movement was made available in translation through the courtesy of the Embassy of Spain, Washington, D.C.

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### **Important Dates in the History of Religious Liberty in Spain**

- 414 C.E.: The Visigoths arrive in what is now known as modern Spain
- 598 C.E.: Spain officially aligns with the Roman Catholic Church
- 711 C.E.: Spain is invaded by the Muslims of Northern Africa
- 1492 C.E.: The last of the ruling Muslims leave Spain
- 1478-1502 C.E.: Isabella of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon pass a series of increasingly anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim laws, eventually leading to the Spanish Inquisition
- 1559 C.E.: The first auto de fe takes place in Valladolid
- 1812 C.E.: The Cadiz Constitution is ratified, further solidifying the relationship between the Spanish government and the Roman Catholic Church
- 1834 C.E.: The Spanish Inquisition is abolished
- 1845 C.E.: The Constitution of 1845 drops the prohibition against the practice of other religions
- 1869 C.E.: Religious freedom is declared a civil right in the Constitution of 1869
- 1876 C.E.: The protection of religious liberty is withdrawn from the Constitution
- 1931 C.E.: The monarchy falls and the Second Republic is established
- 1936-1939 C.E.: Spain is consumed by civil war
- 1936 C.E.: General Francisco Franco becomes ruler of Spain, “por la gracia de Dios” (by the grace of God)
- 1962-1965 C.E.: The Roman Catholic Church holds the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) to address the Church’s relationship with the modern world. It was this council that forced Spain to change various laws in order to comply with the new standards of the Church
- 1967 C.E.: Spain’s “Law of Religious Liberty” is passed
- 1975 C.E.: Franco dies
- 1978 C.E.: A new Constitution that declares, “no faith shall be made the State’s own” is ratified under King Juan Carlos
- 1980 C.E.: The Law of Religious Liberty is altered to remove some of the “privileges” of the Roman Catholic Church

**Important Dates in Spanish Baptist History**

- 1867 C.E.: William Ireland Knapp is the first Baptist missionary to firmly establish himself in Spain
- 1870 C.E.: The first Baptist church in Spain is founded in Madrid
- 1876 C.E.: There are nearly 250 Baptists in Spain
- 1921 C.E.: Everett Gill arrives in Spain with the goal of unifying the Spanish Baptist churches
- 1922 C.E.: The Spanish Baptist Seminary begins classes
- 1929 C.E.: The Seminary closes due to financial difficulties
- 1986 C.E.: The Federation of Evangelical Religious Entities of Spain is founded

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