



Dr. Ramesh Richard spoke at Dallas Seminary's chapel before our world radically changed. Please request a link to the talk for encouragement.



RREACH

Ramesh Richard Evangelism and Church Health

*RREACH envisions changing the way
One Billion Individuals think and hear about the
Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Father,
and by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

The Rock ... & Relativism

Is Your View an Opinion or a Conviction?



This is the first of four devotional articles by Ramesh Richard examining the implications of the Lord Jesus Christ's claims about Himself. Please enjoy these insights for your spiritual growth and ministry.

If you know anyone seeking Truth at this time, this article may benefit them. Join us in prayer so that many will read these devotional articles and begin to think differently about the Lord Jesus.

"Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?'" (Matthew 16:13-15)

Relativism has nothing to do with relatives or relativity. My joke about relatives and relativity is that when a person becomes wealthy, it is only a matter of time (relativity) before relatives discover him! People who are relativists say that there is no absolute reality. This sure sounds like an absolute claim about reality.

If you believe all thought and life, belief and behavior, are relative, there is no reason to recommend them to others. For example, relativists believe that morality just comes from majority opinion. Whatever is practiced by the group is moral. Any knowledge is relative to each person's perception. Like clothing styles or ice cream flavors, what is reality is determined by preference. Some like vanilla, others chocolate, and yet others a mix of both.

Is There Anything Real?: Opinion

Is there anything real to support our existence outside of our opinion? I call it "the rock," from one of the key exchanges between Jesus and His disciples meant to move them from opinions to convictions about Him.

First, consider the identity of the rock as a rock. Is a rock real in itself, regardless of what we think about it? Today, many look at everything we know as just opinion and perception. People say that a rock may not be a rock if someone perceives it to be something else.

Graciously, but confidently, we insist on the obvious—that when reality confronts opinion, it must change to a conviction.

The Rock is Real: Opinion vs. Conviction

Have you seen a rock lately? Pick one up and examine it. You actually live on a big one about 25,000 miles in circumference. A rock, any rock, is a rock, not a non-rock. It is identifiable as a rock. More importantly, identifying a rock is not just an opinion. It is what corresponds with reality.

Jesus trained His disciples to reject a relativistic understanding of His identity. He first asked, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" Notice there is an identity to this Son of Man who actually is.

His survey received relativistic answers, reflecting personal opinion and cultural preference: John the Baptist. Elijah. Jeremiah. Or, like unprepared students on a multiple-choice exam, some chose the least risky, "One of the above!"

You Can't Ignore it!: Conviction

While willing to hear opinions and perceptions, Jesus does not accept relativistic views about Himself. In contrast to wrong opinion, He asks, "But who do you say that I am?"

In this first part of a longer "Rock" dialogue (which we will review over the course of four devotionals), Jesus does not permit disciples to hold relativistic views about Him.

He invites us to affirm who He is, as He understands Himself to be: the Son of Man.

"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13-14)

Jesus has made a determination about Himself. We cannot ignore the reality of His identity for all humanity's sake. For eternity's sake. We humbly affirm and joyfully accept Jesus' absolute view of Himself. 🙏

As COVID-19 began hitting shores around the globe, Dr. Ramesh Richard walked off a plane in Dallas, having just finished a proclamation trip to southern Africa. He returned to a new life of lockdown, temperature-taking and video-conferencing. The pandemic tsunami had crashed over the world. Much of life as we knew it shut down. Fast.

Though Dr. Richard went from itinerant to home-based proclaimer in the matter of a few hours, God's Word is not bound, the Final Commission is still in effect, and Christ Jesus has not stopped building His Church. Ramesh's speaking engagements actually increased!

Invitations to speak "live" poured in. Webinars with both Christian and pre-Christian audiences offered him wide exposure and new opportunities to proclaim God's Word, even while remaining in Dallas. He also managed to find a few hours to write. Have you read his "Testing, Testing, Testing: Sound Faith in a Global Pan(dem)ic" article or heard the talks that grew out of it? This reflection on our Trinitarian Faith has encouraged many. Let us know if you would like to receive them.

Wishing to be faithful to the global proclamation stewardship of RREACH, Dr. Richard devoted considerable time, prayer and strategic thought to assessing ministry execution amid the world's new (and potential) realities. "We are not pursuing certainty; we are pursuing clarity," he said. Major decisions resulted around:

- The 2020 Dallas Global Proclamation Academy. If the Lord allows, we will host a Dallas GProAcademy in June 2021.
- The 2020 Global Proclamation Congress for Trainers of Pastors of Latin America & the Caribbean. The Lord willing, the rescheduled event will take place November 2021.

The following is a glimpse of Ramesh Richard's life and ministry at Ground Zero (RREACH 0) during the last few months, in his own words:

Precious connections

Today, we are all dealing with alternate realities, with no place of safety except the safe arms of Jesus. March began with a visit to see a world-famous apologist and dear friend of five decades who had

been stricken with cancer. He has since gone to be with our Lord Jesus. He is missed more than words



Ramesh greets an online gathering of 21 of his Global Proclamation Associates.

can express. Also, the pastor of the fastest growing church in the world (125,000 in 12 years) came by our house to visit about his future.

Then, I called on (and continue to call on) a very dear

and newly widowed friend, one of America's great preachers, only offering the gift of presence. I intend to connect with old and new friends through video conferencing, a remarkable tool to keep up the precious gift of eternal friendships on earth.

Trip cut short

In early March, I had flown to South Africa to meet with leaders of a new organization, Re-Forma, which works on assuring the quality of pastoral training—a critical need in view of many non-formal initiatives. A pastor must have the confidence of God and people as he serves. Pastoral health affects church health.



Dr. Richard speaks to pastors in Botswana.

Then nations started closing down. I went on to Botswana to strengthen pastoral leaders and evangelize opinion leaders (about 10 of 63 present embraced the Savior). However, we heard that South Africa, my transit stop, would close its borders to non-citizens. I canceled my trip to Lesotho, and God opened an "impossible" airline seat on an itinerary through the U.K. to the U.S. I am grateful that through two subsequent weeks of taking my temperature twice a day, every reading was below normal.

“Prayerful thought, thoughtful decisions, decisive action”

With itinerant work suspended and two major events postponed, my mental space and time have been significantly preoccupied with prayerfully rethinking, even reinventing, this *global proclamation ministry*.

Today, we are all dealing with alternate realities, with no place of safety except the safe arms of Jesus.

We decided not to furlough any staff—we already run a lean organization. Next, we met in four three-hour sessions. First, we question-stormed this statement: *RREACH must seize this time of global anxiety for the best amplification of God’s Word through Ramesh Richard in the deepest, widest and fastest ways*. Second, we came up with the best ideas to address select and recurring questions submitted by colleagues. Finally, we discussed the next actionable areas on which to concentrate in this new season. I have fantastic, smart and hardworking co-workers. Now we are on to “getting it done!”

“rr Live”

Live-streaming provides me with a larger reach of ministry at short notice. Each Sunday night we hold **PRAYERREACH**, a precious and fast 30 minutes of accents lifted from all over the world—Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and even North Texas—for needs arising from virus-stricken global, national and local situations. I wish you would join me. See page 6 for details.

Daily **Wisdom and Peace Contagion** short video talks “from my home desk” grew out of the two most important prayer requests I receive from peers during this stressful season: wisdom for and peace in decisions. These biblical-theological-spiritual presentations are available in written



or video lecture format; see RREACH.org/WisdomandPeaceContagion.

“Back to the Bugle”

As staff and board meetings have helped us reset RREACH ministry, the image of a bugle helps us metaphorically capture the purpose of this Global Proclamation Ministry with ease and clarity. I proclaim God’s Word personally; RREACH amplifies the proclamation globally and multiplies the proclamation locally.

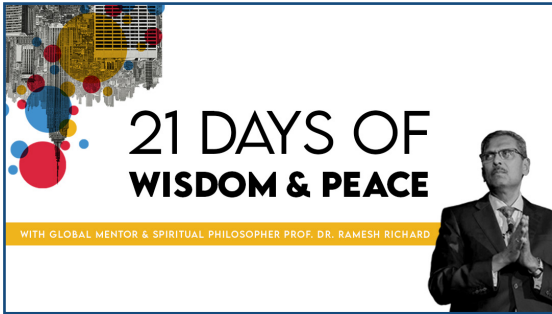


Christ Jesus is still building His Church

While many say they are experiencing times of quiet, my activities have not reduced significantly. On a video call with 23 of our Global Proclamation Associates—who go when and where I can’t—many talked about more time available for family. Bonnie really thinks I have less time available! In spite of all that is going on, Jesus is still building His Church, still populating heaven by selection, provision and invitation. Will you join me in working to distribute spiritual health worldwide? 🙏

With strategic adjustments necessary, RREACH turned focus and efforts to Media Proclamation—utilizing online platforms for a "Most Maximum Ministry."

By God's grace, RREACH already had a long-term, established media project. **LifeRocks**, our online outreach to pre-Christians, runs series of short videos featuring Dr. Richard talking about common life questions and engaging viewers in spiritual conversations.



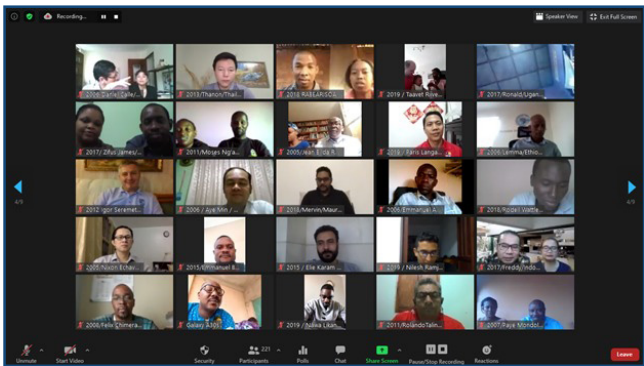
RREACH expanded this project by repackaging some of his many talks into 21-day themed series designed to move viewers toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

New seasonal and special news-sensitive talks were distributed around the world on secular platforms like YouTube, iTunes and Spotify, as well as the Christian-focused giant RightNow Media.

Team members have edited Dr. Richard's material for a new spiritual life journal. He is working on another one based on the Psalms of praise. Please pray for continued efforts and for favor in finding a good publishing house for his new book promoting the Lord Jesus. 🙏



RREACH has ventured into online gatherings, thanks to God's gift of colleagues well-versed in digital events. When we had to cancel the 2020 Dallas GProAcademy, Dr. Richard invited the already-accepted candidates to a video conference call, just to communicate the RREACH ethos of pastoral and personal care.



RREACH held a regathering of Dallas GProAcademy graduates from all years.

Nineteen young pastors joined in from Chad, Argentina, Mali, Guyana, Indonesia and more, eager to connect, looking forward to 2021. They will be given priority opportunity to reapply. They also expressed prayer requests for countries and ministries under the COVID-19 onslaught.

We held a video conference with the President's GProAssociates to discuss how we can better minister during this difficult time, especially where economic and health systems are inadequate.

At the end of June, when we typically hold the Dallas GProAcademy graduation banquet, RREACH instead hosted a Global ReGathering of Dallas GProAcademy graduates over the Zoom video-conferencing platform. We had a high turn-out of 183 graduates (since 2005 from 90+ countries), whose joy at seeing their classmates, Dr. Richard and others seemed uncontainable.

Connecting with these pastors gave us a glimpse of the front-line ravages of COVID-19 and its subsequent shutdowns. Even though many pastors themselves were in great need, they were more concerned about



This pastor from Bangladesh had run out of food; God sent Bless1000Pastors help at the right time.

the people under their ministry care. RREACH launched **Bless1000Pastors** to specifically help pastors and their families in the midst of this crisis. To learn more about God's amazing provision of over three-and-a-half times our goal, see page 7. This project is now closed. And yet these real needs never go away.

Our team is also using this time to work on setting up a series of online courses for leaders, preachers, theologians and trainers, making Dr. Richard's training resources available to many more serving locally around the globe.

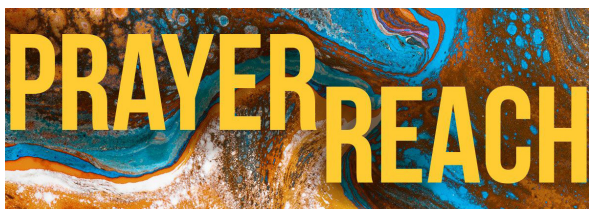
This process of inspiration, innovation and implementation toward the proclamation of God's Word continues at RREACH. If you're on social media, check out our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages. Follow our new ministry prayer blog at RREACH.org/pray4rameshrichard, which contains fresh ministry updates, ways you can pray for RREACH, and links to Ramesh Richard's talks and articles.

"In these unusual times, our mission continues," Ramesh says. "God is opening up ways and means in answer to my desire and prayer for the RREACH + side (amplifying the proclamation globally) to be enhanced—a return to our charter as our future."

Pray with us that RREACH will pursue a most maximum ministry of the amplification of God's Word anywhere and to anyone by every wise means possible. 🙏

PRAYERREACH

The prayer power has never been tried to its full capacity. If we want to see mighty wonders of divine power and grace wrought in the place of weakness, failure and disappointment, let us answer God's standing challenge, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not!"
—Hudson Taylor



Ramesh Richard invites you to join him for prayer each Sunday evening (US Central Time).

This 30-minute time of intercession, started during the early intensity of the COVID-19 pandemic, has become one of his most anticipated times of the week. Friends from all over—

Malaysia, Guyana, Niger, India, Japan, North Texas and more—gather via Zoom teleconference (audio only) to pray over matters concerning our world.

Dr. Richard welcomes you to participate in this valued and short prayer time with a global and eternal focus. Should you have any questions or wish to have call details, please contact Melissa@RREACH.org. 🙏

BLESS1000PASTORS

MORE THAN WE ASKED



"There was not a single penny in my hand ..."

That's how one pastor's note of thanks began—his family was one of the 3,695 pastors' families who received help through RREACH's Bless1000Pastors initiative this summer.

This particular note came from India, in the Rothas district of Bihar, where a terrific storm had completely removed this pastor's roof and added to their pandemic-related grief.

His note continued, "We were very sad and were praying to the Lord. God heard our prayer and we were able to make the roof. I wholeheartedly thank those who helped me, likewise I am also helping my people who are in need, either with money or with food."

In the wake of the global pandemic, RREACH became aware of pastors and their families who, despite not having enough for themselves, were sacrificially giving to those they served.

In response, RREACH committed to two initiatives in early May. First, to give \$50,000 as an outpouring of our Enlarge Fund to help 1,000 pastors at \$50 each. Second, to cover all fees related to distribution of funds, so that every dollar given was directly transferred to a pastor's family in need.

RREACH friends were invited to help raise an additional \$50,000 for the Bless1000Pastors initiative. In just five days, giving exceeded that number.

Bless1000Pastors was a one-time, direct cash gift project to pastors and their families during the global COVID-19 pandemic. In total, US \$50 each was sent to 3,695 pastors and families in 30 economically weaker countries where Christ's Church is growing. This cash level parallels the needs of the economically poorest 10% of the world (c. 750 million people), who presently live on less than US \$2 a day.

Countries where gifts were distributed:

Latin America

Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador
Haiti
Honduras
Mexico
Nicaragua
Peru
Venezuela

Africa

Benin
Burundi
Cameroon
Ethiopia
Gambia
Ivory Coast
Kenya
Liberia
Mozambique
Rwanda
Togo
Uganda

Asia

Bangladesh
Bhutan
Cambodia
India
Nepal
Pakistan
Philippines
Sri Lanka

For videos and notes of thanks from those who received this blessing, please visit rreach.org/bless1000pastors.

Though such needs will never end, this COVID-19 project is now closed. And yet, there is more to do in evangelizing opinion leaders and strengthening pastoral leaders. We welcome your ongoing prayer.

Let us continue to run RREACH's race toward spiritual health for One Billion Individuals together. 🙏



RREACH

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The Rock ... & Relativism from Ramesh Richard

VISION

RREACH envisions changing the way One Billion Individuals think and hear about the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Father, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

MISSION

A Global Proclamation Ministry, RREACH implements God's calling and gifting on Ramesh Richard to promote the Lord Jesus Christ worldwide.

STRATEGY

We accelerate our global impact by the wise use and mix of personal proclamation, media outreach, and ministry training to evangelize opinion leaders, strengthen pastoral leaders, and reach large numbers of individuals, especially of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

THEME VERSE

"And many will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God." — Luke 13:29

Thank you for helping us to RREACH into large numbers of desperate souls around our broken world with lasting solutions.

A Felt Need on Local Fronts

Present world realities prompt expressions of weariness, lostness, powerlessness. This is even true of pastors. Perhaps especially true of pastors as they care for everyone around them. RREACH has heard from pastors around the world.

A pastor in the **Philippines** writes of exhaustion. "We miss the church family, our extended families, and even our annoying neighbor. This is even surprising since we are introverts, so we can't even begin to imagine how our extroverted friends are feeling right now."

A **Venezuelan** pastor has been separated from his wife and ministry for six months. They talk daily. While he has generous hosts and the ministry is holding steady, he is lonely.

In **Kenya**, a pastor struggles to feed his own family while helping meet desperate needs around him. "I was visited by two widows, who had walked to my house... They wanted prayers and had not eaten for two days. I was having porridge with my family, which I shared with them. From their talk, I realized they had five or six grandchildren in their care. They wanted to carry the cup of the porridge back to share with the children... Thankfully, I was able to share maize flour with them."

A pastor's wife in **Brazil** has shared how tired she is. She and her husband love ministry, but they feel the weight of being given "care of many souls," intensified through the pandemic.

These are only a few of many precious servants who, while remaining thankful and faithful, long for encouragement. Dear friends, please pray for God's field-shepherds serving on local fronts of crises and opportunities. 🙏