



February 1, 2019

Dear Ministry Partners,

I'm writing in a state of absolute astonishment.

I will try to convey to you what I was so stunned to behold. *I've been praying that God would give me the words!*

I just got back from Cuba—and there I witnessed evidence of a harvest beyond anything I could have prepared myself for . . . a harvest that God has used you to produce. Over the years that you and other generous friends have partnered with me and with our ministry teams, God has been honoring your faithfulness—using your support to get the Gospel out far and wide in Cuba!

This isn't just a matter of Manny being "excitable." The entire group traveling with us in Cuba was overwhelmed by what we saw! A friend named Tom Golden had been invited by one of our longtime supporters; at the end of the experience they turned to him and asked, "What do you think?" *I wish you could have seen what happened in the next several moments. . . .*

Tom almost froze as he searched for the right words. He was mesmerized by his mental survey of what he had seen and heard. He looked down . . . then he looked up . . . and finally . . .

. . . He gave up! He offered just one word, simply and deeply: **"Speechless!"**

Here's how it happened. I shared with you a few weeks ago our amazing discovery in Spain, when we gathered about 60 students and graduates to share what's going on in their ministries. To see the entire scope, the panorama, of the harvest work that you have empowered—it was breathtaking.

So traveling to Cuba, I decided to ask our workers for a similar review. I knew the picture they painted would be BIG. We've been getting reports of an average of 30,000 people trusting Christ every single month.

But I also knew the report could be disheartening—it could be the story of a sudden downturn in ministry results—because of the **painful crisis which has gripped the island nation of Cuba.**

Let me show you how this crisis has developed:



We normally stay at a hotel in Villa Clara in the middle of the island. Over the years, we have typically paid \$50 per night. But then the Obama administration relaxed travel restrictions, unleashing multitudes of American tourists on the country. Over a period of a couple of years, prices soared. The old \$50 room increased to \$200—then \$300—then \$500! Incredible!

Cuba's aging infrastructure was already stressed—Europeans had been traveling freely there for years—but now, the doors opened to U.S. tourists, and Cuba was overwhelmed.

Still, many Cubans figured they could make truckloads of money as the market kept booming.

But then—the bubble burst. The rise in demand, which had come on so quickly, crashed even more quickly. (I think word had gotten out in the U.S. tourism industry that Cuban hotel rooms costing hundreds of dollars a night were not even up to the basic standard of an ordinary American Motel 6.)

Now, even in the “high season” for tourism, our hotel in the middle of the island has come down to \$65 per night. Yet even with such low prices, **this same hotel, with the capacity for hundreds of guests, housed a total of just six people**—our ministry team, nobody else—on our last night there.

The crash is deep. It is real. And it is painful. I know Satan rejoiced to see it. The whole country is feeling the shock . . . financially . . . emotionally . . . and spiritually.

But whenever people realize they're not as clever as they thought when they realize they don't have the control over their lives that they thought they had, *they finally remember God.*

As a result of the crash, the harvest fields in Cuba (which as you know were already ripe) are ripening at a more dramatic rate than ever! **The harvest has been energized because of the crisis the Cubans have to endure.**

We saw the results firsthand. This mission trip was perfectly timed; we were clearly on a divine timetable. Our evangelistic activities were planned and led by the Holy Spirit. In four short days, our small ministry team of five saw 345 people come to faith in Christ! (Typically 10 times as many are led to faith in a month, but by a total of 650 ministry workers! This is evidence of an incredible intensifying of the move of the Holy Spirit in Cuba today!)



I could hardly believe my eyes as some fifty percent of the people in every crowd raised their hands to indicate that they had prayed with us to receive the Lord!

We saw these types of results again and again in our own ministry last week—but the reports from elsewhere, from all over the island, were like *flashes of glory*.

Instead of the downturn I thought they might report as a result of the crash, they reported *astounding advances*!

We gathered 100 or so workers in the west of the island and another 100 toward the center. Each worker began by sharing personal history: how they began their work; the breakthrough of establishing their first church; and then the multiplication of the ministry as they established daughter churches.

Some of these church planters were reporting on three generations of church plants—***churches planted by churches planted by churches planted through your generous support of the ministry!***

- ☐ Several reports came from women. (In the Cuban culture, women typically don't pastor churches. Yet like Lydia, the seller of purple in Acts 16, they are still absolutely instrumental agents of church planting.) A woman named Ruth in the town of Cuatro Caminos takes a little longer than others to plant each church—so she has planted “only” six churches so far!

Yet each of these churches is dynamic! The last time I visited her, we baptized 22 people! One of the 22 is a lieutenant colonel in the Cuban army. On this visit, Ruth passed along the colonel's personal greetings to me—and reported on the latest development in his walk with the Lord: **He is now pastoring a nearly 200-member church!**

(Many of those who pastored the first churches we planted in Cuba years ago are today the “elder statesmen” of the movement. This is not the result of any official designation on our part, this is simply the result of everyone clearly recognizing that God has anointed and appointed these individuals to shepherd His work in this country.)

One large church has seven meetings each Sunday with an average of 300 people at each service—that's a congregation of 2,100 in church every Sunday! They've been “hiving off” daughter churches in strategic neighborhoods of the capital city of Havana.

- ☐ A church planter named Naranjo has developed a wonderful church of some 170 members. They built their church building with their own hands. But then,



just when everything was perfect, the man who had “donated” the land demanded they get out!

The congregation came together to pray and plan. The Spirit spoke to them and affirmed that the church was not a building; *they themselves were the church*. They realized that their lives were not planted in a certain piece of dirt.

So they moved—and reassembled intact—in another place.

- On our last night in Cuba, we invited five churches of the Santa Clara region to come together. It was a celebration: These were the latest five churches officially registered by the government under the Cuban system.

Only four of the five churches were able to make it; the fifth church’s bus broke down. But frankly, I don’t know how we could have handled one more church! So many people jammed into the auditorium, only sixty percent of them could find seating; the rest of us stood for the entire service!

Oh, that was a glorious worship service! But here’s the icing on the cake: The Christians had invited their non-Christian friends—and **126 people made decisions** to receive the Lord in that meeting!

*God is on the move in Cuba! **Satan’s schemes are defeated!*** Out of an economic crisis, we see the hand of the Lord in wonderful blessings. The pain and the trials almost seem to enhance the beauty of the divine tapestry that is being unveiled before us.

But challenges continue—and in one specific way, I need your help today.

**We have just
suffered our own
sort of “crash.”**

A partner organization has been contributing \$10,000 a month toward our ministry together in Cuba for the past 10 years.

Now, they are moving out, focusing their resources in Europe. (In the beautiful afterglow of our visit to Cuba, I can’t help but think they’re losing out in a big way!)

So we must make up this lost support. I’m asking every friend of our ministry to prayerfully consider what part he or she can play in closing this gap. **The beautiful work in Cuba—a work God has established through you—MUST CONTINUE.**



I'm not afraid. We've seen setbacks like this from time to time over the years. God has wonderfully come to our aid each time. And we see how wonderfully He is moving in the harvest in Cuba. We know His heart is there! We know as we serve in Cuba that we are not on our own—we are joining *God* in *His* work!

I simply ask you to allow the Lord to use you to meet some portion of this need—and to continue our work around the world.

Our greatest joy comes from seeing the wonderful panorama of so many works that God is doing—beyond what we could ask or think. May we reach out for yet many, many more victories! *Eternal results are the most important results!*

“Only one life, ’twill soon be passed. **Only what’s done for Christ will last!**”
Thank you in advance for whatever you can give today, according to the leading of the Lord!

Rejoicing in the Soul Harvest,

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. We must not allow the amazing work in Cuba to falter. Thank you for your kindred heart! Thank you for your faith! Hebrews 11 tells us, “without faith it is impossible to please God.” *I know the Lord takes pleasure in you, as the lost are led to Christ, as new churches are established, as the darkness is dispelled by the Light of His love!*