

Sermon 2012 Lenten Midweek - Ash Wednesday
Test: Mark 15:16-20
Theme: His Humbled Head

There was a day when “dry-clean only” made absolutely no sense. Dänya and I still think it makes no sense but there was a day when a person would not have known what it meant. When clothes became dirty, someone had to take the hamper down to the river and rinse them over and over. Eventually, someone came up with the brilliant idea of a washboard. You could fill a tub full of water, put in some soap, and rub the dirty clothes up and down against the washboard until the dirt came out. It was tough on the clothes and tough on the hands, but at least you did not have to stand in the river to clean your clothes. Now, we are able to throw our clothes into a machine, add soap, and push a button or, we can even wash clothes without water, dry cleaning them. Brilliant ideas have made lives much easier. They save time and money. But not all ideas are as brilliant as we may think.

It is disappointing to look up and see a light bulb that should be bright, but is dark. The same thing happens with what goes on inside our heads. Sometimes the light is on and sometimes it is out. The heads that have come before us have been able to solve challenges, like washing clothes faster. All sorts of brilliant ideas come from our heads, but not all the thoughts that come out of these

heads are brilliant. Some thoughts that lurk in here are dark and sinful and one of the dangers of our minds is that no one else can see what we think or imagine. In here, we are free to wander wherever we want. God has given us an imagination, so we may come up with brilliant ideas. Yet those imaginations do not always find themselves entertaining the brilliant ideas; instead, our minds become tangled up in all kinds of dark thoughts. You may think that you're free to think whatever you want to think, because these are only thoughts, thoughts that stay inside your head. No one else can see them. Except, remember that God sees everything, including what's going on inside your head.

Inside Jesus' holy head were only pure thoughts, only good thoughts, loving thoughts. He constantly thought of those around him and was consumed with helping those in need. Even when Satan tried to tempt him in the wilderness, his mind never strayed from his mission to enter Jerusalem and soon after he arrived in Jerusalem, the scene became messy. Soldiers found long thorns and wrapped them around his head in the shape of a crown. After all the love Jesus had shown to people, Jesus deserved a crown made out of platinum covered in diamonds. But the soldiers had a brilliant idea. How about the most humiliating crown they could put on that holy head of Jesus? Thorns were tightly wrapped around the one

head that had never thought a dark thought. As Jesus walked through the streets of Jerusalem with the cross on his back, all people could see the ugliness of the crown on his head. In that crown of thorns, you and I see how ugly and how dark the thoughts in our heads can be. The soldiers' thoughts and our thoughts put that crown on his head. It was because of the thoughts that come into your head and my head that Jesus walked through the streets of Jerusalem, walking to his death, wearing the crown of thorns on his head—the crown our heads deserve.

We can't always do much about the thoughts that come into these heads. We can try to think about good things, the brilliant ideas, but the dark thoughts will still come into our heads. We are sinful and just like we can't always control cancer cells running rampant through our bodies, we can't always control cancerous thoughts running rampant through our minds, but Jesus did not abandon us to the prison of being stuck in our dark thoughts. Jesus came to a world full of dark thoughts. He came because our heads are not filled with holy thoughts. Jesus chose to wear that crown of thorns on his head, and in that crown, we can see how much Jesus loves us. He took all of the dark thoughts that fill these heads, and he took them to the cross and all our dark thoughts were buried with

his body in the grave. Jesus laid down his head for the thoughts that go on in ours.

This Lenten season, we are going to meditate upon our savior's wounded body. Today we hear about his head. On the cross, Jesus wore thorns around his head. Jesus came back from the dead, fully alive. That crown of thorns is gone, because our dark thoughts, which put that crown on his holy head, are paid for. Now, Jesus wears a new crown. His head is no longer bloody and he wears a new crown, a priceless crown. He has a crown for you as well; a crown more precious than any crown worn by any king before, because that crown marks us as immortal. By His wounds, we were healed. By His wounds, we wear not a crown of thorns, but the crown of life.