

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



FEBRUARY 2023

Dear Mentor,

On a cold but pleasant evening, a professor, Joe Pryor, and I debriefed a presentation that Joe and I had given to a classroom of students at American University in Washington, D.C. We had been asked to discuss the role that restoration plays in the criminal justice system. I talked about my journey of restoration, and I could tell from the students' questions that what we shared resonated with them. We discerned that a Christian perspective on restoration was new to some of the students.

Our God cares deeply about restoration, and we have a part in carrying on His work as His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20).

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18–19).

As Christ's disciples, we seek to follow His example. He taught us to go out of our way to help those in need, even those we may prefer to avoid (Luke 10:25–37). He taught us to feed the hungry, give water to those who are thirsty, allow strangers into our lives, and visit the incarcerated (Matthew 25:34–36).

To be a disciple of Christ means to make disciples. As a mentor, you have answered the call to make disciples and to point your students to Jesus (Matthew 28:19). Discipleship is restorative work. As we point others toward Christ, they find that their relationship with God, which has been broken by sin, can be reconciled and restored.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:17–19).

The ministry of reconciliation and restoration that Christ has given us doesn't always require grand gestures. It can be found in the small things we do for each other. Encouraging your students, praying for them, and gently pointing out sins they need to confess can be restorative acts.

In your letters this month, share your thoughts on your role in God's restorative work and what He is calling you to do through your ministry as a mentor. Encourage your students to think of ways they can contribute to this work right where they are.

I experienced restoration before I even knew what it meant. Jesus was waiting for me when I desperately called out to Him years ago. He welcomed me into the Kingdom cleansed and reconciled, and He showed Himself through the hands and feet of His people. My marriage and my place in the community were restored through new relationships and opportunities.

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My prayer is that those within our spheres of influence will also experience and hear about the restorative work that God is doing, including in the lives of those in the criminal justice system, just as we shared with those university students.

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 Q&A

Join us virtually to ask your ministry-related questions! If you think of a question beforehand, please email it to mentor@cpministries.org, and we will use it as part of the discussion.

Tuesday, February 21st, at 8:00 p.m. (EST)

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

Correctional Ministries and Chaplains Association (CMCA) Summit

CMCA will be hosting a correctional ministries summit in May at the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. The summit will be a time of learning, worship, and networking. Please consider joining your mentor support team and others from Crossroads as we gain tools and confidence for our ministry outreach. Details for this event can be found here:

www.cmcainternational.org/event/cmca-2023-correctional-ministries-summit-information/

Student Prayer Requests

Through a recent sampling of student lessons, we found that over 50 percent of those students did not share a prayer request within their lessons. If you notice your student has not shared a prayer request in their lesson, please consider encouraging them to share one in their next lesson, whether it is with you (Tier 2/3) or their next mentor (Tier 1). Tell them that it is our desire to be able to pray for the challenges and joys they experience and for their families. As a reminder, if your student has shared a prayer request with you, please acknowledge in the lesson or your letter that you have seen it and are praying for that request. It is powerful to know another person is praying for you.

"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" (Ephesians 6:18).