

## **Cuba**

I just returned from a week in Cuba. I met with a number of sport federation officials and with people whose churches are doing ministry in sports. There is such a hunger for ministry in sport there that I was stunned. Their society has been so secularized that the integration of matters of faith have been totally removed from their approach to sport. Now when I or others speak about how one's faith can be woven into the fabric of the sportsperson's life, it's like fresh, cool water to their souls and they want more.

I took the recently translated devotional book, "Corazon de un Campeon" (Heart of a Champion in English), with me and gave twenty copies to various people. They all received it gladly and some were very enthusiastic about its potential for the individual players' lives as well as for use in groups. Two different sports federation presidents were thrilled to discuss the integration of faith and sport, a radical concept for their sport culture.

One pastor drove seven hours to Habana to meet with us. I was thinking, "I wouldn't drive seven hours to meet with me, but he did." Such a demonstration of commitment and hunger spoke deeply to me and I was ready to commit similarly to him and to his church. We are making plans to work together to train sport chaplains and sport mentors in the near future.

Every time I'm in less privileged environments than what I daily experience in the USA, I am taken back by the hunger, drive, perseverance, determination and passion of the men and women of sport in these places and even more so by the Christian sports people. This last group's passion for sport and for achievement is amplified by their love for Christ and their passion to honor Him as they compete.

My challenge for today is to seek out the hungry and thirsty among those we serve in our home communities. If we live in the wealthiest of countries or in the poorest, there are hungry and thirsty coaches, players, physios, support staff and more who desperately want the life we carry in our souls. Let's give it away freely. We have a promise of rivers of living water which we can distribute broadly, at will.

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