

John Piper: Cancer Is a Parable About Sin

All human suffering, especially the suffering of the Son of God, is meant to portray to dull souls the unimaginable moral ugliness of sin and the unimaginable offensiveness of sin to God.

That's why there is suffering in the world, according to Romans 8:20. God subjected the creation to futility, *not* because it wanted to be subjected, but because of Him who subjected it, *in hope* for that new day. So God brought down calamities galore, and diseases galore, and death *everywhere* in order to make plain: Sin is ugly.

The Parable in all Our Pain

All human beings hate suffering. Very few human beings hate sin. We're not getting the connection. It is a parable.

Cancer is a parable. Leukemia is a parable. Arthritis is a parable. Ebola is a parable. Tsunamis are parables of the ugliness of sin.

Sin is ugly. It should be killed daily. I die every day, because Jesus said, "Take up your cross *daily*" (Luke 9:23). And crosses are for dying.

The Ugly Offense of Our Iniquity

Sin is *so* ugly and *so* offensive, the only remedy was the death of an infinitely worthy divine substitute.

Sin is *so* ugly and *so* offensive, all human death—billions and billions of deaths—are owed to one sin.

Sin is *so* ugly and *so* offensive, everlasting conscience torment is a just and proper response.

Sin is so ugly and so offensive, it justifies the slaughter of the Canaanites—men, women and children—after 400 years so that their iniquity could be full.

Sin is so ugly and so offensive, Jesus describes it in a parable as the unpayable debt of 10,000 times 20 years' wages.

Sin is so ugly and so offensive, that God ordained 1,500 years of law covenant, so that every mouth would be stopped, and all the world would be accountable to God, and know that no one is justified by works of the law, *because you can't do any*—1,500 years to learn that lesson (Rom. 3:19–20).

To the Death

Conflict with this ugly and offensive reality, therefore, is not a peaceful affair. It is not a pretty affair. Neither on Golgotha, nor in the kitchen, nor the bedroom, nor in front of the television.

If we are faithful every time we meet this quivering power, we meet it with a sword. No truce. No compromise. No prisoners. To the death.

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