Nothing Can Separate Us from God’s Love in Christ — Romans 8:31-39

Life is full of ups and downs—roads that allow us to circulate easily without major obstacles but also routes where we may find obstacles that require some creative ideas to overcome. Sometimes those impediments make us not only stop but go back or abandon our journey and the desire to move on in a different direction. For others, these obstacles are challenges to overcome and a reason to continue fighting to reach the goal.

Throughout 2020, several obstacles threatened our courage and the desire to move forward. Many people lost their jobs, homes, good friends, relatives, and neighbors. Others experienced frustration and powerlessness due to various racist events in the United States and Canada. Many lost their faith; others are confused. But some of us—while dealing with pain of grief, anguish, injustice, and uncertainty—are strengthening our faith and our relationship with our Creator.

On December 29, a friend in his mid-30s, a very athletic and friendly person who was deeply involved in the community, died from complications of COVID-19. Such sad news touched the hearts of the entire community. Those who knew him were shocked when they learned about his death. His parents and sibling were destroyed and still cannot believe the new reality with which they now must live. And what about his wife and young children? A dream of a beautiful life together became a nightmare.

A day after the funeral, my friend’s younger brother posted a Facebook note that touches me every time I read it:

Not everything goes our way in life. We cannot turn back time. But we must always be grateful to God for the good and the bad. We do not know God’s plans for us, but we must accept and respect them no matter how much it hurts!

I ask for the eternal rest of my brother’s soul. May God heal the earth, heal those who are sick, and heal the hearts of humankind.

Our eternal love for you, Lord.

Amen and amen.

God bless you.

My friend’s relatives hold the conviction that not even death and all the pain that life can bring will separate us from God.

When we go through difficult situations, we often feel abandoned, insecure, rejected, isolated, and forgotten by God. Most of us have gone through these moments at some point in life—situations that made us feel separated or far away from the love of God. But the apostle Paul’s goal is to help us develop and grow in our security, conviction, and deep confidence that we as God’s children are more than secure and protected by his love—the unconditional and eternal love that our Father has toward us, the reason he gave his only Son for our sake. Paul’s testimony invites us to lean into this love:
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For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39 NIV)

“Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live.”

Tough times come; they always do. And when they come, let us not forget to rely on the Lord and be comforted by Jesus’ unconditional love.

Blessings,

—Andrew Bodden, AndrewBodden@mcc.org


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Looking for participant guide page numbers in the leader guide? The page numbers in the leader guide work for both guides.

Resources for this session

- “Nothing Ever (Could Separate Us)”
- Dramatic Reading, Luke 7:11-35 NRSV adapted