



# CLEAR VISION

A Monthly Publication of the Center for  
CHRISTIAN LIFE ENRICHMENT



## Soul Food:

### For What Do You Hunger?

By Rich Blue

*Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.*

*John 6:35 (NIV)*

**H**ow many of our hearts were moved with compassion seeing the dazed and hurting people after the devastating earthquake in Haiti? To make matters worse, how painful was it to empathize with those parents who could not provide food, water and shelter for their children. The fear of being that powerless and dependent is more than many of us are willing to even imagine.

We recognize the magnitude of our most basic needs when we go without them. It is certain that we will all at some time go without what we want and others of us may face going without what we need. All these experiences heighten our awareness of our dependence on others.

Jesus came to both unveil as well as underscore our hunger. Our hungers are reflected in our need for air, food, water, clothing and shelter. Yet, Jesus knew that underlying all our basic survival needs are our even more fundamental yearnings for relationship—and ultimately our relationship with God. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy saying, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* (Matt 4:4) Jesus was not being dualistic, arguing that we shouldn't care about food. He was saying that in the same way we hunger for bread and water, our souls also yearn for communion with our Heavenly Father.

When Jesus declared that he was the bread of life, he was saying that his purpose and passion was to feed us. Like any parent, he longed to provide for us the

food and water we need to sustain our souls. Jesus declared that if we will only come to him, then he will be our food and water. He claims that he himself is our nourishment and sustenance. A dependent and intimate relationship with God is our pipeline to the abundant life which God has promised. Jesus said, *"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."* (John 10:10)

*It is certain that we will all at some time go without what we want and others of us may face going without what we need. All these experiences heighten our awareness of our dependence on others.*

If we will only come to him, like any decent parent on the planet, he will embrace us and provide for us the nourishment we need. Many of us fear the very intimacy we crave. We say we believe that God loves us, yet, our fear and resentment keep us away. We want to be self sufficient. We don't want to believe we need anyone. We see dependence as weakness. We don't want to feel again the pain of disappointment, rejection or abandonment.

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## Soul Food (continued): For What Do You Hunger?



Jesus said, “*And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.*” (Luke 12:29-31) Jesus acknowledges our hunger but challenges us to put it in perspective. He tells his followers to not only seek him but to seek his kingdom. Seeking him suggests we

are acknowledging our yearning for relationship with him. Seeking his kingdom, means that we strive to live by his principles and fulfill his purposes on earth.

Jesus invited us to live a life of faith in him. A faith not in the seen but rather in the unseen. A life lived in dependence on him and his principles to be our bread and water. A life lived not for safety or security. Instead, a life lived by

faith according to the principles and purposes of God. His principles and practices are summed up in one word, love. The Apostle Paul wrote, “*The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*” (Gal 5:6)

Jesus exhorted us saying, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matt 5:6). Embrace the bread of life and love one another.

*Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. John 6:27*

### Upcoming Events at CLE:

**Couples Winter Retreat**

**February 12-14, 2010**

The Power of Attachment:  
Building Intimacy in Relationships

**Singles Workshop**

**February 26th, 2010**

Picking on the Right Criteria

**Satellite Groups Workshop**

**February 27th, 2010**

Introduction to CLE

## Seven "I AM" Statements of Jesus

By Rich Blue

The New Testament has record of seven instances when Jesus explicitly referred to himself as "I am" something. Is it significant to you that Jesus did not say he was *like* bread, light, truth or life; instead, He said he *was* each of these things. What does it mean to you when Jesus says he is the gate or the good shepherd? How does his claim impact your understanding of yourself or God?

Join us in this mystical and meaningful adventure. I believe each of these references hold value and significance. Join me in a personal journey to understand how each of these metaphors impact our understanding of God and our insight into ourselves.

The next seven issues of CLEAr Vision will be dedicated to exploring these metaphors Jesus made about himself.

### 1. I AM the bread of life.

John 6:35: Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never

go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

### 2. I AM the light of the world.

John 8:12: When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

### 3. I AM the gate.

John 10:7: Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep."

### 4. I AM the good shepherd.

John 10:11-14: "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a

hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me...."

### 5. I AM the resurrection and the life.

John 11:25: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."

### 6. I AM the way, the truth and the life.

John 14:6: Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

### 7. I AM the true vine.

John 15:1, 5: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

"I am the way  
and the truth  
and the life..."

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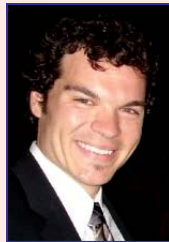
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This newsletter is intended to offer general information only and recognizes that individual issues may differ from these broad guidelines. Personal issues should be addressed within a therapeutic context with a professional familiar with the details of the problems.

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