

# JUST FOR MENTORS

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



FEBRUARY 2022

Dear Mentor,

Recently, as I reflected on the challenges of mass incarceration, I took a few minutes to page through one of our latest publications, *Remember: A Crossroads Prayer Journal*. This booklet, which features stories and photos from behind bars, clearly portrays the impact that mass incarceration has on our students—and on all of us. Reading the words of our students, I was struck by their humility and humanity. As a former student myself, I was reminded that the evil one does not want to see our students fully restored to their communities.

The evil one works hard to make men and women behind bars and those who have served their sentences feel hopeless. The collateral consequences of mass incarceration persistently remind formerly incarcerated people of their shame, impacting all areas of their lives and the lives of their loved ones. We recognize that sin still pollutes our world, and it has certainly seeped into the criminal justice system. It shows itself through fearmongering and legislative policies that create homelessness, poverty and oppression while having a questionable effect on improving public safety. The breadth of this can be difficult to comprehend. It can be challenging to understand the socioeconomic and racial inequalities that have helped the United States become the most incarcerated nation in the world.

When facing an issue as big as mass incarceration, creating change can seem overwhelming or even insurmountable. But we know that mountains can be moved. Change starts with faithful prayer (Mark 11:23–24). As we pray, we remember those in prison (Hebrews 13:3). As we pray, our hearts are stirred, and wisdom can be found (James 1:5–6). As we pray, our faith can turn into action (James 2:18).

If you haven't already, I encourage you to download our prayer journal ([cpministries.org/prayer-journal](http://cpministries.org/prayer-journal)) and commit to twenty-four days of prayer. Pray for the featured student and journal topic each day. Consider asking a friend to join you in prayer, discussing the topics as you move through the journal and then inviting them to mentor through Crossroads.

As a mentor, you have accepted God's invitation to remember and visit those in prison. This work you do is part of the solution to mass incarceration. As you review each lesson, you get a glimpse at the plight of our students, and you believe that Jesus can change their hearts (Psalm 51:10). You believe in restoration (Galatians 6:1). Through each lesson and letter, you are helping your students build a firm foundation (Matthew 7:24–27).

When you tell others about the friendships you've formed with your students, you advocate for men and women in prison. You speak on behalf of the voiceless as you share with others who may never have given a thought to incarcerated people. You are humanizing people behind bars as you share that they are no different from us; we are all made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

Years ago, Crossroads mentors told me that I had been made new in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17), and I believe this. Yet today, the evil one continually tries to convince me and millions of others like me that we cannot be restored. This narrative is not true. I encourage you to tell your students the same.

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"What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" – Romans 8:31

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](mailto: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.

Tuesday, February 15, at 8:00 p.m. (EST)

Wednesday, February 16, at 3:00 p.m. (EST)

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

### Spanish Lessons Backlogged

Due to increased student enrollment in the Spanish program and a shortage of Spanish-speaking mentors, we have a seven-week backlog of Spanish lessons. Significant effort is being made to grow and strengthen the Spanish program. We are currently translating new mentor and ambassador training materials. Our website, a Crossroads Facebook group and our quarterly newsletter (*Inside*) are now available in Spanish.

If you know anyone interested in mentoring Spanish-speaking students through Crossroads, please refer them to [cmcarcelario.org](http://cmcarcelario.org).

You can also refer them to the Facebook group, which features testimonies, poems and artwork from our Spanish-speaking students: [facebook.com/groups/341451697781203](https://www.facebook.com/groups/341451697781203)

Knowing that these backlogged lessons may contain questions about salvation and challenging life situations, we want to get them into mentors' hands as soon as possible. Please prayerfully consider how you may be able to help us solve this problem. If you have any ideas or questions, please contact us at [mentor@cpministries.org](mailto:mentor@cpministries.org).

### Tier 1 Mentor Reminder

Please remember to add "your mentor for this lesson" after signing your name on letters to Tier 1 students. This helps remind students that each of their lessons is reviewed by a different mentor. We are trying to reduce the number of letters that students address to Tier 1 mentors since we are unable to forward them.