

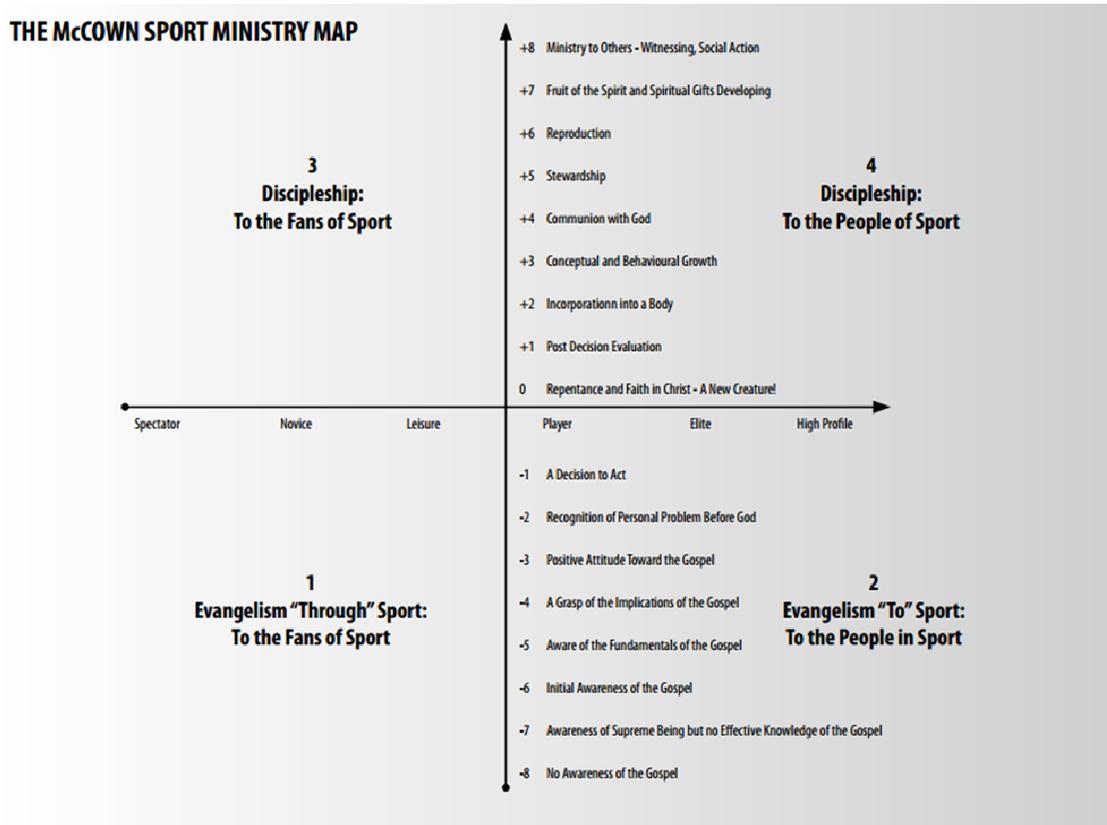
Aims:

- To give an understanding into the life of a sportsperson.
- To give an understanding into the needs of a sportsperson.

MODEL OF MINISTRY MAP

Sportspeople are those who would be identified as competitive athletes (not leisure or recreational) in quadrants 2 and 4 on the McCown/Gin Sports Ministry Map.

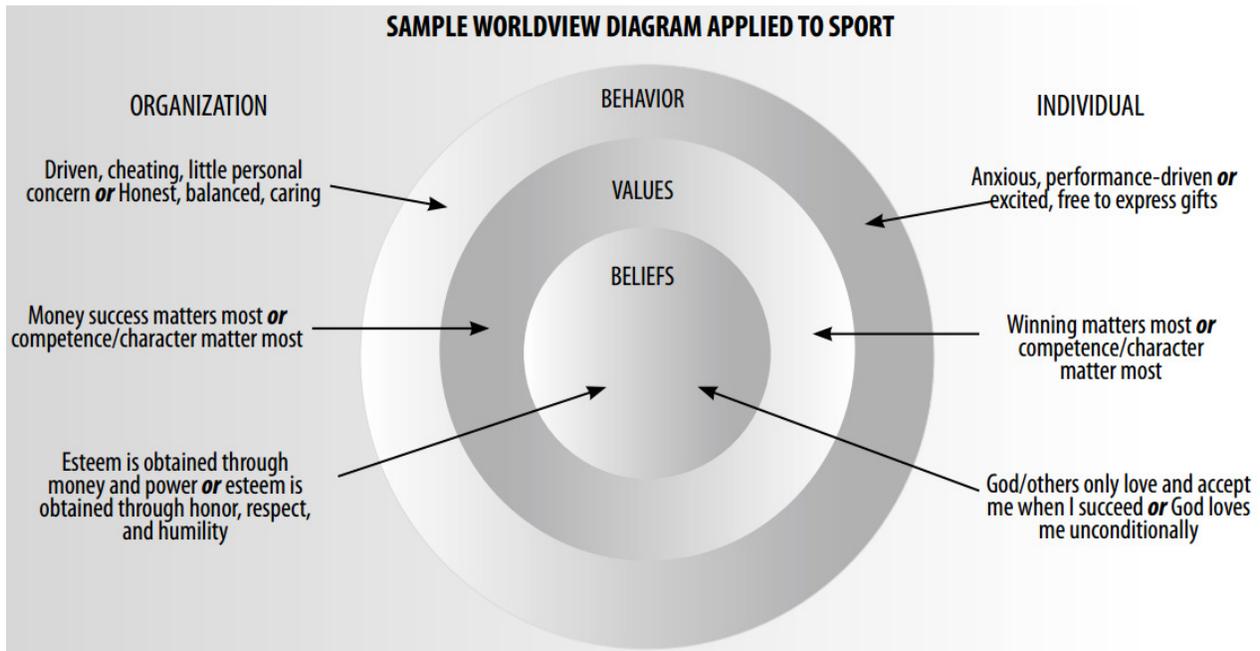
1. **Figure 1 – McCown Sport in Ministry Map**



There are people in sport in every sector of the McCown's Ministry Map. Similar to the Engel Scale, we can identify sports people according to their mindset toward competitive participation in sport along with where they are placed in terms of their relationship with God. Elite, high profile athletes who are active and committed Christians would fall into quadrant 4. Sportspeople involved in competitive sport, may have an awareness of God and an

understanding of the basics of the Gospel, but have not yet made a commitment to follow Christ, would fall into quadrant 2.

- A sportsperson’s identity is connected to his or her performance and is not directly related to age, gender, or level of sport. Their self-worth changes with their sports performance, referred to as “performance based identity” (a mindset driven by heart motivators).
- They see themselves and the world first and foremost through their sports experience.
- They are complex individuals – what we see is not always what we get. The sportsperson (depending on their level of sport, i.e. high profile) may appear different to the average person because in many ways they are different than the average person.
- Sportspeople need a sense of worth apart from competition:
 - They need to know they are loved for who they are, not what they do
 - They need to know they are important to others regardless of how they perform



Worldview of a sportsperson

Sports people live in a world that is anxiety and performance driven. Performance is what defines them, and their self-esteem is obtained through their success or failure. Winning is what matters and is often the only focus and goal. Their worth is oftentimes based on their achievements and the more they succeed / achieve the more worthy they are in their own eyes, and in the eyes of outsiders, fans, family, team members, other sports people and the media.

- Sportspeople need a source of strength to handle the pressure of competition. They need a biblical perspective on sport to understand:
 - a. Sport is a part of God's creation
 - b. They can bring worship and glory to God through their sport
 - c. They are not alone as they pursue their sporting dreams...God is with them.

Ephesians 1:4 “Even before the world was made, God chose us for Himself because of His love. He planned that we should be holy and without blame as He sees us.”

- Sportspeople need to build long-term relationships, but at times this can be difficult due to a number of factors :
 - a. Training is a high priority and demands much time

Watch: The life of an athlete: Alicia Sacramone - US Gymnast
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64n9ms5s6Sc>
 - b. Sport can promote a self-centered mindset
 - c. Often times they end up isolated and lonely
 - d. The sports person lives in a constantly changing environment (hero today and scapegoat tomorrow)
- Sportspeople need friendships
 - a. They are very suspicious of making quick friends

- b. They need a feeling of security and stability in their constantly changing environment
- c. The sports chaplain/sportsperson relationship has potential for a unique and lasting friendship
- d. The sports chaplain who is there to serve can appreciate the players accomplishments (and beliefs) as a friend, without expecting anything back
- e. Faith helps sportspeople keep a balanced perspective

Watch: Who does God say I am?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsDQEb-qlyM>

- Sportspeople deal with certain fears and anxieties
 - a. Fear of failing
 - b. Failing to perform according to expectations
 - c. Anxiety from performing and being under pressure
 - d. Pressure from crowds, manager, trainer, family, media and self. The higher the profile the athlete has, the more the pressure they are under
 - e. Up's and down's in the world's eyes- seen as only as good as their last result.
 - f. Sports chaplains have the unique possibility to walk alongside the athlete and help them meet their fears, and live fully:

1 Corinthians 1:30 “God Himself made the way so you can have new life through Christ Jesus. God gave us Christ to be our wisdom. Christ made us right with God and set us apart for God and made us holy. Christ bought us with His blood and made us free from our sins.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 “For if a man belongs to Christ, he is a new person. The old life is gone. New life has begun.”

** See Sports Bible themes*

Discussion questions:

1. What factors lead sports people's lives to be unique?
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2. How can a sports chaplain help a sports person see themselves as God does?
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3. What unique role can a sports chaplain play in the life of a sports person?
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Resources:

1. McCown, Lowrie and Valerie J. Gin. *Focus on Sport in Ministry*, 360 Sports, Marietta, GA (2003).
2. White, Cindy and John, *Passing the Baton - Fundamentals for Building a sports ministry*, at <http://www.iasportscomplex.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/PTB-final.pdf.pdf>