

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



AUGUST 2021

Dear Mentor,

In my many years of prison ministry, I have facilitated dozens of discussion groups. Many of the conversations centered around emotional and spiritual healing. We discovered a lot about ourselves as we dove into topics such as anger, guilt, grief and forgiveness of self and others.

People in prison often have trouble coming to terms with the harm they have caused. A profound sense of shame can dominate their thoughts as they wrestle with feelings of pain, guilt and regret. Peace can seem elusive.

I, too, messed things up badly in my past and deeply hurt the ones I loved most. As time moved forward, I longed for forgiveness. I longed for peace I could not find.

Over time, I began to experience forgiveness as I learned to be truthful about the pain I had inflicted on others around me. Most importantly, I learned to share and confess my wrongs to the One who loves me most.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

As I experienced the joy of true forgiveness, I was stunned to realize that my wrongs are not only forgiven but forgotten and covered by the blood of Jesus.

"You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19).

If your student is struggling with guilt, regret or shame for the hurt they have caused themselves or others, invite them to pray a prayer of confession and to meditate on verses about God's abundant forgiveness. As students engage in prayer and soak their minds and hearts in the truth about forgiveness, they will realize they do not need to carry the guilt and burdens of their past.

Confessing sins and finding forgiveness are essential steps toward transformation in Christ. As we confess our wrongs and increase our reliance on Jesus, we find that peace and healing are within reach.

"When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross" (Colossians 2:13–14).

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 as we gather virtually to equip and empower one another to serve our students well.

Dawn McCalla will be leading us in a discussion about trauma and its impact on our students. Dawn holds a master's degree in social work and has a professional background in addiction and trauma recovery. She co-authored the book *Tapestries: Group Work with Survivors of Sexual Trauma*. She also serves as a Crossroads mentor.

We look forward to seeing you!

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

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

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84182956475?pwd=QWs10GIYZTZlejVOSkcyOEc5NW9SUT09>

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

A Note from Douglas

Over the past few years, we have been working to improve the Tier 1 student experience to expand the ministry of Crossroads to more and more men and women in prison. But we don't just want our ministry to grow wider—we want it to grow deeper too.

We know that the deepest and most long-lasting transformations happen in the context of one-on-one mentoring relationships, so Tier 2 is a critical component of the Crossroads program. Our goal is to make one-on-one mentoring available to students earlier in their journey with Crossroads.

You can help us get there! In the coming months, you will be invited to participate in a mentor recruitment campaign we are calling the Timothy Project, named after the relationship of Paul and his disciple, Timothy. As COVID-related restrictions continue to loosen, we will have more opportunities to gather in person to share and invite others into the ministry, emphasizing the gift of one-on-one friendships that we can give to people in prison. We will be encouraging you to share your story with others and invite them to join you on the Crossroads journey. I am looking forward to this very much!

As we have said before, Tier 1 is vital to our mission, and it is not going away. If that is where you feel called to stay, we will continue to be grateful for your important ministry.

I am very excited about the future of Crossroads. I believe that together we will continue to grow this ministry beyond what we can imagine. As we encounter Jesus when we visit our students, powerful changes occur within us and through us. As people hear about the transformation happening in your life and the lives of your students, I believe more and more members of the Church will discover the joy of meeting Jesus in prison.