

JUST FOR MENTORS

Tips, inspiration and encouragement as you mentor men and women in prison



NOVEMBER 2020

Dear Mentor,

Years ago, my pastor asked a question that still echoes in my mind. As he stretched out his arms to illustrate a space on the stage, he asked:

“If you were lying here in a casket at your funeral, what would those standing over you say?”

When I heard this, I had not given much thought to my legacy—what I wanted to be remembered for. At the time, my answer to the question would have been something like:

“I have messed things up badly and hurt so many people around me!”

My life since then has been a journey to rewrite my legacy. I can never take back the hurt that I have caused in the past. It will always be part of my life’s story. But, in Christ, I have been given a second chance (and many more chances after that!).

Since my release from prison, I have made an effort to live each day in love, with the hope that I will be remembered for the way I loved people that day.

Isn’t that how legacies are shaped? Aren’t legacies built from the little things we do each day—things like being present with our children, loving our spouses well, being sensitive and obedient to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and faithfully doing the work to which God has called us without complaining?

In Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians, he told the church, “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders” (1 Thessalonians 4:11–12).

The everyday, quiet, faithful acts of working hard, respecting and loving others and obeying God form the foundation of our legacies and help us win the respect of others, including those far from God.

In Ephesians, Paul implored his readers to “walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us” (Ephesians 5:2). I want to be remembered as someone who did his best every day to walk in the way of love—or, as Mother Teresa put it: “Do small things with great love.”

I have talked with countless men in prison over the years, and although they rarely use the word “legacy,” they all think about and sometimes agonize over how they will be remembered.

As you write to your student this week, remind them that the broken pieces of their past do not need to define their legacy. God’s glory shines brightly in and through us when we are made new in Christ and live out this new identity (2 Corinthians 5:17).

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Assure your student that it's not too late to take the story of their life in a new direction. They **can** begin to take steps toward forming a new legacy. The first step might be walking through the yard alongside a cellmate who received some bad news from home. It might be sharing their talents in the church inside their facility. It might be working to de-escalate tense encounters between people in their unit. Whatever expression it takes, rebuilding a legacy can only happen with the courageous choice to love the way God loves, one day at a time.

Serving alongside you,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas Cupery".

Douglas Cupery
Church Mobilization Director

Have a question? You can contact the mentor support team at mentor@cpministries.org or 800-668-2450.

NEWS & NOTES

Student Prayer Requests

Many students include prayer requests in their lessons or letters. These requests give us a glimpse into our students' hearts and show us what they are thankful for or struggling with. We encourage you to acknowledge these requests in some way. Thank them for sharing the requests with you, and then let them know that you have prayed or will pray for their requests. Prayer can change things!

Comments in Lessons

We encourage you to write comments and reflections inside your students' lessons to show them that you are interacting with their work. Please write these in the margins of the lessons or anywhere else you can find space. You can write a simple, encouraging comment like "Great answer!" or provide them with a relevant Bible verse. Future lessons will be designed like *Who Are You?* to provide more space for mentors to write comments and reflections.

Mentor Community Gatherings

Here are the dates for this month's virtual mentor community gatherings:

Tuesday, November 17, at 8:00 p.m. (EST)

Wednesday, November 18, at 3:00 p.m. (EST)

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84182956475?pwd=QWs1OGlYZTZlejVOSkcyOEc5NW9SUT09>

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410