

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



FEBRUARY 2026

Dear Mentor,

The secured iron gates closed behind us as we made our way into the segregation unit of the prison. The corridor was lined with cinder block walls and dimly lit, with a row of barred cells along one side. As we walked down the hallway, we encountered a man we had met the day before in a "round-table" Bible study. He had been transferred to segregation the previous night in preparation for his execution, which was scheduled for two days later.

He greeted each of us as we made our way to a small room with a table next to his cell. His presence was peaceful as he expressed gratitude for our visit. Seating himself at the table, we gathered around him as he quietly opened his Bible. He began walking us through the Scriptures he wanted to share, ministering to us as he spoke about his hope as he faced execution. His words reflected a deep trust in the Lord:

"In you, LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame.

In your righteousness, rescue me and deliver me;

turn your ear to me and save me.

Be my rock of refuge,

to which I can always go;

give the command to save me,

for you are my rock and my fortress" (Psalm 71:1-3).

I do not know the details of his crime or the pain and loss he caused the victim and loved ones. This suffering is real and difficult to comprehend. Also, the emotional and spiritual toll on prison staff who carry out executions should not be overlooked. The men in every other prison unit we visited knew what was to come in two days.

Sitting before us was a man condemned by society, deemed worthy of death for his actions. This same man placed his hope in Jesus. He embraced the mercy and grace freely given to him and shared that truth with us (Hebrews 4:16). Though society gave him no way out, he held on to a greater truth.

"The disciples were even more amazed and said to each other, 'Who then can be saved?' Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God'" (Mark 10:26-27).

I encourage you to reflect on this as you write to your student. Jesus' blood, which dripped from the nails in His hands, covers the sins of even those we consider the worst (Ephesians 1:7). Our hope is in Jesus (1 Peter 1:3), and He is our only path to salvation (John 14:6). With God, all can seek rescue and refuge.

My tendency is to suppress hard memories, but I pray I do not push this one down. As we sang and laid hands upon the condemned, we knew he was already claimed by God. What is impossible for man is possible for God, as His mercy had the final word.

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

February Mentor Q&A Gathering: Spring Speaker Series

Please join us as we hear from Allis Gilbert, Vice President of Advancement and Finance. Allis will review our financial report and go over some advancement strategies we are focusing on in the coming year.

See you there!

If you have specific questions about this topic, please send them in advance to GatheringsQA@cpministries.org.

Date: Tuesday, February 17, at 3:00 p.m. (ET)

Open your phone's camera to scan the QR code and register online.

We look forward to seeing you there!



REGISTER

Print what you need at home

If you go to our website, you can find extra resources you may need or find helpful for your mentoring experience. Go to cpministries.org, click on the "Resources" drop-down, and then select "For Mentors." Under "Documents," click "Printable Resources." Here you will find answer keys available to print or download, extra stationery to print, and lesson logs you can print at home.

Letter with every lesson

In recent months, we've seen an increase in lessons being returned without an encouragement letter for the student. This letter is a required and essential part of our program, and it provides significant value to the students we serve.

Please remember to include a letter with every lesson you review. If you're going through a busy season or find yourself falling behind, we're happy to place you on hold for a while. You may also mail the lesson back to us so we can reassign it to another mentor, ensuring the student receives the full experience.

Printing encouragement letters

We ask that mentors either print their letters or type them on a computer. Some students are not able to read cursive and therefore cannot receive the encouragement you intended to share with them. Ensuring your letters are printed or typed helps every student fully benefit from your support.