

## Personal Observation on the Spanish Church

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*Photo date and location unknown*

There has been much confusion here because the Catholic Church has been the only one which has the right to decide about a man's life. Here the Church has had an absolute influence for many centuries; therefore, Spain is the most important nation for the Vatican. Nearly all of the youth of this generation were educated in colleges run by nuns and monks. Therefore, most of them don't want to know anything about the Church, God, or religion. They had experienced so deeply the injustice and conflicts caused by those who were said to be the representatives of God and Christ, but who showed them a life of contradiction.

Also, the strict Catholic education in the families no longer satisfies the children. The parents have a very strict authority, based on religious obedience to the laws of an absolute Church. Usually the children don't leave their homes, even though they have conflicts. The relationship in the family is very strong.

Any other religion was disliked and forbidden until June 1967. In that year a law was passed permitting religious freedom in Spain. But even though there was freedom, the groups who came to bring the gospel to Spanish towns and villages were not very welcomed. The Protestant Church had to fight much, and now has about 30,000 members. The Jehovah's Witnesses work from door to door. Their success has been quite good, but many people don't like them. Other groups include the Mormons, Baptists, Pentecostals, Adventists, and Baha'is. Recently, oriental religions are increasing, the Guru Maharaj-ji's group, and others. Young people are following them, and some that we meet wear buttons with their master's face.

Many Catholics have never read the Bible; they just believe what their priests tell them. On the other hand, many priests have been leaving the Church over the years because they see the real "truth" and are working together with Communists or leftists. They help the working people, whose conditions are very bad. Many are in prison for their fight for justice. There are voices who wish the dissolution of celibacy. Others marry. Still, the Church and the government are working together, quite dependent on each other.

In spite of all that, the Communists are growing more and more in all areas-in the Church, schools, working places, government, and especially in the universities. Communist propaganda can be found inside and outside the university.

There are illicit meetings and assemblies. The people who are found doing this are caught by the police, who put them in prison or do with them whatever they like. It's the only possibility to do something to change the situation in this nation that many students and other people see. They have no other source of information than this false ideology.

Politics, economy, culture, science, etc., are very poorly developed. So the Communists have a good base on which they can work, and are even working in Churches.

We feel very deeply all the problems, and we have to work hard and quickly to give truth and love to our brothers and sisters.