

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



MARCH 2023

Dear Mentor,

About eight years ago, I went to the doctor for my annual medical evaluation. I had no concerns as we discussed my health and he began his head-to-toe examination. When he pulled out his stethoscope and listened to my heart, he heard a murmur. This discovery prompted further testing. On the treadmill test, I went into a transient but life-threatening heart arrhythmia, but I never felt anything unusual.

As I got ready for an MRI, thoughts spun around in my head. A friend of mine, who was serving as my technician, could see how confused and anxious I was as I donned my gown. He said, "Douglas, you just had a glimpse at your own mortality."

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (Psalm 90:12).

Unbeknownst to me, I was born with a defective heart valve that had worn out, and I needed an artificial valve to replace it. I had a rough recovery after the operation, which gave me a clear understanding of my own mortality. It was a reminder that life is very short. Knowing this, I needed to focus on how I was going to live the days that God had given me.

As you prepare to write to your students this month, consider sharing Jesus' explanation of the greatest commandment:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30-31).

These verses explain how we are to live within the days given to us. We are to love because God loves us (1 John 4:19). The greatest demonstration of God's love was how He gave us Jesus to cleanse us from sin, guide us, intervene on our behalf, and restore us. God hears our voices (Psalm 116:1), and we are precious to Him.

Loving your neighbor can be challenging. Who is your neighbor, and what does it look like to love them? Is it a family member or friend who has hurt you? Is it a coworker you just don't get along with? Loving your neighbor could mean purposefully praying for that person daily (Matthew 5:44-45). Their very souls could be impacted by this act of love.

I was told that if I live long enough, my replacement heart valve may fail over time, and I would need to have another surgery. I do not like that thought, but it is a continual reminder that I need to focus on how I want to live. Keeping Jesus' commandments to love God and our neighbors at the forefront of our minds is central to how we should live the days we have been given. I pray that you will always keep your eyes on Jesus and your hand outstretched to your neighbor in love. This month, offer the same prayer for your students.

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Serving alongside you,



A handwritten signature in cursive 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, March 14th, 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/

Reminder About Sending Cards

As we approach Easter, we want to encourage those of you who are Tier 2 or 3 mentors to consider sending your student an extra hope-filled card or letter. If you would like to do this, please check your mentor portal account first 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, please do not send them a card. It can be confusing for Tier 1 students to receive a card from a mentor. From experience, we know that these students often write back to the mentor, and unlike in Tiers 2 and 3, we cannot forward responses to the mentor who sent the card.

Reminder About Cursive Handwriting

Through a sampling of lessons returned to the office with a letter enclosed, we found that 21 percent of mentors wrote back to their students in cursive handwriting. Since 2010, cursive is no longer required to be taught in schools, and many students have difficulty reading it. Please write your letters in print handwriting or, if necessary, type your letters and sign your first name by hand.

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Scripture Reading and Prayer Guide

Please join your students and the whole Crossroads family as we study Paul's prison letters over the next two months, pausing in April to reflect on Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Date	Passage	Reading Topic	Prayer Focus
Mar. 1	Ephesians 1:1-2	Paul's greeting	For the peace of God in your relationships with others
Mar. 2	Ephesians 1:3-8	Spiritual blessings in Christ	To be holy and blameless in God's sight
Mar. 3	Ephesians 1:9-14	Sealed with the Spirit	Praise God for your salvation
Mar. 4	Ephesians 1:15-23	Thanksgiving and prayer	To know the riches of your inheritance in Christ
Mar. 5	Ephesians 2:1-4	Made alive in Christ	To leave behind old patterns of sin
Mar. 6	Ephesians 2:5-10	We are God's handiwork	For perseverance in good works
Mar. 7	Ephesians 2:11-18	Jews and Gentiles reconciled	That God will break down walls of hostility
Mar. 8	Ephesians 2:19-22	We are God's temple	For an opportunity to share Jesus with someone
Mar. 9	Ephesians 3:1-8	God's plan for the Gentiles	For those who are lost or seem far away from God
Mar. 10	Ephesians 3:9-13	God's wisdom made known	That God will grant you more wisdom
Mar. 11	Ephesians 3:14-21	Paul's prayer	To better understand God's love for you
Mar. 12	Ephesians 4:1-6	Unity in the Church	For unity among God's people
Mar. 13	Ephesians 4:7-10	Gifts in the Church	To know how best to serve others
Mar. 14	Ephesians 4:11-16	We are called to be like Jesus	For the leaders of God's people
Mar. 15	Ephesians 4:17-21	God enlightened our hearts	For the light of the Gospel to reach the unreached
Mar. 16	Ephesians 4:22-25	Put off the old self	To become more like God in righteousness and holiness
Mar. 17	Ephesians 4:26-32	Do not grieve the Holy Spirit	For more kindness and compassion toward others
Mar. 18	Ephesians 5:1-20	Live as children of light	To live a life that is pleasing to the Lord
Mar. 19	Ephesians 5:21-29	Instructions for households	For God to bless your marriage or a friend's marriage
Mar. 20	Ephesians 5:30-33	We are the body of Christ	For revival in the Church
Mar. 21	Ephesians 6:1-9	Instructions for households	For the mothers that you know
Mar. 22	Ephesians 6:10-17	The armor of God	That you will be ready to fight spiritual battles
Mar. 23	Ephesians 6:18-20	Pray at all times	For consistency in your prayer life
Mar. 24	Ephesians 6:21-24	Paul's final greetings	For strong, grace-filled Christian friendships
Mar. 25	Philippians 1:1-8	Paul's greeting	That God will continue His work in you
Mar. 26	Philippians 1:9-11	Paul's prayer	That you will grow in your knowledge of Jesus
Mar. 27	Philippians 1:12-19	The advance of the Gospel	For someone you know who doesn't believe in God
Mar. 28	Philippians 1:20-26	Paul's desire to be with Jesus	To remain faithful until you go to be with Jesus
Mar. 29	Philippians 1:27-30	A life worthy of the Gospel	That you will be a good witness to those around you
Mar. 30	Philippians 2:1-6	Imitating Christ's humility	For a humble heart
Mar. 31	Philippians 2:7-11	Christ is exalted above all	That Christ will be exalted in all aspects of your life
Apr. 1	Philippians 2:12-18	Fulfilling God's good purpose	That your life will reflect God's light to the world
Apr. 2	Philippians 2:19-24	Paul sends Timothy	For faith to go wherever God may send you
Apr. 3	Philippians 2:25-30	Paul sends Epaphroditus	For God to heal those who are sick
Apr. 4	Philippians 3:1-6	Rejoice in the Lord	To put your full confidence in Jesus
Apr. 5	Philippians 3:7-11	The power of Christ	That Jesus will show Himself through your life
Apr. 6	Philippians 3:12-14	Pressing on toward the goal	For greater faithfulness as you run the race

Apr. 7	Matthew 27:45–56	Good Friday	Thank God for Jesus' sacrifice on the cross
Apr. 8	Matthew 28:1–10	Awaiting Easter	Praise God for forgiving your sins
Apr. 9	Matthew 28:11–20	Easter Sunday	For wisdom to share the good news of Jesus
Apr. 10	Philippians 3:15–21	Following Paul's example	That your mind will be set on heaven
Apr. 11	Philippians 4:1–3	Stand firm in the Lord	That your faith in God will not waver
Apr. 12	Philippians 4:4–9	Final instructions	For the peace of God to guard your heart
Apr. 13	Philippians 4:10–16	Paul thanks them for their gifts	For opportunities to be generous
Apr. 14	Philippians 4:17–23	Final greetings	That God will richly supply all your needs
Apr. 15	Colossians 1:1–8	Paul's greeting	For the Gospel to bear fruit in your life
Apr. 16	Colossians 1:9–14	Thanksgiving and prayer	To be filled with the knowledge of God's will
Apr. 17	Colossians 1:15–18	Jesus is the image of God	To reflect Jesus to those around you
Apr. 18	Colossians 1:19–23	Jesus reconciled us to God	To forgive others as God has forgiven you
Apr. 19	Colossians 1:24–29	Paul's labor for the Church	For maturity in Christ
Apr. 20	Colossians 2:1–5	The goal of Paul's labor	For someone who needs encouragement
Apr. 21	Colossians 2:6–10	Spiritual fullness in Christ	To be strengthened in the faith
Apr. 22	Colossians 2:11–15	Christ paid the debt for our sins	To leave your sins in the past
Apr. 23	Colossians 2:16–23	Spiritual freedom in Christ	For those in need of spiritual freedom
Apr. 24	Colossians 3:1–4	Set your minds on things above	To be strengthened against temptations
Apr. 25	Colossians 3:5–11	Take off the old self	For a clean heart
Apr. 26	Colossians 3:12–17	Put on the new self	For the peace of Christ to rule in your heart
Apr. 27	Colossians 3:18–25	Instructions for households	For the fathers that you know
Apr. 28	Colossians 4:1–6	Paul's call to pray	For devotion to prayer
Apr. 29	Colossians 4:7–18	Paul's final greetings	For those who are lonely or forgotten
Apr. 30	Philemon 1–25	Paul appeals for a friend	To love others the way God loves you