

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



APRIL 2021

Dear Mentor,

A constant, simmering chaos fills the air in prison. Incessant noise and arguing leave many tense and agitated. Always on edge, always suspicious, always on the lookout for danger. It seems like a cloud of darkness constantly hangs over the place. Bloody fights erupt over who is next in line to use the microwave. Games of pool end with someone knocked out on the floor. But all of these are just symptoms of a deeper evil in prison.

I could see much of the prison unit from my top bunk. From this vantage point, I could visualize how Satan was at work throughout the facility. All the enemy needed to do was stir up commotion: a disagreement over who was next in line or a perceived offense. We would take our pent-up frustration and begin to destroy each other with fists, verbal abuses and uncontrollable anger. This was the work of the enemy.

You may have noticed that some students seem fascinated with Satan, demons or hell. It makes sense, given that they are living in a hellish environment. In some ways, this awareness of evil is positive. 1 Peter 5:8 warns us, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."

This strong warning from Peter tells us to remain aware of the devil's presence to avoid being drawn into any evil desires, temptations or darkness. But we also know we should not give evil any undue attention. Our eyes should not be on Satan. Instead, we fix our eyes on Christ (Hebrews 12:2).

Our awareness of Satan should only serve to help us fight against his evil work in the world. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," says James 4:7.

Our role as believers is to drown out Satan's darkness with the light of Christ. Our students can do this through prayer and their words and actions each day. They can speak a kind word to someone who is going through a difficult time, or they can take a walk with them through the prison yard. They can steer negative conversations in a positive direction.

A preoccupation or even an obsession with evil or dark forces does not lead to hope. Satan does nothing but lie to us. Instead, encourage your students to focus on Jesus, who came to "destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8).

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus has bound up the "strong man," Satan, and set people free from his reign of sin and death (Mark 3:27). Our students can partner with the Spirit in the ongoing work of casting out the darkness and evil around them. Encourage your students to focus on this instead of the accuser, who wants to bring chaos into our lives.

"For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14).

Serving alongside you,



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

Mentor Community Gatherings

Join us for a virtual gathering to encourage and empower one another as we serve our students. This month, John Byrne, the new director of student programming, will introduce himself and lead a discussion about upcoming curriculum projects. We look forward to seeing you!

Tuesday, April 20, at 8:00 p.m. (EST)

Wednesday, April 21, at 3:00 p.m. (EST)

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

International Prayer Gathering

Please join us for a worldwide virtual gathering as Crossroads extension center leaders and mentors in Asia lead us in a time of prayer. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together as one! Spanish language interpretation will be provided.

Thursday, April 22, at 9:00 a.m. (EST)

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82265613686?pwd=SIV5djdCb2tja05mWHBDZXQ4TTgvdz09>

Meeting ID: 822 6561 3686

Passcode: 795704

New USPS Postage Rates

In January, the United States Postal Service made changes to the postage rates that affect the cost of mailing lesson packets. The new rates are:

\$0.75 for a 2-ounce mailing

\$0.95 for a 3-ounce mailing

Most lesson packets require the 2-ounce rate, so we recommend purchasing 2-ounce stamps at your local post office. Please remember that a single “Forever” stamp (currently worth \$0.55 each) is not enough postage for any lesson packet.

You can read the USPS press release announcing the changes here:

about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2020/1009-usps-announces-new-prices-for-2021.htm