



H – E – Double Hockey Sticks

Read: Matthew 10:26-33

In the gospel Jesus instructs his disciples to have courage when it comes to proclaiming the gospel. The reason, as St. Paul says, is because of the dangers of sin. Sin, if not dealt with, can cause spiritual death. That's why Jesus died for our sins. He restored our relationship with God, so that we can have eternal life (John 3:16). Those who choose to reject God will experience everlasting separating from Him in Hell.

God does not want anyone to be lost. His purpose for our lives is to be in relationship with him both now and forever. When Jesus talks about Hell he uses the word Gehenna. In Jesus' time Gehenna was a trash heap. When we take out the trash, we throw away things that have lost their purpose. So when it comes to our souls, we, in a sense, throw ourselves out. We make the choice to no longer fulfill the purpose we were designed for. Consequently, the pains of Hell are not physical pains, but the knowledge of knowing we have separated ourselves from God's loving purpose.

Therefore, Hell is the "state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God" (CCC 1033). As Jesus alludes to in the gospel, it is the logical consequence for a person who has chosen to deny God. Once on this path, a person drifts further into sin and away from God, who is the source of all life and happiness. At death this separation becomes complete.

Of course "God desires that all people should be saved" (1 Tim. 2:4). Unfortunately, some people still freely choose to deny Jesus. They do so because no one has ever told them the good news before, or they have received a distorted version of the Gospel. Our job is to tell others the truth about Jesus, and help them discover their real purpose in life, because everyone has value in God's eyes (Matt. 10:31).