

May 2008



CLEAR VISION

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CHRISTIAN LIFE ENRICHMENT



Truth or Dare

By Rich Blue

Imagine you are part of a small group on a retreat. Each person in your group is given the assignment to share something they like and something they dislike about each other. What are you feeling? What are you thinking?

Sharing the “like” is a no brainer; however, the “dislike” raises your fear by a factor of 2. Not only are you afraid to hear criticisms about yourself, you fear sharing your dislikes about the other members in your group. Your heart is racing, you’re short of breath and you’re asking yourself what in the world were you thinking when you signed up for this retreat!

You are scrambling to maneuver your way through this dangerous mine field. On the one hand, you’re trying to anticipate what others may say so that you can act unaffected by their comments. Pain and humiliation seem more tolerable if no one knows you are suffering. On the other hand, you’re trying to come up with something insightful to say about the other people that will make

you look good while at the same time not get the other people too upset with you.

I remember my first mini-panic attack resulting from unexpected painful feedback. I was a new member of a therapy group and out of the blue (pun intended!) the leader confronted me about my lack of integrity. I was completely caught off-guard, feeling exposed and having no idea what he was talking about. He said, “You constantly make reference to your integrity—if you were living in integrity, then you wouldn’t need to talk so much about it!” Ouch. I was hurt, offended and convinced he was right all at the same time. It was a wonderfully awful moment.

My first reaction was to try to diminish him and make him bad. I said to myself, “What a jerk. He is so mean. What does he know about integrity? Who does he think he is acting so superior?”

My surge of righteous indignation only calmed me for a moment. It

was as if I was observing myself, like a sports commentator at a football game, noticing I was hurt by his comment and at the same time feeling incredibly loved. Once I got past my initial attempt at “ego repair” I recognized he was right. His judgment was true and I felt seen. I suddenly had the confidence that he could really help me. Surprised by joy, I felt free and hopeful that I could learn, grow and become the person I was longing to be.

We may think we want truth, however, most of us prefer the comfort of denial. The question we must ask ourselves is whether we are willing to seek the truth about ourselves and use it to transform our lives. We are comfortable with truth when it is propositional and theoretical. When truth becomes personal we get really uneasy. The truth that transforms penetrates our hearts and demands change.

The author of the book of Hebrews knew the power of God’s truth when he wrote, *“For the word of God*

[Continued on page 2]

Living Life Abundantly



Truth or Dare

By Rich Blue

[Continued from page 1]

double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). God intended His word to be personal—confronting our heart as well as our head. The Apostle James exhorted us, “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22). The relationship of truth to our false self is like water to the Wicked Witch of the West. Jesus taught, “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of

wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds” (John 12:24). We must be willing to die to our false self in order to give birth to the new. We cannot become who we want to be apart from the truthful feedback of those who care enough to confront us.

If we are going to be men and women of the truth, then we must grow in grace and our capacity to love and accept ourselves in

the face of our breakdowns. We must confront shame and neutralize its power with the knowledge that we are cherished children of a loving God. We must be careful to accept responsibility for any attitudes and actions not in line with our values. When we recognize we are out of integrity, we need to acknowledge what is true, grieve the pain, accept the consequences, make amends when necessary and get back in the race.

Pain and humiliation seem more tolerable if no one knows you are suffering.

CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE ENRICHMENT HOSTS A WORKSHOP FOR MEN

Leadership from the Inside Out

Join us for an inspiring and challenging morning exploring what it takes to become the kind of men we all long to be—men of integrity, courage and passion who are leading lives of meaning and purpose. Our vision is for men to lead from their hearts and not simply their heads. When we understand more about ourselves and the forces at work within us, we are free to lead in creating more nourishing and rewarding relationships. CLE hosts a community of men who are dedicated to becoming the best husbands, fathers and friends they can be.

When: Saturday, June 21, 2008 from 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Where: Room 101 @ The Park Center, 2400 Chestnut Avenue, Glenview, IL 60026

Cost: \$100

Most of us have had training to improve our performance in academics, athletics and business. When was the last time you were encouraged and equipped to become a better person? We believe become a better person? We believe true leadership begins in the heart and radiates from the inside out. In this workshop you will receive training as well as work in small groups to learn principles and skills which will help to improve your leadership in the relationships that matter most to you.



Team Crossroads:

CLE's Racing Team for the MC200

By J.W.

"**R**unning is a metaphor for life." Whether you're a part of CLE's running and walking club or not, if you've spent any time with Nancy Rollins, you've heard this phrase. In the last few months, 12 individuals from Running Club had the opportunity to live this truth. We were inspired by Joel's leadership to form a relay team and participate in a 200-mile adventure, the MC200.

Together, we chose the name "Team Crossroads", representing the choices we've all made to move our bodies, be in community, and be committed to growing and living abundant lives. On Friday, June 6, we'll start the race in Madison, Wisconsin, running 3-6 mile legs throughout the day and night. Each runner will run 3 legs of the route, running an average of 15 miles in between Friday morning and Saturday evening. There's also a support crew in place who will be an integral part of our success.

When we began training together a few months ago, our hunger for community was readily apparent. One person created a message board to enhance communication and support of each other. Joel initi-

ated and led our monthly meetings where we discussed a myriad of topics, including motivation, pitfalls, injuries, planned runs, hungers and proactive training. We've shared our journeys, successes, struggles, and made ourselves accountable to each other by setting goals and sharing our training logs. It's been exciting to be "in it" together.

Here are a few of our learns and grows:

- The more direct about our hunger for relationship the better.
- Trust our vulnerability and use it to strengthen relationships.
- Intending to get the sleep, healthy diet and scheduled runs in is a way of taking care of our selves. There is always enough time for what you make a priority.
- Declaring goals and using a support network improves every one's performance.
- Avoid isolation when you're not doing well. Include people in both success and failures.
- Getting support is vital to success.
- No one has to go it alone.
- You can exceed all expectations by leveraging the enthusiasm

and investment of the group.

- The power of community is inspiring and motivating.

We will keep you informed of our growth and welcome your prayers and encouragement! We invite you to come out and support us. You can get information about our route at www.mc200.com. Contact any of the participants for more information. Be a part of Team Crossroads!

The following individuals will be running:

Meredith Ade
Gene Waid
Colleen Hammond
Karyn Herndon
Brad Jeffery
Susan Jeffery
Bridget Kadolph
Norma Mersino
Anthony Mersino
Emily Reedy
Joel Wallen
Renee Wallen
Neale Williams

The following individuals continue to support the runners:

Laura Hepker
Ann Hoffer
Liz Cho

"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does." James 1:22-25 NIV



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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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