

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



MARCH 2024

Dear Mentor,

A two-year-old's outlook on what is important helps me keep things in perspective. Our granddaughter has all the toys she could ever need, yet a simple cardboard box filled with colored tissue paper to pull out, crinkle, and toss in the air can be the greatest gift she has ever received. When she reaches out for your hand, leading you to the book she has picked to read, she tells you in her special way that you are important to her and she is happy you are there.

While seated on the couch beside my wife, Hendrina, our granddaughter on her lap, I closed my eyes and reflected on her journey over the past two and a half years. She was once just a pound and a half in the neonatal unit, and the uncertainties that surrounded her and her parents during that time were overwhelming. I was overcome with gratitude as I listened to her curious expressions.

Later today, I will be visiting a prison. As I sign in at the front desk, I will be given documents that show I am approved to enter. After waiting for some time, I will be called through the gate into a transition room called "the bubble" for a thorough check of my person and materials. I will show my identification documents, place my hand under a black light that shows an invisible ink mark, and receive a personal protection alarm. Through another gate, I will hand over my driver's license, which will be held until I return. Passing through the final gate, an officer will be waiting to escort me.

These security measures reaffirm the reality that those who live behind these gates are incarcerated. It leaves one to wonder if any gratitude or thankfulness can be found within the prison walls.

For many incarcerated people, expressing gratitude might be a challenge. Emotions like grief, anger, hopelessness, and despair often overshadow any sense of gratitude. From others, you may hear a much different expression. As a mentor, you may have been told by a student that their incarceration saved them from complete destruction or even death—whether physical death by their circumstances or spiritual death without Christ.

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

One evening, I asked a group of incarcerated men if thankfulness could be found inside prison walls. Some quickly responded in agreement: "Every time I wake up!" "I was saved from myself!" "I have become a better person." As anticipated, others were silent, as previous weeks of discussion had revealed deep pain and regret.

As you prepare to write to your student, consider expounding on thankfulness (a response) and gratitude (an appreciation):

- Share a recent personal example of experiencing gratitude. Did you have an uplifting conversation during the week that lifted your spirits? Are you navigating a health struggle and seeing glimpses of God's involvement in this journey? It could even be something as simple as getting a good night's sleep (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18).
- Encourage your student to reflect daily to find something positive. It could be a kind word spoken to them or a meaningful Scripture passage. Even small things contribute to cultivating a positive outlook (Psalm 118:24).

The gratitude we feel for the gift of our granddaughter is immeasurable. But my heart aches for those who have faced painful or tragic experiences with childbirth, a feeling compounded by our own experience of miscarriage. I admit that I often dwell on difficult circumstances, neglecting to appreciate the positive aspects of life. This letter serves as a reminder to me, too. I am grateful for your willingness to join in Christ's mission of visiting those often labeled as the least important (Matthew 25:40).

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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 GatheringsQA@cpministries.org, and we will use it as part of the discussion.

Tuesday, March 19, at 8:00 p.m. (EST)

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

Spanish-Speaking Mentors Needed

A backlog of completed lessons that need to be sent to Spanish-speaking mentors is continuing to grow in our office. This concerns us because these lessons likely contain important questions about identity and salvation. Our aim is to avoid closing the program to new Spanish-speaking students. Between March and September of 2023, we were heartbroken to have to deny more than 800 prospective Spanish-speaking students due to mentor capacity challenges. **We need your help!** If you have an opportunity to share this need within your network, please direct them to cmcarcelario.org to find more information.

Request Copies of *I See You*

In December, you should have received a copy of Doug's book, *I See You: Remembering the Incarcerated Through a Living Letter*. Many of you have requested extra copies so you can share the book with your family and friends. We still have copies available to mail at no charge. Learn more about the book and how to request copies at cpministries.org/iseeyou. We are also working to make the book available for purchase on Amazon. Look for announcements soon about the Amazon release.

Scripture Reading and Prayer Guide: The Book of Joshua

In each quarterly *Just for Students* newsletter, we provide our students with a reading and prayer guide designed to help them in their daily journey with God. We invite you to join us in using this guide to study and pray alongside them.

During March and April, we will read and pray through the book of Joshua. This book tells the story of Israel as they entered the promised land after the death of Moses. Joshua was appointed by God to lead His people as they conquered the land of Canaan and distributed the land among the twelve tribes of Israel. Joshua was a gifted military leader who encouraged the Israelites to serve God and follow His law.

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Although some of the passages include details that may seem boring, confusing, or violent, we encourage you to remember that “all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). Be mindful of how God might be speaking to you through His Word.

Date	Passage	Reading Topic	Prayer Focus
Mar. 1	Joshua 1:1–9	God calls Joshua to lead	For clarity about God’s call in your life
Mar. 2	Joshua 1:10–15	Joshua gives his first orders	For wisdom to encourage fellow believers
Mar. 3	Joshua 1:16–18	The people pledge to obey Joshua	For a willingness to submit to authority
Mar. 4	Joshua 2:1–7	A prostitute named Rahab	For eyes to see God in surprising places
Mar. 5	Joshua 2:8–14	Rahab protects Joshua’s men	For opportunities to advance the Gospel
Mar. 6	Joshua 2:15–21	Joshua’s men pledge their protection	For God’s protection over your family
Mar. 7	Joshua 2:22–24	Joshua’s men report back	Give thanks to God for delivering you
Mar. 8	Joshua 3:1–6	A command to follow the ark	For God’s guidance in your life
Mar. 9	Joshua 3:7–13	God confirms that He is with Joshua	That God will make His presence known
Mar. 10	Joshua 3:14–17	Crossing the Jordan River	For a miracle to happen in a difficult situation
Mar. 11	Joshua 4:1–7	A sign for the twelve tribes	That Jesus will help you witness to others
Mar. 12	Joshua 4:8–14	40,000 are prepared for battle	For God’s help in fighting your battles
Mar. 13	Joshua 4:15–24	Israel camps on the border of Jericho	That God will do His will in your life
Mar. 14	Joshua 5:1–9	Circumcision of the uncircumcised	For a heart that is obedient to God
Mar. 15	Joshua 5:10–12	Israel celebrates the Passover	Give thanks to God for your salvation
Mar. 16	Joshua 5:13–15	Joshua is visited by an angel	For understanding about how to worship God
Mar. 17	Joshua 6:1–11	Marching around Jericho	For eyes to see God’s supernatural methods
Mar. 18	Joshua 6:12–21	Jericho falls with a trumpet blast	For victory over a challenge in your life
Mar. 19	Joshua 6:22–27	Rahab’s family is saved	For God’s protection as you serve Him
Mar. 20	Joshua 7:1–9	Israel defeated at Ai	For a strong commitment to obey God today
Mar. 21	Joshua 7:10–15	Israel’s sin against God	To live with integrity and honesty
Mar. 22	Joshua 7:16–26	Achan confesses his sin	For a heart willing to repent when you sin
Mar. 23	Joshua 8:1–17	Joshua’s strategies for the battle	For wisdom to set God-honoring goals
Mar. 24	Joshua 8:18–29	Victory in Ai	For victory over a sin that has plagued you
Mar. 25	Joshua 8:30–35	Joshua renews the covenant	For faithfulness in your commitment to God
Mar. 26	Joshua 9:1–15	The plan of the Gibeonites	For protection from those who want to harm you
Mar. 27	Joshua 9:16–27	The Gibeonites are spared	For a grateful heart
Mar. 28	Joshua 10:1–15	The sun stands still	That you will use your time wisely
Mar. 29	Joshua 10:16–28	Five Amorite kings are executed	That all enemies of God will be defeated
Mar. 30	Joshua 10:29–43	Southern Canaan is conquered	For your leaders in government
Mar. 31	Joshua 11:1–15	Northern Canaan is conquered	To fully trust God
Apr. 1	Joshua 11:16–23	God hardens the hearts of His enemies	For a soft heart toward God
Apr. 2	Joshua 12:1–6	Former victories of Moses	For understanding as you study God’s Word
Apr. 3	Joshua 12:7–24	Joshua’s victories	To remember everything God has done for you
Apr. 4	Joshua 13:1–7	Land to be conquered	For the spiritual battles that lie ahead
Apr. 5	Joshua 13:8–23	Moses’s inheritance	To leave a legacy of faith for the next generation
Apr. 6	Joshua 13:24–33	More history	For wardens and staff in prisons and jails
Apr. 7	Joshua 14:1–15	Caleb’s request	Bring to God the prayer requests on your heart
Apr. 8	Joshua 15:1–19	Judah’s inheritance	For God’s blessing as you follow Him
Apr. 9	Joshua 15:20–63	Judah’s inheritance, continued	That God will show you who to help today
Apr. 10	Joshua 16:1–10	Ephraim’s inheritance	For those living in slavery around the world
Apr. 11	Joshua 17:1–13	Manasseh’s inheritance	For those you know who don’t know Jesus

Apr. 12	Joshua 17:14–18	Driving out the Canaanites	For the Body of Christ around the world
Apr. 13	Joshua 18:1–10	Joshua tells the people to take the land	That your family's needs will be met
Apr. 14	Joshua 18:11–28	Benjamin's inheritance	For those who have just come to faith
Apr. 15	Joshua 19:1–16	Simeon and Zebulun	For God's encouraging grace
Apr. 16	Joshua 19:17–39	Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali	That your actions will demonstrate your faith
Apr. 17	Joshua 19:40–51	Dan and Joshua	For the restoration of any broken relationships
Apr. 18	Joshua 20:1–9	Cities of refuge	For a fair justice system, judges, and police
Apr. 19	Joshua 21:1–12	The Levites ask for an inheritance	For your pastors and teachers
Apr. 20	Joshua 21:13–33	The descendants of Aaron	For chaplains and volunteers in prisons and jails
Apr. 21	Joshua 21:34–45	God fulfills His promises	For God to complete His work in your life
Apr. 22	Joshua 22:1–9	God gives His people rest	That God will give you peaceful rest today
Apr. 23	Joshua 22:10–20	Trouble amongst God's people	To love those with whom you disagree
Apr. 24	Joshua 22:21–29	Three tribes defend their actions	To be a witness to God's truth
Apr. 25	Joshua 22:30–34	Peace among the tribes	For peace between political opponents
Apr. 26	Joshua 23:1–13	Joshua gives direction to leaders	For wisdom to lead others well
Apr. 27	Joshua 23:14–16	Joshua's life nears its end	To honor God with your whole life
Apr. 28	Joshua 24:1–13	Renewing the covenant with God	Rededicate your life to God today
Apr. 29	Joshua 24:14–28	Choose whom you will serve	To serve God wholeheartedly
Apr. 30	Joshua 24:29–33	Joshua's death	For those mourning a recent death