

# JUST FOR MENTORS

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



MAY 2024

Dear Mentor,

In one of the prison groups I facilitate, we discussed childhood wounds. One of the participants shared that his mother had passed away. Arrangements had been made for him to privately watch a video recording of the funeral earlier that day, and as he described seeing his extended family through the screen, he expressed the guilt and grief he carries because of the decisions that led to his incarceration. Watching the video made him realize how much he has missed his family's companionship and conversations with his late mother.

For many years, I have watched my wife, Hendrina, guide discussions about decisions that have unrealistic expectations and outcomes. She straightforwardly expresses that choices come with consequences. Each option leads to a different outcome, and we must decide which consequences we are willing to live with. Our communities grapple with ongoing consequences that result from a disregard for potential outcomes, such as unwanted children being born from personal gratification or divorces that stem from extramarital affairs. The list could go on and on.

Our students are paying the price for poor decisions made impulsively or due to errors in thinking that blur their judgment. This is an age-old challenge that traces back to the first family—Adam's choice to listen to Eve still echoes in the consequences we face today (Genesis 3:6–7). Judas, though he was openly called out by Jesus, still brought the soldiers to Him to have Him arrested (Luke 22:20–23, 47–48). Peter, confident in his expression of standing by Jesus, abandoned Him to save himself (Matthew 26:69–75).

As Christ-followers, we hold firm beliefs in the truth and power that Scripture provides. Since I started following Jesus, my decision-making process has taken a 180-degree turn. I now navigate my choices with a much different lens than I did before. Although I don't always get it right, I can't imagine where I would be if I hadn't made this shift.

*"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:9).*

As you write to your students:

- Reflect on how you navigate your decisions, and perhaps share one decision that proved successful and one that failed.
- Challenge your students to be examples of positive behavior for others in their daily decisions. Encourage them to look to God for wisdom if they are struggling to make a difficult decision.

Over the weeks we spent with the participant in our group, it has been clear that he is navigating his life as a Christ-follower. Despite the pain and regrets, he seems determined to seek healing through his faith. I give thanks to God for this because navigating life on his own could lead him down an unhealthy path. May we all look to God for wisdom in life's difficult decisions.

Serving alongside you,



Douglas Cupery  
Church Mobilization Director

**Have a question?** You can contact the mentor support team at [mentor@cpministries.org](mailto: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](mailto:GatheringsQA@cpministries.org), and we will use it as part of the discussion.

Tuesday, May 21, at 8:00 p.m. (ET)

URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84182956475?pwd=QWs1OGIYZTZlejVOSkcyOEc5NW9SUT09>

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

## Updating Your Home Church

In our database, each mentor is attached to a church code assigned to their place of worship. This allows us to effectively communicate with mentors and church staff. If you have changed where you attend church in the past several years and have not notified us, please call us or send an email to [mentor@cpministries.org](mailto:mentor@cpministries.org).

## *I See You* Now Available on Amazon!

If you have already read Doug's book, *I See You: Remembering the Incarcerated Through a Living Letter*, we hope you have benefited from the wisdom and guidance it contains. If you would like to order another copy or recommend it to a friend, you can search for it on Amazon or find the link at [cpministries.org/iseeyou](http://cpministries.org/iseeyou). Please consider leaving a review of the book on Amazon!

## Spanish-Speaking Mentors Needed

The 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. **We need your help!** If you have an opportunity to share this need within your network, please direct prospective mentors to [cmcarcelario.org](http://cmcarcelario.org) to find more information.

## Lesson Reformatting

We continue to navigate the ongoing challenges posed by changes in mail policies at correctional institutions nationwide. Currently, we are unable to deliver Crossroads lessons to 127 institutions. We anticipate an increase in the number of institutions that electronically scan mail to be read on a tablet or distributed as a photocopied version. Unfortunately, our current booklet format is not conducive to scanning or photocopying, which can negatively impact the student experience.

To address this, we are in the process of reformatting our lessons to ensure compatibility with scanning or photocopying. This is a large project that we believe will help us better serve our students. By late summer, mentors will begin receiving reformatted lessons from students. While the content remains unchanged, the lessons will now be printed on 8.5-by-11-inch sheets of paper instead of the traditional booklet format. The prototypes have received positive feedback, and this change will offer us the opportunity to reach more students with the hope of the Gospel. We will keep you updated as the project moves forward.