

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



DECEMBER 2022

Dear Mentor,

At a recent mentor community gathering, our guest speaker shared her life story and offered encouragement to those in attendance. She shared how her identity had been shaped by deep childhood wounds. Over time, she began self-medicating with drugs and alcohol to address her severe emotional pain, which ultimately resulted in addiction. Her addiction was harming not only herself but also her relationships with others.

Through Christ, she experienced miraculous healing from her addiction, but she still struggled with forgiveness. She had to learn how to forgive herself for the years she lost to addiction and the pain she caused others.

Though the details of their stories may be different, our students may also be struggling to forgive themselves, especially during the Christmas season.

Curtis, a student in Texas, recently wrote to us, "I know God loves me and forgives me if I truly believe. Sometimes I have self-doubt, but I'm trying to keep God's words in mind. . . . I truly have problems with my forgiveness, but I'm working on it, thanks to Crossroads."

I, too, have struggled with forgiving myself for the pain I have caused. Maybe you have as well.

As we look forward to celebrating Jesus' birth, we are reminded of the hope we have through Him, even when we struggle to forgive ourselves.

Out of His abundant love for us, God sent His only Son to be born here on earth as a fulfillment of His promises and to set in motion His plan for our redemption (Luke 2:1–20; John 1:1–17). Jesus came to proclaim God's love for the broken, the outcast, and the forsaken (Mark 2:17). He came to defeat sin and death (Romans 6:23). He had not done anything wrong nor said anything that was untrue, yet He took on the guilt of our sins, our lies, and our deceit. Through His death and resurrection, we were granted forgiveness, and our relationship with God was restored (2 Corinthians 5:21).

"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).

We can follow God's example by showing compassion to ourselves and refusing to let our past define our identity. Although it may take time, we can break free from the bondage of the evil one who wants us to hold on to our past as we remember and accept the Father's gift of forgiveness.

For our speaker, forgiving herself did not happen immediately; it took time for her to understand and embrace the breadth of God's forgiveness for her. We have the same opportunity as we look beyond our past toward the hope that has been given to us through the birth of our Savior.

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"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

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

Mentor Community Gatherings

Join us as we gather virtually to equip and empower one another to serve our students well! Joe Pryor, president and CEO of Crossroads, will join us with a message of encouragement as we celebrate this Christmas season and look forward to the new year ahead of us.

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

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

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

Spanish Program Update

The Spanish language program continues to face challenges in recruiting enough new mentors to sustain our current student enrollment. In March 2022, we stopped accepting new students as the amount of time our students' lessons were held in our office before a mentor was available to review them continued to grow. Between March and September, we had to turn away over six hundred prospective Spanish-speaking students who had expressed a desire to study God's Word through Crossroads. In September, we resumed enrolling new students, and we are continuing to monitor this significant challenge.

Please continue to pray for new opportunities and relationships that will help us address this problem. We encourage you to share our Spanish website with anyone who may be interested in serving as a mentor: cmcarcelario.org.

Scripture Reading and Prayer Guide: The Wisdom of Proverbs

This month, students are receiving their winter *Just for Students* newsletter, which includes the Scripture reading and prayer guide for December and January. Please consider following the guide along with your students and discussing the topics as you write letters.

As a new year approaches, many people make resolutions, or commitments, to change their behavior. Some people commit to losing weight, exercising more, or quitting a habit that isn't helpful or healthy. As 2023 draws near, we might want to look at improving our thinking and perspective about life. A changed mind comes before changed behavior. The book of Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings that help us look at our thinking and attitudes. If we can take some of these proverbs and apply them to our lives, the wisdom of God will work in us to help us have the mind of Christ. Over the next two months, pray especially for wisdom and understanding for yourself and the people you love.

Date	Passage	Reading Topic	Prayer Focus
Dec. 1	Proverbs 1:1–19	A call to gain wisdom	For God to give you His wisdom
Dec. 2	Proverbs 1:20–33	The world rejects God's wisdom	For people you know who need God
Dec. 3	Proverbs 2:1–8	We receive knowledge from God	To understand what God is doing in your life
Dec. 4	Proverbs 2:9–22	Wisdom keeps us from sin	For God to help you overcome temptation
Dec. 5	Proverbs 3:1–20	The value of wisdom	That you will value what God values
Dec. 6	Proverbs 3:21–35	Wisdom in action	That you will have confidence in the Lord
Dec. 7	Proverbs 4:1–9	A father's instruction	For those who have taught you about God
Dec. 8	Proverbs 4:10–27	Continue in the ways you were taught	For perseverance in your walk with Jesus
Dec. 9	Proverbs 5:1–14	Warning against adultery	To love God's laws
Dec. 10	Proverbs 5:15–23	Enjoy what the Lord has given you	For contentment
Dec. 11	Proverbs 6:1–19	Warning against the way of the fool	For holiness; to be set apart for God
Dec. 12	Proverbs 6:20–35	Further warning against adultery	For sexual purity
Dec. 13	Proverbs 7:1–20	Warning against the adulteress	For those struggling with temptation
Dec. 14	Proverbs 7:21–27	Further warning against the adulteress	For those struggling with addiction
Dec. 15	Proverbs 8:1–21	The treasure of wisdom	That your love for Jesus will grow
Dec. 16	Proverbs 8:22–36	The power of wisdom	For wisdom to bring your worries to God
Dec. 17	Proverbs 9:1–12	An invitation to be wise	For those not seeking wisdom from God
Dec. 18	Proverbs 9:13–18	An invitation to be a fool	That sin will seem foolish to you
Dec. 19	Proverbs 10:1–16	"Love covers over all wrongs"	That you will grow in your love for others
Dec. 20	Proverbs 10:17–22	"Whoever spreads slander is a fool"	That your speech may be pure
Dec. 21	Proverbs 11:1–15	Righteous are rescued from trouble	For those being persecuted for their faith
Dec. 22	Proverbs 11:16–31	The wicked will not escape judgment	For those who have hard hearts
Dec. 23	Proverbs 12:1–14	The Lord corrects the wise	To be open to correction
Dec. 24	Proverbs 12:15–28	A wise person seeks advice	For God to place wise people in your life
Dec. 25	Proverbs 13:1–13	A wise person is humble	For a humble heart
Dec. 26	Proverbs 13:14–25	Walk with the wise	For leaders in the church
Dec. 27	Proverbs 14:1–17	Fear the Lord	To view God rightly
Dec. 28	Proverbs 14:18–35	A wise person is kind	For opportunities to bless others
Dec. 29	Proverbs 15:1–16	"A gentle answer turns away wrath"	For a gentle spirit
Dec. 30	Proverbs 15:17–33	A wise person is loving	For those who feel unloved
Dec. 31	Proverbs 16:1–16	A wise person commits to God	To be open to God's leading
Jan. 1	Proverbs 16:17–33	"Pride goes before destruction"	For those who seem lost or far from God
Jan. 2	Proverbs 17:1–14	A wise person is honest	To have integrity in all you do
Jan. 3	Proverbs 17:15–28	"A cheerful heart is good medicine"	For joy in your Christian walk
Jan. 4	Proverbs 18:1–12	A wise person seeks shelter in God	For greater trust in God

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Jan. 5	Proverbs 18:13–24	A wise person speaks carefully	To honor God with your speech
Jan. 6	Proverbs 19:1–15	A wise person is patient	For increased patience
Jan. 7	Proverbs 19:16–29	A wise person is generous	For opportunities to be generous to others
Jan. 8	Proverbs 20:1–15	A wise person works hard	That you will do all your work for the Lord
Jan. 9	Proverbs 20:16–30	Wait for the Lord	For those suffering through war or conflict
Jan. 10	Proverbs 21:1–16	The wise hear the cry of the poor	For those suffering from hunger or starvation
Jan. 11	Proverbs 21:17–31	Nothing can succeed against the Lord	That the Gospel will reach more people
Jan. 12	Proverbs 22:1–16	A wise person avoids danger	For wisdom to stay away from danger
Jan. 13	Proverbs 22:17–29	Listen to the wisdom of the wise	For a soft heart that is quick to listen to God
Jan. 14	Proverbs 23:1–18	Be content with what you have	For contentment in your circumstances
Jan. 15	Proverbs 23:19–35	A wise person has self-control	For the fruits of the Spirit to be evident in your life
Jan. 16	Proverbs 24:1–16	A wise person has great power	For the power of the Holy Spirit in your life
Jan. 17	Proverbs 24:17–34	“Do not fret because of evildoers”	For greater understanding of God’s love for you
Jan. 18	Proverbs 25:1–14	Humility is the way of the wise	To have humility like Jesus
Jan. 19	Proverbs 25:15–28	Be kind to your enemies	That your enemies will know God’s love
Jan. 20	Proverbs 26:1–16	The wise are not quick to argue	For love and patience in your relationships
Jan. 21	Proverbs 26:17–28	Gossip feeds strife and quarrels	For your heart to be uninterested in gossip
Jan. 22	Proverbs 27:1–14	“Do not boast about tomorrow”	To rely on God instead of your own knowledge
Jan. 23	Proverbs 27:15–27	A wise person makes wise plans	For wisdom in making plans for the future
Jan. 24	Proverbs 28:1–14	“The righteous are as bold as a lion”	For boldness to speak the truth in love
Jan. 25	Proverbs 28:15–28	Trusting in yourself is foolish	For greater trust in God’s wisdom
Jan. 26	Proverbs 29:1–14	The wise care about justice	Pray for those enduring injustice
Jan. 27	Proverbs 29:15–27	“Pride brings a person low”	For humility for those in leadership
Jan. 28	Proverbs 30:1–14	A wise person treasures God’s Word	To love reading the Bible
Jan. 29	Proverbs 30:15–33	“Stirring up anger produces strife”	For peace where there is strife in your life
Jan. 30	Proverbs 31:1–9	The wise speak up for others	For those who feel defenseless
Jan. 31	Proverbs 31:10–31	The wise woman	For wisdom for the women in your life