

JUST FOR MENTORS

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



OCTOBER 2026

Dear Mentor,

As I rounded a bend on a wooded trail I had walked many times with my dogs, I heard what sounded like a barking dog deep in the woods. The sound grew louder until I spotted what looked like a German Shepherd running toward us—a loose dog.

Then I realized it wasn't a dog. It was a coyote.

Each time I yelled or threw a stick, it backed away, circled through the trees, and returned even closer. I was alone, and the safety of my car was a long way behind me. The coyote showed no sign of leaving.

Covered in sweat, I remembered there was a house farther down the trail and kept moving toward it. Holding the dogs close, we climbed the last hill with the coyote charging to within just a few feet of us. After leaving the trail and pushing through the woods, we reached the safety of the porch. The coyote retreated.

Life has its dangers, both physical and spiritual. Many of our students know what it feels like to be pursued by things that once controlled them. Addictions, unhealthy relationships, and old patterns of thinking can suddenly confront them. Even after placing their faith in Jesus, those struggles often wait for an opportunity to return.

*"The Lord will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
the Lord will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore" (Psalm 121:7–8).*

As you write, consider sharing the truth that God does not always remove the dangers around us, but He promises to walk with us through them. Encourage your student to stay close to Him through prayer (Psalm 145:18), Scripture, and daily trust (Psalm 37:5). Our safest place is always in His care.

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

A week later, I was driving to another park when a coyote trotted across the road and disappeared into those same woods.

The coyote was still there, but so was God.

He had faithfully watched over my coming and going.

Serving alongside you,



Douglas Cupery

Director of Church Engagement

P.S. The day I turned in this article, I found myself back in those same woods I had avoided for weeks. In the early morning, I picked up the first large stick I saw beside the trail. Anxiety and fear tried to overtake me. I scanned the woods and cautiously took my first steps onto the trail, keeping the dogs close. With each step forward, God's presence carried me all the way to the end of the trail.

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

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NEWS & NOTES

October Mentor Community Gathering

John Collier, speaker and author of the autobiography *Inside Out, a Father's Love*, will share how childhood trauma and PTSD shaped the course of his life, led to incarceration, and ultimately brought him to new life in Christ. He will also discuss his journey toward healing and restoration.

Through his personal story, John will provide firsthand insight into the challenges many incarcerated men and women face and demonstrate the impact a committed mentor can have. Mentors will leave with a deeper understanding of their students, greater awareness of how trauma can shape a person's life, and renewed encouragement to mentor with intentionality.

To help us prepare and provide the best answers, feel free to email your questions to us in advance to **GatheringsQA@cpministries.org**.

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 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

Two Initiatives Launching This Month

Spanish Curriculum

This month, students and mentors in our Spanish program will begin using new curriculum covering topics such as reentry, developing a biblical mindset, serving God while incarcerated, and making the most of the mentoring experience. Please continue praying that these new courses will be a blessing to both students and mentors as they study God's Word together.

Digital Lessons

This month, we are also launching digital lessons for students in a select number of facilities that no longer allow physical mail. Over time, we hope to expand access to additional facilities.

Through our partnership with Edovo, a learning platform for incarcerated people, students in participating facilities will be able to continue studying Crossroads lessons digitally. While these students will complete their lessons online, mentors will continue receiving students' responses through the postal mail.

Watch your email for more information in the coming weeks!

Upcoming Crossroads In-Person Mentor Gatherings

- College Station, Texas (October 2026)
- Glendale, Arizona (November 2026)

For more information and to register for upcoming events, visit our events page at **cpministries.org/events**.