

Scriptural and Theological Grounding

Christ-centered

Reality Ministries is founded on the scriptural precept that the Creator and God/man Jesus Christ is the only truth of the human race and that in his incarnation, life, death and resurrection he has embraced all persons at their sinful worst in order to redeem them for a relationship with himself and the Father by the Holy Spirit.

All things were created by him and for him (Col. 1: 16)

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and have been justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:23-24)

The Trinitarian/Incarnational Model

Reality Ministries ministers to young people through a Trinitarian/incarnational model. The Trinitarian emphasis contends that we can trust the compassionate picture of God we see in Jesus Christ: *in Christ all the fullness of deity lives in bodily form* (Col. 2:9). In the incarnational emphasis we acknowledge a holy God who refused to be separate from us but who was Immanuel, God with us: *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us* (Jn 1:14). Through the Trinitarian/incarnational model we desire to treat others in the way of Christ, embracing them at their worst and inviting them into friendship.

Congruence

While other youth ministries lay the groundwork in this same fashion, we believe a distinguishing feature of Reality Ministries is our conviction that this Trinitarian/incarnational emphasis should be maintained throughout the whole course of our ministry to young people. We strive for congruence between our proclamation theology and our practical ministry “on the ground.” For instance, we do not want to practice unconditional love, forgiveness and acceptance in our day to day interactions with young people only to later proclaim to them a gospel message that says God will love you, accept you and forgive you *if...*

Belonging and Presence

Reality Ministries believes that sharing the gospel involves declaring to adolescents the good news of the love and Lordship of Jesus Christ and their belonging to him by grace alone.

As Jesus preached the good news in the gospels, we want adolescents to be aware of the real presence of the Kingdom of God – the constant nearness of Immanuel. We can't wait to tell them; we don't want them to miss it! (Lk 17:20-21). We want adolescents to know and love the One who

knows and loves them on the most intimate level. Today's adolescents are often cynical and untrusting. In their brokenness they may be reluctant to reach out to God. How exciting it is to sweep these beloved young people off of their feet with the gospel, to surprise them with the grace of God and to make a strong claim on their lives that they belong not to themselves but to the Savior. *At the name of Jesus every knee will bow, in heaven and earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Phil. 2: 10-11).

Evangelical Repentance

We in Reality Ministries are convinced that a person cannot know who he is until he knows whose he is. We believe with many of the Church Fathers that forgiveness always precedes repentance, and that a person cannot truly repent until he knows he belongs to God. *God's kindness leads us to repentance* (Rom. 2:4), and by the Holy Spirit we are able to make a free personal response to God, entering a love relationship with the one who first loved us. Those who refuse to repent and believe, resisting the Spirit of grace, will not live eternally with God in heaven (Matt 12:30-32; Hebrews 10:29)

Inclusion

In Reality Ministries we look at every person as included in the redemption and reconciliation of the world accomplished by Christ; accordingly, we value all people with integrity and intrinsic worth because we know that because of Jesus Christ they are inside the blessing, not outside. Because God assumed human flesh in solidarity with all human beings, we believe we are meant to live our lives in solidarity with him.

While Jesus Christ is the most inclusive Person, he is at the same time the most exclusive – eternal life is found only in him. *I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except by me* (John 14:6). We desperately want our young friends to join us as we walk with Christ in the love of the Father by the Holy Spirit! We want them to participate in the Body of Christ. To reject a proper relationship with the Lord and Savior of the world can only destroy our relationship with God and our relationships with those around us (*they denied the Sovereign Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves, 2 Peter 2:2*).

One Truth One Message

We are convinced that the trajectory for discipleship is set in evangelism, and we believe preaching one message of truth to every person regardless of “category” (Christian, non-Christian, nominal Christian, high IQ, low IQ) pleases the Holy Spirit who is out to convict us of the futility of leading our own lives and convince us that we may find rest and purpose in the Faithfulness of God. It is a joy to watch as the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, brings people to a saving knowledge of the truth and to a place of free personal response to the gospel.

The assurance of knowing that God doesn't change his mind about us when we change our mind about him, the knowledge that he was committed to us before we could ever commit to him – under the sound of the gospel these foundational truths are worked through our minds and hearts

by the Spirit, and as we are reoriented by grace we become believing, obedient, faithful disciples of Christ (Rom 12:1,2).

Reconciliation

In light of the truth of Jesus Christ for all human beings, we in Reality Ministries refuse to be satisfied with a world-view that separates humanity from God or human beings from one another: *God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has given to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore ambassadors for Christ...* (2 Cor. 5: 19). We believe there is no better place to begin a ministry of reconciliation than with the young people in our community.