

the power he has “to wrench a real good out of a real evil.” For now, he gives us Christ, himself afflicted with pain, to be with us for comfort. And whoever accepts this consolation and encouragement, really is consoled and encouraged.

—Ron Lutjens



## **Ah, Holy Jesus, How Hast Thou Offended**

**See print copy for music.**

**Old Orchard Church**  
**Fifth Sunday in Lent**  
**March 29, 2009 — 10:15-11:45 a.m.**

*See print copy for picture.*

What You, my Lord, have suffered,  
was all for sinners' gain;  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
but Yours the deadly pain.

# Celebrating Jesus, Incarnate Son of Man: Afflicted With Pain

## Jesus of the Scars

If we never sought, we seek Thee now;  
Thine eyes burn through the dark, our only stars;  
We must have sight of thorn-pricks on Thy brow,  
We must have Thee, O Jesus of the Scars.

The heavens frighten us; they are too calm;  
In all the universe we have no place.  
Our wounds are hurting us; where is the balm?  
Lord Jesus, by Thy Scars we claim Thy grace.

If when the doors are shut, Thou drawest near,  
Only reveal those hands, that side of Thine;  
We know today what wounds are, have no fear,  
Show us Thy Scars, we know the countersign.

The other gods were strong; but Thou wast weak;  
They rode, but Thou didst stumble to a throne;  
But to our wounds only God's wounds can speak,  
And not a god has wounds, but Thou alone.

—Edward Shillito, *World War I soldier*

## Scripture Readings

Pearl-string of passages on Jesus' pain  
2 Corinthians 6:1-13

## Sermon Series on Matthew

*"Jesus Christ, Hidden Treasure in the Scriptures"*

*Matthew 22:41-46*

Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching



We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

## Our Bodies, Our Selves

When God says he loves us, he means he loves our bodies. He made our body to be a part of our self. But if he loves us even so far as loving our bodies, why does he not protect our bodies better than he does? Why does he give Satan so much leash in our lives? Why does God so often allow the bodies of elderly believers to become decrepit to the point where they are shamed and dishonored in their own eyes and in the eyes of others? Why does Ann Stuber's sister just find out she has cancer when another sister has had to battle the same thing? Why are infants of believing parents born with deformities? Why are Christians murdered? Why?

It is true that **the bondage to decay** we all experience in our bodies is the result of sin coming into the world in Eden. But this doesn't solve the why question for us, because one of the very things God promises is that he will protect from bodily harm those who trust him:

**If you make the Most High your dwelling.... then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone....**

—Psalm 91:9-12, 14

But we have learned from experience — ours as well as the experience of the Bible's own heroes — that what you can truly "bank on" in these promises is not protection from all harm but from ultimate harm. In the end, the apostle Paul reminds us in Romans 8, our bodies will be "redeemed" — put beyond injury, decay, and death forever.

**Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (v. 23)**

That's in the end. What about now?

For now we do have protections and healings and rescues and scientific medical breakthroughs. And some of them are dramatic. We should share them with each other and find encouragement in them, and thank God for them. But you can never bank on them; they are not part of what every believer is promised. There is mystery in the way the divine mercies are unevenly bestowed.

Then what about now? Is there nothing we can count on absolutely for the here and now? Yes there is. It is Christ in his High Priestly work of sympathizing with us in our weakness. To every last one of us who trusts him, Christ promises that in our bodily afflictions he is near to us — not only by the power of divine omnipresence but by the power of a common human experience of pain and injury. In the end, Romans 8:28 assures us, God will reveal how even our diseases and injuries and death he turned to our good. As Dorothy Sayers once put it in her essay, *"Creed or Chaos"*, what this astounding promise really means is that God is determined to perfect us through our suffering by

*Continued on the back...*