

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



NOVEMBER 2022

Dear Mentor,

For the past several months, I've spent a lot of time traveling. I have navigated flight delays and cancellations, diverted landings, and cramped seating. These inconveniences have caused feelings of impatience and frustration to surface more often than I'd like to admit.

Impatience tends to distort our thinking and can lead to making poor choices. Minor everyday inconveniences, often outside our control, can quickly escalate into an overreactive, emotional outburst. It is never pleasant to witness one of these outbursts, but it is even more unpleasant to be the one whose impatience has expressed itself in a negative or unkind manner.

"A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel" (Proverbs 15:18).

Our students face the ongoing challenge of navigating things beyond their control. They have no control over things like what they will eat for dinner, how crowded their facility is, or, in some cases, when they can use the restroom. They may find their patience tested when a new cellmate they find obnoxious enters their small living space. These examples are among the many daily obstacles that require our students to have patience.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

We can encourage our students by acknowledging that they live in an environment that tests their patience, sometimes intensely, every day. In your letters, encourage students to work on letting go of the things they cannot control and identifying how they can glorify God by doing well in the things they can control. Ask them to join you in prayer that their patience may be strengthened each day.

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12).

During one of my trips, I caught myself getting frustrated with an airline employee. He had the unfortunate task of informing me that the next leg of my flight home was canceled, and I would need to stay there for the night. He had no control over the message he had to relay, and despite his best efforts, he was unable to find an alternate flight for me that evening. Although my patience was strained, I reevaluated my reaction as I realized that this inconvenience was not worth missing the opportunity to reflect the fruit of the Spirit to this airline employee.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23, ESV).

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!

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

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

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

The Upcoming Holiday Season

Thanksgiving and Christmas are quickly approaching. I want to personally acknowledge that this time of year might be difficult for you. I pray that you may be filled with the comfort of our Savior if this season brings up difficult and painful feelings like grief and loneliness.

Every year, knowing that our students often experience these emotions as well, I am asked if it is okay to say "Happy Thanksgiving!" or "Merry Christmas!" to students. My response is yes, it is okay. If you do so, consider also sharing what these two expressions mean to you. Read more about why I think it is okay to share these greetings here: cpministries.org/news/can-you-say-merry-christmas-to-someone-in-prison

During this holiday season, we want to encourage those of you who are Tier 2/3 mentors to consider sending your student an extra hope-filled card or letter. Please check your mentor portal account to see if cards are allowed at your student's facility. If they are allowed, please use a plain white envelope to mail the card.

If you have Tier 1 students, we request that you do not send them a Thanksgiving or Christmas card. It can be confusing for Tier 1 students to receive a card from a mentor. From experience, we've seen that these students will often write back to the mentor, and unlike in Tier 2/3, we cannot forward those back to the mentor who sent the card.

Please be reassured that your Tier 1 students will receive a card for Christmas. Crossroads sends every student in the program a Christmas card or letter (based on facility regulations) featuring a message from our staff and art from one of our students.