

ONE in FIVE Veterans Suffer from PTSD

*Author shares biblical process
for dealing with the past*

In response to the overwhelming number of soldiers returning from war with PTSD, the Department of Defense has unveiled a creative new way to help soldiers deal with their trauma—through a video game. Many veterans return home feeling alone in their pain. But the truth is, *no one* is immune to the effects of the past. We all have hurts and unresolved issues. The question is, what do we *do* with those issues?

Stephen Viars has spent more than 20 years as a biblical counselor, and has identified two main responses to the past:

Response 1: “The past is everything;”(therefore, it must dictate our future)

Response 2: “The past means nothing,” (so we suppress our feelings).

The problem, says Viars, is neither of these responses allows us to explore the role of the past as God intends. Now, Viars shares a “third way”— a biblical approach to answering the question, *How do I handle a particular aspect from my past?*

VIARS REVEALS...

- WE ALL HAVE A PAST. IT’S HOW GOD MADE US.
- WE SHOULD LEARN TO THINK ABOUT OUR PAST *BIBLICALLY*.
- THE PAST CAN BE OUR BEST FRIEND OR WORST ENEMY.
- GOD’S WORD IS SUFFICIENT TO DEAL WITH OUR PAST.

“The Gospel is powerful enough to help you with your past. Anything that has happened to you, or anything you’ve done—nothing is hopeless or beyond the reach of God.”

Viars will lead you to replace guilt and despair about the past with forgiveness and hope. He shows how to resolve past conflicts and broken relationships so you can find freedom. “As you learn to release the past to God, you can turn your struggles into stepping stones for growth,” says Viars.

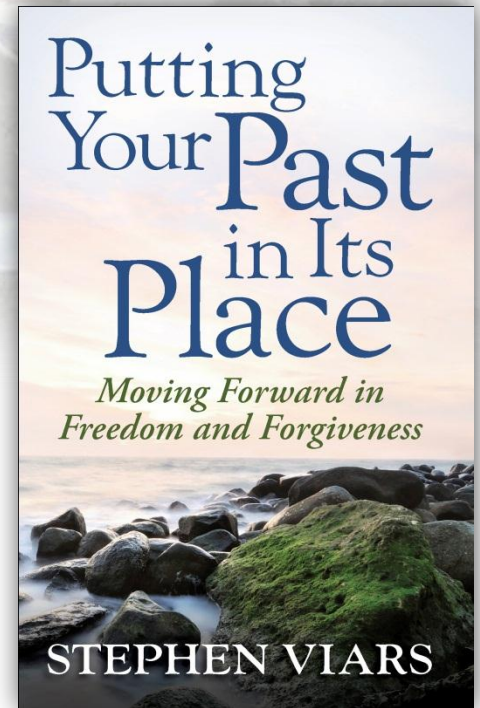


Stephen Viars earned his DMin degree in biblical counseling from Westminster Theological Seminary and has served as a pastor and biblical counselor for more than 20 years at Faith Baptist Church and Faith Biblical Counseling Ministries in Lafayette, Indiana. He serves as the President of the Board of the Biblical Counselors Coalition, and the Vice President of the Board of NANC, and is a frequent speaker at conferences, colleges, and seminaries in the United States and abroad.



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Why are Americans so fascinated with the events and experiences from their past?
- Aren't Christians supposed to forget the things from their past (the things which are behind)?
- Isn't focusing on the past just a popular concept from modern secular psychology?
- You talk about two ways that people tend to view their past; one is that the past means nothing; the second is that the past means everything. In your book, you propose a third way to view your personal history—by exploring the role of the past as God intended. How exactly do you do that?
- Many people have had a strongly negative experience in their past; one that lingers in their memory every day. How does a person begin to unplug the negative effects of their past?
- What about the person who has really blown it in the past? How do they get past the guilt, shame, and embarrassment that those choices have created?
- Tell us more about the benefits of experiencing the joy that comes from viewing hard times God's way.
- You share a story about a young woman named Jill who struggled with depression. Through biblical counseling you helped her to put her past into a proper perspective. Will you share that story with us now?
- You say that many people have grown up believing that it is somehow wrong to feel hurt (big boys don't cry). Why is that attitude unbiblical?
- You say that it is possible to actually draw strength from a rocky past. How? Tell us how David was able to recall challenging events from his past that strengthened him and drew him closer to God.
- You outline a method to organize your past into four "buckets." What is that technique, and how do you go about organizing it?
- What is your greatest hope for readers of your book?



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