



TUNED TO SORROW

BY VICKI SAIRS

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“Sorrow and love flow mingled down.”

Isaac Watts knew how to turn a phrase. This one comes from his hymn about Jesus on the cross, just after the line: “See from His head, His hands, His feet.” Watts doesn’t mention the blood, but we all know it’s there, flowing down with all that love and sadness.

I know this song is about Jesus, but the phrase itself strikes me as something that most mothers experience too. Having children is an exercise in sorrow and love, isn’t it?

The love part seems easy enough, at least at first, when you can’t believe there’s anything as beautiful as your baby. There he is, lying on your stomach, tiny and warm, trusting you to be his bed. His foundation, even. His place of safety.

He doesn’t know any better.

The sorrow comes later, when you realize that you can’t protect your baby from everything that might damage her. Wounds will come, sometimes even through you.

It hurts to have your soul pierced. Having children opens you up to this pain.

You aren’t God. You won’t always say or do the right thing. You won’t always be there for her. And even when you are there, you may not see what she really needs.

How hard is this?

It’s hard enough that even when you’re as old as I am, you can be gripped in the middle of the night by a fear, an unsettling dream, a whisper that won’t leave you alone. “Why did I react that way?” or “If I had just trusted my instincts,” or, the worst, “How could I have missed that?”

Not all mothers go through this, but many do. They listen to Simeon talking to Mary in the temple and shudder. He held her baby in his ancient arms and said, “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel . . . so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

It hurts to have your soul pierced. Having children opens you up to this pain. I’m not Mary and neither are you, but we can still

imagine something of the love and sorrow she experienced, carrying the Messiah. She gave birth to the Son of God and watched over him, loved him, and enjoyed his beauty. How could she not?

She must have made mistakes as his mom. And she knew deep sorrow.

On one of those nights when I woke up at 3 am, knowing it would be a while before I could silence the voices in my head and get back to sleep, I stumbled out to the living room, crashed on the couch, and put on headphones to listen to a devotional app. The music in my ears was lovely, choral, in a different language, but so moving I didn’t need to understand the words.

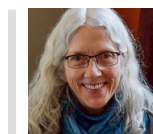
A quiet voice identified the tune. I misheard the title as “My Heart Is Tuned to Sorrow”¹ and thought, well, yes, it is. That’s a good description of my heart. I closed my eyes and went with the voices to the foot of the cross and stood there with Mary, looking up at Jesus. And I couldn’t stop weeping. Oh, Mary, I thought. Oh, Jesus. All this sadness.

I wept and wept, standing at the cross with Jesus’ mother. So many mothers weeping, such a sharp sword piercing our souls. But in the middle of this grieving, I felt a strange sense of peace. I thought, maybe my heart is tuned to sorrow. Maybe that’s okay.

Sorrow and love do flow together from a mother’s heart. A sword does pierce our soul, repeatedly. We can’t avoid it. To all the mothers reading this: wounds will come, sometimes through you. That’s a hard truth, and you’re allowed to cry about it. But Jesus knows sorrow, and he loves you—and your child.

¹ *Versa Est In Luctum*, by Alonso Lobo.

Photo credit: Rebecca Scholz - Pixabay



Vicki retired from Rosedale Bible College to write novels, but shows up on campus to teach literature and writing. She and her husband, Reuben, attend London Christian Fellowship. They have three sons, two daughters-in-law, and one sassy old cat.



30 Years of REACH

BY MADALYN

In 1992, the Annual Report for Rosedale International (then Rosedale Mennonite Missions) stated, “This year marked the beginning of the pilot REACH program, based in Rosedale and Cincinnati. Twelve young people completed three months of intensive discipleship training and then formed ministry teams for three months of outreach in Israel and Kenya. Possible teams for 1993 include Taiwan, Russia, Israel, Kenya, and a circuit-riding Hispanic ministries team.”

Since these fledgling beginnings in ‘92, over seven hundred REACH students—a total of 155 teams—have collectively served as Kingdom workers in 34 countries around the world. Some aspects of the program have changed—REACH is now based in Columbus, includes six months of outreach, and sends 26 students and five teams per year on average. But the heart and goal of REACH, *to mentor, disciple, and equip young adults to pursue a life of devotion to God, no matter where they find themselves*, has remained.

In the fall of 2022, Rosedale International (RI) will send teams on outreach for the thirtieth year in a row. In anticipation of this anniversary, we asked both current and former REACHers to reflect on their time in the program. Their responses revealed common themes of joy, worldview expansion, and deep spiritual growth that run through an experience in REACH.

Candice, RI worker in Thailand, served in Ecuador with REACH in 1996. She was excited to worship in a new language, observe leaders sacrificially serve their congregations, and meet young believers who embraced her team. “God was working in Ecuador just like he was back home. It felt so free and so fun to be a part of something bigger than myself and my small world,” she remembered. “Their faith encouraged my faith. I feel incredibly fortunate that I got a chance to learn from Ecuadorian Christians and to enjoy and learn about that culture.”

Looking back, Candice credits her time in REACH with planting the seed for her life in missions: “God began preparing my heart way back then for a life in his upside-down kingdom.”

David, three-time REACH alum and current RI worker in the Mediterranean, shared the aspects of REACH that compelled him to return. “Discipleship training school (DTS) was such a rich time of learning and growth; I wanted to go through it again

to absorb more of the knowledge and wisdom offered to us. I learned that the world is a big place, full of lots of different people and incredible diversity—yet despite these vast differences, we were all created for relationship with our Father.”

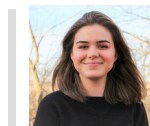
“For me, REACH was the beginning of a new direction in life,” reflected Kurt, part of 2016’s Team Eurasia and currently leader of Team Albania. “I learned that I was not made to be a solo Christian. God taught me that I was designed for and needed a supportive community—and gave me a love for the church and for people that I did not possess on my own.”

When RI staff sent out the first REACH teams in 1992, they could not have known the scope and influence that the program would have both locally and globally. Out of CMC, REACH has borne mission workers, church planters, youth pastors, and believers passionate about living out the gospel. Overseas, a harvest is growing and spreading through the impact of the program. As David aptly summarized, “REACH created a platform for me to step out of my little world and accept [God’s] invitation to go be his hands and feet. It helped me connect the things that I had always known as truth to this big world and my role in it. If one is willing to commit and apply themselves to REACH and to God, it can be a life changing experience. It certainly was for me.”

In two weeks, RI will welcome home our three REACH 2021-22 teams—fourteen young men and women transformed by nine months of discipleship training and outreach. They join REACH’s long legacy of Kingdom workers, equipped to follow Jesus and share his love wherever they go.

If you are interested in exploring what it means to actively step out in your faith and learn tools for leadership and disciple-making, we invite you to join us for REACH 2022-23. You can apply at rosedaleinternational.org/reach/.

Some names and locations have been changed for security.



Madalyn lives in Rosedale, Ohio. She recently graduated from Grace College & Seminary and serves as Media Coordinator at Rosedale International.



multiply 2022

July 22-24 | McHenry, MD
Garrett County Fairground

THRIVE

What is the Multiply conference?

An oft-debated question among the planners of CMC’s Multiply Conference is, “What is the purpose of our annual gathering?” Is fellowship the primary purpose? Is it to be an equipping event for ministry leaders? Is it meant to be primarily inspirational? Those are all good things, and we hope they all happen at Multiply 2022, but those things can also be experienced at many other conferences. Is there a unique purpose for which we gather each year? We propose that amidst the other reasons we gather, **the overarching purpose is to celebrate our life together as a body and recommit ourselves to the mission to which God has called us.** As a body made up of local churches, a Bible college, and a mission agency, we have stories to tell of God’s goodness and how he has been at work in our midst. Let’s tell those stories! And let’s be inspired to embrace anew our mission to mature and multiply churches locally and globally.

JOIN US JULY 22-24!!
Garrett County Fair Grounds
270 Mosser Rd
McHenry, MD 21541



Expo Building



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PLENARY SESSIONS – Expo Building

Worship Leader – Annette Miller

FRIDAY EVENING 6:30-8:00 pm

Plenary Session 1

Our Stories

Join us for an evening of inspiration as we share stories of how God is using our churches, Rosedale Bible College, and Rosedale International to help individuals thrive in their walk with Jesus.

SATURDAY MORNING 9:00 am

Moderator's Address – Phil Swartzentruber

Seminar & Table-Talk Session 1 10:30 am

Where are We Now? Understanding Rural – and Why It Matters – Brad Roth

In this session, we'll look at characteristics of rural and ask how rural's unique contours shape the work of the church. How can we see, love, and impact our communities for the sake of the kingdom?

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Seminar & Table-Talk Session 2 1:15 pm

More with Less in God's Country – Brad Roth

In this wounded moment, God is calling the church to both more and less: more love for him and passion for sharing the gospel, and a let-go-and-let-God passionate *less* that depends on God's presence and power. How can we learn the art of more-with-less for God in rural places?

Seminar & Table-Talk Session 3 2:30 pm

How to Light a Fire: Prayer in the Rural Church – Brad Roth

The church is a divine-human alloy guided by the Holy Spirit and sent into the world. Prayer keeps the supernatural nature of the church front and center and fuels God's people for mission. In this session, we'll talk—and practice!—prayer to spark a new fire in our lives and congregations.

SATURDAY EVENING 6:30-8:00 pm

Plenary Session 2

Characteristics of a Thriving Church – Wes Furlong

SUNDAY MORNING 10:00-11:30 am

Children's Church

Plenary Session 3

God's Mission for the Church – Wes Furlong



www.cmcrosedale.org

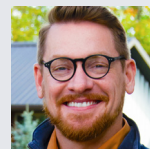


For more information and to register, visit our website.

YOUTH SESSIONS – Cherry Glade Mennonite Church
Saturday - 10:45 - 3:30 (Lunch c/o RBC)

Theme: *But God...*

Speaker: John Risner



John Risner
Mennonite
Christian Assembly

Door prizes throughout the day and activities in the evening!
Check our website for updates!

CHILDREN'S CLASSES Nursery - 8th grade

Theme: *Components of a Thriving Spiritual Life*

Registration & Check-In - TBA

Additional care for nursery/preschool children will be available during the Friday and Saturday evening sessions, 6:30-8:00 pm.

To register your children, visit our website.

SPECIAL EVENTS

- CMC Multi-Agency Reception Friday Evening
- Second Wind Bluegrass Band Saturday Evening
- Children's Features by James Miller
- Introduction of New Congregations
- Passing the Moderator's Baton
- Introduction of CMC's Church Planting Catalyst
- Introduction to CMC Church Plant - Morgantown, WV
- Hymn sing at the old Cherry Glade Meeting House
- Round Table with RI field workers
- Experience REACH - Come see what serving with REACH could look like for you!



Phil Swartzentruber
CMC Moderator



Preston Yoder
CMC
Moderator Elect



Annette Miller
Dir. of Worship
Oak Dale Church

Brad lives in rural Moundridge, Kansas with his wife and three sons where he serves as pastor of West Zion Mennonite Church.



Brad Roth
Guest Speaker



Wes Furlong
Guest Speaker

Wes, Director of Church Development for Evana Network, served as lead pastor at Cape Christian for 11 years before joining Evana.



“Mistakes Were Made”

(Part 4)

BY JOHN RISNER



How Can We Get Accountability and Church Discipline Right?

Oral Roberts University shocked the world when they beat Ohio State in the 2021 March Madness tournament. The Oklahoma-based Christian school went on to win again in the next round as a 15 seed, and became one of the biggest stories of the men's basketball tournament.

However, as the school came into the national spotlight, not everyone was cheering for them. A writer for *USA Today* suggested a protest because of the school's conservative views.

Cancellation seems to be the order of the day. If someone doesn't align with what we consider proper, we lose them faster than a toupee in a hurricane! Cancel culture says if you have messed up, you get canceled. In a bit of irony, the *USA Today* columnist was fired the day after calling for an ORU boycott... for an insensitive tweet.

We are no strangers to this in the church. Not only have we pioneered visible boycotts of companies and products, but we have enacted church discipline, put people under the ban, and excommunicated brothers and sisters, citing 1 Corinthians 5:13, “Expel the wicked person from among you” (NIV).

The goal is to restore the person in their walk with Christ and in their fellowship with others.

But there is a biblical model of warning people and walking with people before reaching the point of cancellation. It is called accountability. We offer grace, and we restore when someone has fallen. So how do we get accountability and church discipline right?

The context for 1 Corinthians 5 is that there was an incestuous relationship between a man and his stepmother that was not being dealt with. Paul says that this sin cannot go unchecked. The man needs to be dealt with for the salvation of his own soul and for the witness of the church. This kind of discipline is genuinely meant to help the sinner. It is done with love and

compassion. The goal is to restore the person in their walk with Christ and in their fellowship with others.

However, a very important distinction is made here. Holding a brother or sister accountable must only take place in matters of sin. This is not a grey area. This is not arbitrary, or based on cultural preferences. If and when an individual is placed under church discipline, it must be for a sin issue and no other. If it is done for reasons other than the biblical definition of sin, it is legalism. Human rules must never be enforced as if they are God's Word.

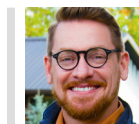
Accountability begins with living in community.

In our zeal to maintain our Anabaptist witness, we have often gotten this wrong. There are matters of personal conviction on which we can differ. We ought to accept one another and serve the Lord together without fear of being excommunicated.

Head coverings are an example of something which has been divisive. Can we let coverings be for those who want to honor God in this way, but not cast judgment on the ones who do not share those convictions? Choices of clothing and hairstyle are personal preferences. Food and drink choices differ. The use of technology, parenting philosophies, the wearing of jewelry, musical styles, and whether or not to get the COVID vaccine are not issues over which to break fellowship.

The Bible is explicitly clear on many sin issues: sexual immorality, greed, gossip, drunkenness, swindling, sorcery, pride, anger, stealing, lying, murder, lust, jealousy, hypocrisy, hatred, envy, blasphemy, idolatry, favoritism, complaining, and disobeying and dishonoring one's parents.

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John serves as lead pastor of Mennonite Christian Assembly (Fredericksburg, Ohio) and as an instructor for the Training in Ministry program at Rosedale Bible College. He and his wife Rachel have eight children.

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If the answer to wrongdoing is not cancellation, then should we adopt the "I'm OK, you're OK" mentality? "Live and let live? You do you?" No! If we truly have compassion, we speak into the lives of others with tact and love. We call out sin and implore the sinner to repent. And when they do, we help to restore and offer grace.

Sin within the church needs to be dealt with, not ignored. We need to cultivate loving communities of believers as safe places to learn from our mistakes and course-correct on our faith journey. Accountability begins with living in community. This means that we submit one to another. We do life together. We know each other and trust each other.

We have a responsibility to one another. We are called to come alongside one another and help bear the burden. This is the work of Christ. He came near to us and carried the burden that we ourselves could not carry. This is how we should experience accountability: side by side and hand in hand. And when we fall, we are met not with cancellation, but restoration.