

We are One; Fun and Education with Photography

November 2019

On November 10, 2019, in Vedado, Cuba. The *Somos Uno* (we are one) Project held an outreach workshop aimed towards Cuban children of low income and disadvantaged families in problematic areas. This project was carried out by a group of Cuban Christian artists who are interested in reaching young people to have an opportunity to be followers of Jesus and help them acquire knowledge about art and photography as a job, while also teaching them to grow their self-esteem, creativity, character, and relationships. The children and some of their parents were invited to this free of cost workshop, where besides taking home this unforgettable experience, they would get to keep their sets of professional portraits to treasure forever.

The children were selected by partnering with *Pequeños Tesoros*, an organization that already has a group of children with which they work. This partnership would also ensue that someone follows up on the children once the project and the workshops were done. These children are different ages, and have different personalities and backgrounds, yet the workshops and activities such as this one has taught them how to work and get along with people that might initially seem different to them.

The children were introduced to Jesus and to the essentials of photography through a series of games and engaging conversations. Another strategy was to use the photography workshop to teach the children values, for example, they were taught how in the same way light sources in photography work, each one of us has the power to reflect good things on every situation.

The children were delighted with how the portraits came out. For many of them, it was a profound psychological experience to receive a physical portrait of themselves; through this gift they learn to value and accept the individual qualities and everything that makes them unique. These portraits depict them as a worthy, valuable and even beautiful person, someone they can be proud to be.



Some of the Portraits taken at the workshop



The children during Somos Uno's workshop