



# Healing the Wounded Spirit

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In almost thirty years of being a doctor, I have seen many physical wounds, some unfortunately fatal. Yet there is a certain satisfaction in bringing healing to wounded people. It is amazing to see seriously injured people go on to recover and regain useful productive able lives.

However wound healing can be complex and can cause hard permanent scars, get infected, retain foreign matter (eg shrapnel) or fail to completely heal, leaving ongoing weeping wounds.

People can also suffer other types of wounding, including wounds to their deep inner being (which we call the human spirit).

Let's consider what can cause wounds in your spirit and then how to have them healed.

**Proverbs 4:23 NIV** "Above all else, guard your heart [your spirit] for it is the wellspring of life"

**Proverbs 17:22 NLT** "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit saps a person's strength." [*dries up the bones* NIV]

I will not try here to distinguish theologically soul (mental and emotional) wounds from spirit wounding. However, **spiritual wounds** are ones that affect your ability to connect well with God or discolour your view of God.

Firstly, any sin causes wounds. Any sin demands a price for the gains of its pleasure. It wants its pound of flesh. The cost always becomes clearer later rather than earlier.

## **The need for a spiritual power for this healing:**

Some behaviour is just unhelpful and inadvisable but is not too destructive within you. But some things drive **deeper wounds** in your spirit and cause much more serious effects to your life. It needs this recognising and then seeking healing **by spiritual means – it cannot be done by your self or by being given enough time**. Spiritual wounds do not heal by time alone and will continue for many years until brought before Christ for active healing.

## The main causes of wounding:

(things that make you spiritually sick)

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1. Wounds caused by what you have done, or got yourself involved in.
2. Wounds others have caused to you.
3. Wounds caused by life in this world – accidents, disability, sickness, loss of significant people, natural disasters, being in the wrong place at the wrong time.
4. Wounds caused by generational sins. “Sins of the fathers visited on succeeding generations” Exodus 34:7, Psalm 79:8
5. Attacks of spiritual forces. “War wounds’. Ephesians 6:16 speaks of ‘flaming arrows of the evil one’ being shot at us.

Some of the things I talk about may not be the main wounds to your spirit, but rather are the things you have done to cope with them albeit unhelpfully, but are adding further harm.

Eg a man, having failed to learn what real manhood is because of a poor father, may chase multiple relationships looking for someone to fulfil him, going from one relationship to another, sucking them dry, disappointed, causing hurt, yet still unsatisfied.

Eg a friend has hurt you, so you find a source of power to get your own way through being strong, dominating and unforgiving, with inner vow “never again”.

## Wounds we can cause to our self:

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- **Holding unresolved unforgiveness, resentment, bitterness and hate** – poisonous to us (**Hebrews 12:15** – a bitter root). It becomes like infection in the wound.
- **Believing lies** or misunderstandings. Taking aboard gossip and criticism of us.
- **Self abuse.**
- **Serious drug and alcohol misuse**
- **Abusive treatment you do to others** wounds **you** in spirit as well as the other person. Meanness, being nasty, lies, gossip,

intimidation, stealing, violence, depriving them and other forms of cruelty etc

- **Occultic practices** – séances, witchcraft, Ouija boards, fortune telling, visiting mediums, astrology, black and white magic etc.

I have known people to suffer years of anxiety and panic attacks after being drawn into an Ouija board experience, until they were healed and set free by Christ.

There is always a cost for this type of power use, even if done for fun or curiosity.

Other common effects observed: serious fears, recurrent nightmares, accidents, insecurity, depression, suicide temptations, self harm, eating disorders, difficulty connecting with Christ, hard to comprehend spiritual truth etc.

- **Involvement in other religions and spiritual pursuits** – Eastern religious practices, Buddhism, New Age practices, Yoga, martial arts, reincarnation, mind control religions, JW's, Mormons etc.

The first of God's 10 commandments says "*have no other gods before me*" for a very good protective reason.

NB Let me be very clear in attitude to people of other beliefs. We need to always give full respect and worth to all people, even if we see problems with their beliefs.

- **Legalistic religion.** Jesus was so upset when religious people placed huge demands on others to be "good people" yet judging them harshly (even rejecting them) when they failed to do what they were supposed to. He knew the damage this does to people's spirits.
- **Sex outside marriage.** Sexual acts or fantasies outside God's plan for us causes wounding in some form. Sex outside God's plan always gives away something of your self, while you try to get something (this is lust). You lose in your getting. It treats others as something less than they truly are (the source of something you want, even if mutual). A good Godly approach to sex and desires builds the other person, creates closer intimacy, and places a higher value for both of you.
- **Abortion**, where the pregnancy is unwanted, inconvenient, too much to handle.
- **Given greater responsibility than you could bear.** This is like a broken bone, giving way under excessive stress.

- **Carrying responsibility for something you do not have matching authority** eg a job involving taking full responsibility but not allowed to make any changes ie being trapped in impossible situation. Can occur in church roles.  
Eg a woman expected to shoulder the whole family responsibility because husband bows out of his responsibility, yet he demands to make all the key decisions.  
Eg being given the blame when it was not your responsibility. Made the scapegoat.
- **Unhealthy forms of chasing success, fame, recognition, popularity, independence.** The core belief: "This will make me someone."
- **Inner vows** eg "I will never allow myself to be vulnerable/ hurt/ alone/ hungry/ etc."

## Wounds caused by others:

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- **Offences. Doing to us what should not be done.** People will offend us, wilfully or inadvertently. Offence can be real or even imagined. It is your choice to pick up and nurse that offence, or not.
- **Disappointments. Trust breached. Broken promises.**  
**Proverbs 13:12** *"Hope deferred [ie unrelenting disappointment] makes the heart sick."*  
Peter disappointed in himself with his denials of Jesus – he was going back to fishing, the old ways. He never thought he would fail. Matthew 26:33 "Even if everyone else falls away, ... I never will". He needed Jesus to help sort this out later and restore his confidence and worth and real purpose.  
We can set ourselves up for a fall by being conceited – thinking we are better than we are. **Proverbs 26:12**  
We set ourselves up for disappointment when we have expectations on ourselves that are too high.  
**Cynicism** can develop and add further hurt.

- **Marital unfaithfulness.** Broken trust. Rejection. Common. The wound of mistrust will also carry into future relationships is not addressed.
- **Family breakdown and divorce** – harms children spiritually (and others) deeply
- **Rejection** by significant people
- **Cutting hurtful words** spoken to us. Even if we have done wrong, harsh comments are unproductive to improving behaviour.
- **Abusive treatment by others.** All types including threatened harm. Sexual abuse is a deep invasive wounding of serious ramifications.
- **Familial or generational sins:** adultery, occultic practices, false religions, curses and deals with spiritual forces etc

## Aids to healing:

These are not in order, nor complete. Healing is a process.

One simple answer: Look to Christ. Yet the process can be multilayered and not to be seen as simple or trivial.

- **Be determined** to gain healing for yourself.
- **Stop the source of harm.** Close the gate. Be decisive. If you fall down, get up and decide again. Never give up. Fight for your life.
- **Repentance, confession** and be washed clean. Do this for your part, even another person has caused the major harm. **1 John 1:9**  
Mistakes are not just to be learned from, saying “bad idea; stupid idiot, don’t do that again”. Repentance is needed, addressing it before God, asking his forgiveness is what actually allows healing to progress.
- **Make restitution of any wrong**, where able.  
Eg if you have stolen, return it or pay them back.  
Eg If you have hurt someone, apologise to them.
- **Grant forgiveness** to those who have hurt you or failed you, and then let go of the offence (choosing not to dwell upon it). This is a process. Even ‘unforgivable’ offences can be forgiven with Christ’s

help if you make the decision. This sets you free and healing of the damage starts.

- **Take hope.** Choose this. You can.
- **Commit yourself to Christ**, if you have not done this. Become a Christian. A new Spirit comes into you – God comes to live in you. This brings a good measure of healing and renewal. Many things are addressed and healed by doing this (though not all).
- **Just ask Christ to heal you.** Be brave. He wants you to ask and be determined, for he is wanting you to gain your healing.
- **Seek the support and prayer by other Christian believers.** This is like putting a plaster cast of support on a broken arm. It may feel uncomfortable and restrictive but is so helpful to good healing.
- **Avoid mixing with people who are bitter and negative** until healed. Resist the urge to seek out other wounded unhealthy people like yourself – **you don't need sympathy** from others who know what wounds feel like; **you need healing!**
- Give yourself some **time and space** to gain healing.
- **Allow emotions to be real.** Tears of healing may come when the Holy Spirit is working. Let them & other real emotions be expressed. The healing process may involve you facing the deep pain for the first time. No bandaid measures because of fear of facing the pain.
- **Reduce the loads of demand and expectations** on you. You are wounded at present. No hero medals given. Don't add further pain by carrying a full load of expectations. This delays your healing or leads to distorted results.
- **Speak the Word of God** to yourself.  
**Proverbs 4:20-22, Romans 10:17 & 8-10, Ephesians 6:17**  
Get advice to what Bible sections will help, if you need guidance.
- **Speak only spiritual truth** about yourself. Be real about your emotions but also see a higher truth and higher worth for yourself. Christ died for you. God places high value on you. Agree with him.
- **Discipline your thoughts** to those that build faith, confidence, peace and not fear and depression of spirit.  
Read **Philippians 4:8-9, 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, 1 John 1:7**
- Accept that we have failed yet are still loved and accepted by God. This allows us to accept and love ourselves in a healthy way.
- **Lots of worship.** Worship helps healing.

- Healing through specific ministry in the Holy Spirit's guidance, with assistance of others, can be very helpful, even necessary, to get through some really painful things. Be courageous enough to ask.

Let's read something to nail this down to something secure:

**Hebrews 9: 11-14 NLT** *<sup>11</sup>So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that great, perfect sanctuary in heaven, not made by human hands and not part of this created world. <sup>12</sup>Once for all time he took blood into that Most Holy Place, but not the blood of goats and calves. **He took his own blood, and with it he secured our salvation forever.** .... <sup>14</sup>**Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our hearts from deeds that lead to death so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins.***

Try verse 14 in the NIV translation:

*<sup>14</sup>How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, **cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!***

Christ can cleanse your conscience thoroughly:

- from your hurt and guilt and shame
- from the power of your memories
- from the fear of disclosure of 'shameful' things in your past

and he can fully heal you of the power of any wounds.

Take courage. Christ is able. He can totally heal you and have you whole and free. Life is different because of your experiences. But trust yourself to him.



Copyright Rick Aitken

Rick & Dianne Aitken have been the pastors of True Haven Church in Culburra Beach on the NSW South Coast since 1992. This is an Apostolic Church assembly. Rick also works as a general practitioner and Dianne works as a physiotherapist. They are seeing the love of Christ work in power to transform lives. Christ is able to make new fresh life grow in anyone, to live as they have never lived before.