

The Paradox of being a wounded healer: Henri JM Nouwen's contribution to Pastoral Theology.

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The Paradox of Being a Wounded Healer: Henri J.M. Nouwen's Contribution to Pastoral Theology

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Abstract

This article is the first in a series of two dealing with Henri Nouwen's contribution to pastoral care. The impact of cognitive dissonance and the role it plays in pastors becoming constrained in their ministry during the past two decades, pastors have been subjected to profound changes. While pastors view the social and faith communities in which they live and work as guiding people towards a life of wholeness because of their own inner woundedness, struggle to live a life of wholeness. This article investigates and with integrity in a world that has been profoundly changed by a shift from a modern to a postmodern society explores the ancient Greek mythological origins of the concept 'wounded healer'. It also shows that, in the work of psychiatrist Carl Jung, the concept became a metaphor. This insight leads to a discussion of how Henri Nouwen's use of the metaphor to pastoral ministry. The discussion takes on the form of certain relevant biographical details of his contribution to pastoral theology. The article concludes with an exposition of Nouwen's use of the metaphor: Ministry in contemporary society.

Keywords: Pastoral care; Henri J.M. Nouwen; wounded healer; Carl Jung and mythological origins; co

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