

Requests for Money, Stamps, Packages

IPPM Mentor Resource

DEAR IPPM MENTOR: You have *responded* to the Lord Jesus Christ's call to **SERVE** on His team – ministering to His prisoners. He has infused you with His extraordinary love and courage, and in Him – you are strong. Thank you for saying YES to Jesus, for serving with **In Perfect Peace Ministries**, and for ministering Christ's grace to your hurting prisoner(s).

BE AWARE: Inmate manipulators do exist – you need to be alert to this possibility. “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, *be wise as serpents and harmless as doves*. But beware...” Matthew 10:16-17 **In our experience, these are the minority.** But just be aware - not every inmate who reaches out to you is seeking repentance, change - or Jesus.

MANIPULATION (definition): to manage or control artfully, or by shrewd use of influence; to “con.”

MANIPULATORS: In order to make their stay as comfortable as possible, **some** prisoners will seek to “influence” you to send **money orders, stamps, and/or packages** their way. To them, you are a means to an end – and object to be used. Playing on your compassion, **they'll request your financial aid**, implying that **their basic needs are not being met** by the authorities (stamps, envelopes, paper, clothing, toiletries, education). **BE AWARE!** What you send to meet their “need”, (i.e., a book of stamps) is easily **traded for comfort items** like coffee, chips, sodas. In prison, stamps are “**currency**”.

PROBLEM AREAS: (1) **Financial** scams (2) **Romantic** attachments (3) **Ulterior** motives (4) **Post-release** support

- **FINANCIAL:** “That’s against IPPM’s guidelines”, “I’m not comfortable with that”, “Let me check with the prison”
- **ROMANTIC:** State IPPM’s purpose. “**THAT** is my purpose with you – nothing else.”
- **ULTERIOR:** State IPPM’s purpose. “I cannot engage in legal counsel or support.”
- **PAROLE:** State IPPM’ purpose. “Post-release support is not our charter; perhaps we can steer you to help.”

WHAT TO SAY: In response to requests for packages, money, or dating services, *I always remind them what our IPPM charter is* (at the bottom of the Prisoner Questionnaire, page 2): “**Please understand this simple policy of IN PERFECT PEACE MINISTRIES: Our purpose is to provide a correspondence connection that will aid individuals in finding Jesus Christ as their savior and then growing in the Christian faith. We exist to encourage teach and provide truth from the Bible.**” THIS is the service we provide. We are a zero-budget small crew ministering to thousands. So, if it’s friendship and biblical mentoring you desire, THAT’s what we do. We offer you our love, our TIME.”

DON'T:

- Forget IPPM’s purpose
- Forget YOUR purpose
- Send Money Orders
- Co-sign Loans
- Send Money for Legal Fees
- Give your home address or phone number
- Engage in Business
- Engage Romantically

DO:

- Remember IPPM’s purpose
- Remember YOUR purpose
- Use a PO BOX (or church address)
- Be Aware of Con Games
- Learn Your Inmate’s Prison Policies & Procedures
- Verify Information
- “Walk Worthy” of Your Calling (Ephesians 4:1)
- Be Assertive and Say NO

TESTIMONY: When I was a prisoner, I cherished my outside mentors’ love, friendship, and guidance. NOT ONCE did I ask any of them for money, stamps, or packages. I wanted them to know that it was their precious love, encouragement, friendship, and biblical guidance that I craved – and nothing else. I wanted to honor them. If they offered, I gratefully received their gifts – typically books. **BE AWARE:** If your prisoner is **asking** for gifts – consider that a “red flag”. If God puts it on your heart to give a gift – that’s a different story.

