

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time – A

- Fifth Sunday in a row the 2nd reading is from Romans 8
 - I think God is trying to get our attention
 - This particular section of Rom 8 has a rather unique message
 - For the longest time this reading troubled me
 - This reading says:
“What will separate us from the love of Christ?
Anguish Distress Persecution Famine Nakedness Peril Sword”

St. Paul says NO
“Neither death nor life – angels nor principalities
Present nor Future – Height nor depth nor creatures
NOTHING can separate us from the love of Christ”

& I said, “That’s wrong – I know what can separate me from the love of Christ – ME

I can choose to separate myself from love of Christ - I can sin

YET – this is St. Paul – so for years I wrestled with this
It is clear to me that I can sin
It is clear that by sinning I separate myself from the love of Christ
And when I talked with others – lots of people believed this.
 Good people go to heaven
 If I sin, I go to hell (can’t get more separated than that)

Then I learned the truth:
God loves me. God loves ME
When I sin – God still loves me – God loves me despite my sin
God became a man, suffered, and died – because I sin & He loves me.

LISTEN
I can NOT separate myself from the love of God
I CAN separate God from MY love
 I can hold back my love and sin
 When I do, God still loves me and calls me to repent
 No matter what I do, how I live, God loves me

Hell is not created for me – or for any of us here.
MT 25 “Hell was created for Satan and his angels” – BUT
If we choose to reject God – if we choose sin – if we choose NOT GOD
Because God loves us, He will honor that choice

BUT while we live, while there is a chance for repentance
God loves us and there is nothing that can separate us from that love
Not even our sin.
In our sin – God loves us. We reject Him – God loves us.
We repent – ANGELS DANCE, God’s beloved has returned
But if not – Hell is the only option – so reject sin – & make angels dance