

CHRIST LOVING FROM MY BODY

Lectio Divina Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Lectio Divina Process

Hearing God's voice with confidence takes practice. A great way to learn is through Lectio Divina, a method of Scripture meditation developed by Benedict in the sixth century. Three times we read the Bible passage and then pray or journal quietly for a few minutes to help us listen to the Spirit. Each reading is guided by a focus question listed below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions to know when you can share your responses. Be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Introduction to the Text

1 Corinthians 13 is one of the greatest pieces of literature ever composed. More importantly, it offers the very best and most definitive description of love as "the most excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:31). But most people think Paul is writing about the love they should have for others and so they feel guilty, pressured, or hopeless to love like this. Actually, the Bible's love chapter is about *divine* love that can't be produced by human effort; it's about the *Love* whose name is Jesus Christ! He wants to live in us and so transform our whole self that his Spirit shines with out from our *bodies* to the people around us.

1 Corinthians 13

1 If I speak in the tongues of [great orators] and [even] of angels, but have not [Christ loving from my body], I am only a [loud gong] or a [tinkling] cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not [Christ loving from my body], I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not [Christ loving from my body], I gain nothing.

4 [Christ loving from my body] is patient, [Christ loving from my body] is kind. [He] does not envy, [he] does not boast, [he] is not proud. 5 [He] is not rude, [he] is not self-seeking, [he] is not easily angered, [he] keeps no record of wrongs. 6 [Christ loving from my body] does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 [He] always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 [Christ loving from my body] never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. 11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became [an adult], I put childish ways behind me. 12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in [an old] mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and [Christ loving from my body]. But the greatest of these is [Christ loving from my body] (NIV84; brackets are paraphrased).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? In silence meditate on that.
2. What do you feel? What specific situation in your life today relates? Write down a prayer or pray quietly.
3. What is God's personal invitation to you from the Scripture? You can write down what the Lord may be saying to you or a prayer of thanks. Or simply rest quietly in the Spirit's presence.