

God has called every Christian to “make disciples.” However, every Christian is not called to be a mentor to prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families. Mentoring this population is a special calling and is one of the most demanding ministries within Prison Fellowship.

Prison Fellowship has recognized that effective Christian mentors generally meet the following qualifications. They should:

- Model mature Christian character and stability
- Have the ability to build and maintain healthy relationships
- Respond well to supervision and direction
- Be honest, reliable, and trustworthy
- Have discernment and not be easily manipulated
- Be able to speak the truth in love
- Have no personal problems that might affect the mentoring relationship
- Understand the importance of rules and are willing to live by them
- Be teachable and willing to learn
- Thoroughly understand the mentoring requirements of the program
- Feel God is calling them to mentoring ministry
- Be willing to make a long-term commitment

One of the most important things a mentor does for a mentee is to provide a model of godly behaviors and attitudes. Mentoring is an opportunity for growth and development for both mentor and mentee as their relationship with each other and their fellowship with Christ grows.

Effective mentors have these common characteristics:

- The ability to look past circumstances in the mentee’s life and find positive potential that can be developed
- An attitude of tolerance and patience, understanding that the growth process takes time and trusting God for transformation of the mentee’s life
- The ability to empathize with the many failures the mentee has experienced and focus on being an encourager rather than a fault finder
- The insight and wisdom to help the mentee maintain a balanced lifestyle
- The ability and willingness to share personal experiences that may encourage the mentee
- The ability to direct the mentee to specific Bible passages and Christian literature that will help him or her become grounded in the faith
- Strong connections to a local church and a large network of resources within the community to help the mentee with transitional needs

Romans 11:29 reminds us that “God’s gifts and His call are irrevocable.” Is being a mentor what God is calling you to do? Set aside some time to seek the Lord’s confirmation of your becoming a mentor at this season in your life. Is now the time? When you feel confident this is where God has called you to minister, rest in the knowledge that He will equip and provide wisdom for this important role.

For information about mentoring opportunities in your area, call 800-251-7411 to speak with Prison Fellowship staff. They can also help you register to take PF’s free mentor training course.