

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



NOVEMBER 2024

Dear Mentor,

For fifteen years, I worked as a paramedic and registered nurse for an ambulance service. It was a privilege to care for and comfort the sick, the dying, and those who were injured. Our bodies are both remarkable and fragile. In my role, I meet people in many situations, from all walks of life and economic backgrounds. If you're not careful, it's easy to become numb to the trauma, suffering, and pain you encounter. Too often, I met people who caused harm at crime scenes and were acting out. Looking back, I realize I became callous toward them, thinking, "They'll never change; they're just getting what they deserve"—until I found myself causing harm at a crime scene.

The Apostle Paul was causing harm, trying to destroy those proclaiming Jesus as the Savior. His heart was hardened by his beliefs, and he felt justified in his actions. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" What's in our hearts shows in our words and actions. Paul's selfishness, pride, and anger came from his deceitful heart.

As Paul's story unfolds, we see God was pursuing him, just as He pursues us. We are all born with deceitful hearts, but this isn't God's desire for us (2 Corinthians 5:17). Only through Him can our hearts be transformed (Philippians 1:6). God pursues us and calls us to examine our hearts and strive to be more like Him (Psalm 139:7-10). He invites us to a change—starting with a change of heart (Romans 12:2).

When a student signs up for Crossroads and begins the Bible lessons, I believe something inside them is longing for change. Some know that change is a lifelong journey of becoming more like Jesus. Others may be realizing they need to live differently but are unsure where to start or how to find the right path.

Encourage your student by sharing how God pursues us. He reaches out to us, no matter where we are—even if we've made our bed in the depths (Psalm 130:8). When we ask Him to save us, He does. When we ask for healing, He heals (Jeremiah 17:14). And when we ask Him to change our hearts, to help us grow and be more like Him, He opens that door (Psalm 51:10). Remind your students that heart transformation is a journey (Philippians 3:12-14). There will be challenges, but it's worth the effort.

I no longer believe what I once thought—that certain people can't change. I've learned that I am no different from anyone else, even those we might consider the worst. God is a God of justice, but He is also a God of mercy and grace. My own journey toward heart change has transformed my perspective.

Serving alongside you,



Douglas Cupery
Director of Church Engagement

Have a question? You can contact the mentor support team at mentor@cpministries.org or 800-668-2450.

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NEWS & NOTES

Mentor Q&A

This month's Q&A session is all about going back to the basics! We'll work through a lesson together and address some common scenarios you might encounter, such as blank answers, wrong answers, or great answers! This session is designed to be helpful for both new mentors and those who've been with us for a while and could use a refresher.

If you have questions about lesson reviewing that you'd like to discuss during the session, please email them to GatheringsQA@cpministries.org. For questions specific to your student, please email mentor@cpministries.org or call (800) 668-2450. We'll get back to you as soon as possible.

Tuesday, November 19, at 3:00 p.m. (ET)

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

Meeting ID: 841 8295 6475

Passcode: 329410

Virtual Coffee with Joe

In addition to this month's Q&A, we invite you to join other mentors and supporters for a virtual coffee hour with Crossroads' president and CEO, Joe Pryor, on Thursday, November 7, at 10 a.m. (ET).

Joe will share highlights from the 2023–2024 Impact Report, some "wow, God!" moments, and plans and goals for the ministry's end-of-year campaign.

Visit cpministries.org/events to register and receive your virtual meeting invitation.

Positive Conversations

As election results come in, it's easy for conversations to become divisive. We encourage you to remind your students that our hope is in Christ, not in worldly powers. As followers of Christ, we are called to respect our leaders and love our neighbors, even when we disagree. When writing to students, focus on their Bible studies and the work God is doing in their lives through His Word.

In Tier 1, please avoid discussions that don't help the student grow in their relationship with God. In Tier 2 and Tier 3, if you choose to discuss areas of disagreement, be respectful and kind, seeking common ground. Remember, it's not our job to convince others—that's the Holy Spirit's work. Strive to reflect Christ in all your interactions with students.

Christmas Cards Reminder

As the holiday season approaches, please remember not to send Christmas cards to your Tier 1 students. Crossroads sends Christmas cards to all eligible students and a Christmas letter to those in facilities where cards aren't allowed.

If you'd like to send a card to your Tier 2 or Tier 3 students, you may do so if their facility permits it. You can check this information in your mentor portal or by contacting us at mentor@cpministries.org. Make sure any cards you send are in plain white envelopes and don't include glitter, stickers, or pop-out features.