

Endorsed by Dr. Tim Clinton  
President, American Association of Christian Counselors

REVISED  
AND  
EXPANDED  
EDITION

JOURNEY INTO THE  
DIVIDED *Heart*

Facing the Defense Mechanisms  
That Hinder True Emotional Healing

Steve Fair

*featuring*

Father Andrew Miller  
Founder, HeartSync Ministries

*Journey into the Divided Heart* is about a critical life journey into the emptiness and brokenness of our day. Steve knows that our emotional freedom, one of our greatest needs, is anchored in relationships, both with God first and foremost and with those we hold close. Get the relationship piece right and you will be blessed; get it wrong and you will hurt.

**Dr. Tim Clinton**

**President of the American Association of Christian Counselors**

Steve does an excellent job of unpacking and simplifying complex emotional issues and pain to help you identify the reason we struggle to overcome them. He then guides you through the practical process of turning these issues over to God for true healing, which goes far beyond our own efforts and limited understanding.

**Bob Dutko**

**Christian Radio Talk Show Host**

*Journey into the Divided Heart* creates a warm and thoughtful invitation into life-changing relationships with God and people. We tend to want either private healing with God or human connections with others. Steve Fair combines the love of God and the love of people into one way of life and transformation.

**Rev. Jim Wilder, Ph.D.**

**Director of Life Model Works and author of *The Life Model: Living from the Heart Jesus Gave You***

I believe that all of us have a divided heart to one degree or another. As such, this book is not only for those who find themselves seeking healing for emotional pain, but it is also for those reading this book cover and thinking that they do not need it! Steve provides a lens for examining one's heart and healing through an experiential and wonderful relational connection with God. His book contains a very practical guide to exploring how we protect our own hearts and thereby block our healing and a wholehearted love of God rather than ultimately allowing God to be our protector. Steve then takes a fresh look at biblical interventions and other suggestions that can be a huge help to anyone on this journey.

**Rev. Canon Andrew Miller, LCSW LCSW, Director of HeartSync Ministries**

*Journey into the Divided Heart* is a book which diagnoses “the signs of the times,” pinpointing in our current cultural climate the factors which cause significant emotional and psychological distress. Steve Fair presents a synthesis of the biological, psychological, and spiritual factors that underlie much human suffering.

It is balanced, insightful, and encouraging in an easily readable manner. Images and examples bring the underlying principles to life. In a seamless manner, this book explains the origins of defense mechanisms, the psychology behind them, and in particular the spiritual dimension. It portrays our need to invite the Healer into the broken areas of our lives and to allow ourselves to be vulnerable before God. It is hopeful in its presentation of many approaches to healing and freedom, which are based on God’s healing presence, but does not neglect the biological and psychological. It can benefit any who read it with an open mind and trust in God’s desire and ability to free us from the pains that bind us.

**Dr. Cheryl Mazzara, MD**  
**Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist**

*Journey into the Divided Heart* is an insightful guide to knowing our thoughts and motives. It’s a “how to” for embracing the truths that will set us free from the chains of our own making.

While Jeremiah reminds us that the heart is deceitfully wicked and baffling to understand, *Divided Heart* brings a “spiritual cardiologist’s” perspective to understanding the ways and wants of the heart.

Steve Fair has created a brilliant guide for the assessment and healing of our divided minds and hearts! Each chapter in this adventurous journey to freedom is filled with practical assessment tools, anecdotal stories, insightful applications, and tools that have brought lasting understanding and needed change to my life.

*Divided Heart* has fueled my pursuit and journey with Jesus. Embracing the principles and insights of *Divided Heart* will lead to a healing of your heart and greater congruity in your Christian character.

Steve Fair is a deep thinker and a very gifted healer. There are very few people in the world as gifted and insightful in dealing with the matters of the heart. And Steve has helped me eradicate the spiritual disconnect and alienation I

was feeling with God. I will be forever grateful for his teachings and writings encapsulated in *Journey into the Divided Heart*.

**Tony Cimmarrusti**  
**CEO Majestic Capital**

Steve has produced a superb treatise on human emotion. It has helped me uncover limiting behaviors in my own life. I have hope things can and will be different. So will you.

**Rev. Robert (Bob) Buse**  
**Doulos Global Ministries**

As a leader in the faith community, I believe the message in this book is vital for people to hear, understand and apply to their lives. We all have to deal with difficult times. Most of us don't do it well. This book provides the key to supersede the negative defense mechanisms and thought patterns we often turn to. By recognizing that Jesus Christ is the foundation to build on, the healing process can begin and ultimately bring transformation to one's life.

**Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Seppo, D.Min.**  
**Executive Director**  
**Operation Transformation**

This book walks you through the journey of life, the journey that leads into the heart. As you walk through these pages you will hear the call of God's love within your heart. As you journey there you will discover and shed the layers you put on which will lead you to the "undivided heart."

As we journey, we have to remember the Word of God which is Love. This journey will empower you to know that you are not alone in the journey: God is with you.

This journey is welcoming to all and easy to understand with practical and simple steps. I encourage you to take these steps into your heart.

**Rev. David Kim**  
**Superintendent, Central Bay District**  
**United Methodist Church**

What I remember most about being counseled by Steve Fair is his heart's desire to bring the session into the very throne room of God's presence. I have been counseled by others, but none brought that sense of intimacy. Steve certainly has a father's heart with a goal to bring someone into a deeper relationship with Abba Father God. How appropriate that he's titled his book *Journey into the Divided Heart*. In every Christian there is tension between doing things their own way and God's way. This book, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will help reveal and bring healing to those places where the human heart is divided. The result can only be a greater intimacy with Abba Father. Those with a continued desire to know God better will be blessed by reading and applying the principles the author recommends.

**Dee Sochacki**

**Barnabas Ministries, Speaker, Author of *Amazing Grace: A Personal Testimony***

JOURNEY INTO THE  
**DIVIDED** *Heart*

Facing the Defense Mechanisms that Hinder  
True Emotional Healing

**Steve Fair**

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*Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images.*  
—Hosea 10:2, KJV

# Chapter 1

## Gomer's Divided Heart— Like Ours!

**O**ne of the most dramatic pictures painted for us in the whole of Scripture is that of the prophet Hosea. Hosea was told by God to go marry a prostitute, a woman who would betray him with her unfaithfulness over and over again (Hosea 1:2). Can you imagine? What if you were told by God to do the same? Hosea was being asked to pursue a wife, to enter into an intimate relationship with her, to have kids with her, and in the process have his heart broken time and time again without pulling away to emotionally protect himself! Would you be willing to take on such a task? Hosea was. And he did just that.

Hosea married a woman named Gomer (how would you like to wake up every morning to a “Gomer?”) who as God foretold became a two-timing partner, and was described in God’s words to have a “*divided heart*” (Hosea 10:2). This state of being divided in our hearts or wanting and pursuing two things at the same time, is illustrated for us with Gomer as she marries Hosea but chases her other lovers simultaneously. God gives a picture to Israel through Hosea to show them that He saw their involvement with other gods as adultery toward Himself too. The book of Hosea is the context and backdrop for this book on healing titled *Journey into the Divided Heart*. What God is showing us through

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the story of Hosea and Gomer has everything to do with our current-day issues, our personal relationships with each other, our relationships with God, and with the struggles we are all facing in this journey we call life.

The story of Gomer's divided heart is God's picture to us, His people, given to illuminate the core dynamics behind our dysfunction, and to lead us toward the healing path you are about to embark on in the following pages. Before jumping into the specifics of our path to complete freedom and healing, let's go through this story together and see what we can learn about our current day struggles—the struggles we go to counseling to address, and the struggles we bring to our pastors and friends for help and ministry. There are huge implications in this scriptural story for why we as a people are so depressed, anxious, angry, addicted, and struggling with relationship issues, and why we are seeing these issues as a culture in unprecedented numbers today!

The story of Hosea and the “divided heart” starts with the sad history that God's people had strayed from their close relationship of protection, true love, trust, and faithfulness that they had started with Him long ago. This intimate covenant relationship dated back to the days of God walking intimately with Adam and Eve in the Garden, and it was further defined through Abraham who was told that he and his descendants would be God's people (“*I will be their God*” [Gen 17:7-8]). God had promised that they would prosper and flourish, and that they would multiply numerically to be like “*the sand on the seashore*” (Gen. 22:17). They were promised that they would have their own land, the place that is now called Israel (Gen. 15:18). God didn't promise that there wouldn't be hardship but that they would have what we now know through Jesus to be “*life and life to its fullest*” (John 10:10).

Israel had married Jehovah God, so to speak, and accepted firstly that they were the chosen object of His affection by no doing of their own. They were loved and pursued by Him wholeheartedly, just because they were! They could not earn this amazing and perfect love, but were given

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it freely! This unending relationship of love between an all-powerful God and a people group called Israel brought to Israel all of what we individually are looking for today! This covenant relationship brought them a sense of security and safety, hope and contentment, prosperity in everything they did, and protection from their enemies who surrounded them geographically. This was what they called “shalom” peace. This peace was complete peace, an emotional peace, which is quite the opposite of the anxiety and depression that many experience today. Though they had this all while in covenant with God they would eventually betray Him. They would “cheat” on Him by serving other gods.

This life of being in and under true relationship with the God the Israelites knew as being a part of God's kingdom (or His governmental family system), is actually said to be literally heaven on earth! That's right—this phrase didn't come from a pop song on the radio, but comes from a biblical concept and a prayer from Jesus that says “*(God's) kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matt. 6:10, emphasis mine). Beginning from that original set of promises by their Father God that said “*I will be their God*” (Gen. 17:8) and they will “*be my people*” (Jer. 32:38), God became the source of their most basic needs on every level. God knew their needs better than they knew themselves, and when Israel was walking in relationship with Him, all of what was His was theirs!

Then, as happens in all too many marriages today, Israel wandered, and forsook the vows that had been the foundation of all that was good in their lives. Israel betrayed their first love and broke the vows they had made to God by following after the “gods” of the nations around them. The parameters their Father God had set up to protect them were for their own good, yet these rules were broken by the Israelites who took on the beliefs and the cultic theologies of their neighbor nations. They lost their identity, and forgetting who they were created to be, they began worshiping foreign gods like Baal, a fertility god of the Canaanites. Now they were looking toward idols made of stone and

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wood for provision, prosperity, comfort, and peace!

Through Israel's infidelity with these other gods, Jehovah did not forsake or forget His people, nor did He follow suit and turn His back on His covenant relationship, as we would do when we are hurt and betrayed. He would remain faithful! He would continue to love them wholeheartedly, while also releasing them to the consequences of their own decisions and honoring their free-will decisions to leave Him for their other gods! This is just what we see Hosea doing with Gomer—and even then buying her back.

As in any committed relationship, when vows and promises are broken, there are feelings of hurt and anger, and God Himself admits to feeling this way. You can feel God's pain when He says about His

As in any committed relationship, when vows and promises are broken, there are feelings of hurt and anger, and God Himself admits to feeling this way.

people, His bride Israel, "*she went after her other lovers, but me she forgot declares the Lord*" (Hosea 2:13).

After all, we are made in His image, and we have been created in His likeness, even in the ways our hearts feel pain. In this time of heartache and pain for God, though, what would He do and how would He respond? God's answer was not to leave and put up walls to guard Himself from additional potential pain! He could have easily just destroyed them. If you or I were God we may have done just that! God's answer, though, was to love and to chase His beloved, but to do so without violating their God given right to choose other gods!

God is the true initiator of relationships, the pursuer of those He loves! Yes, even "*while we were yet sinners Christ died for us*" (Rom. 5:8). God's solution to broken relationships and division is to GIVE, and to GIVE at great cost! His solution is to redeem (to buyback and

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compensate for) what was lost and reconcile (to restore back to friendly relationship). This is what we see Hosea doing with Gomer... It's all in this story of her divided heart, and hers is the story that we as God's children are living today too!

God is the master communicator, and He has many diverse and profound ways to communicate with us, especially when we are cut off from direct communication to Him because of our own disobedience—as was with Israel. God chose a vessel in a man named Hosea to deliver a message, but this message was not to be given in words. God chose to use a living demonstration, a “reality show” of sorts, with real players having real emotional ups and downs, to communicate His message. This was God's chosen line of communication then and it often is today. Your circumstances might be telling you that the path your life is on is like theirs was! Israel was not just being told a story; they were confronted with the real-life story of Hosea and would benefit from it only if they applied it to their lives. The redemption story of God communicating to His people, who had left and betrayed Him, starts in Hosea 1:2-3.

When the Lord began to speak through Hosea, the Lord said to him, *“Go, take to yourself an adulterous wife and children of unfaithfulness, because the land is guilty of the vilest adultery in departing from the Lord.”* So, he married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son (Hosea 1:2-3).

God's message to the people of Israel was quite clear: “You have betrayed me! You have broken your vows and are guilty of unfaithfulness.” He says, “You have departed from me!”

Israel was following other gods. And so the story goes with Hosea... Gomer would betray him. He marries her; they have kids together, and she leaves him. God describes her as He describes Israel here in Hosea 2:7:

*She will chase after her lovers but not catch them, she*

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*will look for them but not find them. Then she will say,  
“I will go back to my husband as at first, for then I was  
better off than now.” (Hosea 2:7)*

She had a divided heart, and though she went back in forth in her mind and in her loyalties, she wasn't ever really happy. This kind of reminds me of an older pop song many sing along to, “I still haven't found what I'm looking for...” Gomer was looking for something she could not find in either Hosea or her other lovers. What was she looking for? Whatever it was, it would never satisfy her. She could never find what she was looking for.

Maybe you are like her, and don't really know what you are looking for, and you never seem to find true contentment and fulfillment. Keep reading...

We all would have understood if Hosea had responded to such a wounding by rejecting her altogether, or even in retaliation against her, but he did not. The Lord shows him how to respond. He says to chase her, so Hosea goes after her! He doesn't “fight or flight,” as we do. He gives acceptance and love in return for her betrayal!

*The Lord said to me, “Go, show your love to your wife  
again, though she is loved by another man and is an  
adulteress. Love her as the Lord loves the Israelites,  
though they turn to other gods.” (Hosea 3:1)*

Hosea not only runs after her even in His pain, but he buys her back financially at a great price. Can you imagine? How humbling. Sometimes that's what love does! It pays the price for someone else's mistake, just as God does for us and did for us through Christ:

*So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and about a  
homer and a lethek of barley. (Hosea 3:2)*



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As you will see in the next verses, Hosea sets expectations for Gomer. He tells her that she is to leave her old ways that he expected faithfulness and loyalty, saying: “*You are to live with me many days*” and to “*not be a prostitute*” (Hosea 3:2).

He set boundaries with her. We will learn a whole lot about how love sets boundaries at the end of this book. We will also learn that true boundaries are a very important part of love that is not based in self-protection but ultimately are set up to protect relationships.

*Then he told her, “You are to live with me many days; you must not be a prostitute or be intimate with any man, and I will behave the same way toward you.” (Hosea 3:2)*

God's hope was to restore the broken relationship, which is always His heart. You can see His heart for His people in the midst of His pain here in Hosea 2:23:

*I will show my love to the one I called “Not my loved one.” I will say to those called “Not my people,” “You are my people,” and they will say, “You are my God.”*

They needed to understand their ways were wrong, and how they had broken the covenant and the relationship they had with God. God describes to them that what was happening was that their divided hearts had left them ignorant. He told them their ways would lead them to their demise, their “ruin.”

*A people without understanding will come to ruin!  
(Hosea 4:14)*

God shows them that their stubbornness prevents Him from leading them, and He tells them the paths they were choosing for themselves were only leading them to destruction.

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This stubbornness may still exist in a few of us today. What do you think? This stubbornness, ignorance, and dividedness of heart that we all live out in our defense mechanisms keeps us from the place of peace and rest that God is trying to provide in what He calls the “meadow” below:

The Israelites are stubborn, like a stubborn heifer. How then can the Lord pasture them, like lambs in a meadow? (Hosea 2:16)

God shows us in Hosea chapters 4 through 8 that He is angry and hurt. He confronts His people with their sins and shows them the consequences of their actions. That’s what love does. It speaks the truth with respect and hope for change. God’s goal in it all though is that they would turn from their path of destruction and seek Him. Maybe you will seek (God) as Israel does in the verses below:

*For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a great lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces and go away; I will carry them off, with no one to rescue them. Then I will return to my lair until they have borne their guilt and seek my face—in their misery they will earnestly seek me (Hosea 5:14-15)*

God got His message through to His people! He shared His pain and His anger. He reached out to those He loved through Hosea’s example, and He showed them the way back to the place of love, peace, and joy by confronting them with the ways they had gone astray. Being confronted in love with your faults, your idols, and the things you are chasing that are leading you astray can be freeing. This is just what God does with the Israelites in Hosea 10:2:

*Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images. (Hosea 10:2, KJV)*

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You might be thinking, Yea, but I don't worship idols and gods like the Israelites did back then, so what does this have to do with me? Let's define a "god" a little bit, so we can apply this to our own journeys. A god, or a higher power, is something we gain strength from, something we consult for answers, somewhere we look for protection, or someplace where we find emotional and/or spiritual comfort and peace.

That's what Israel was doing with the Baal god. They were trusting Baal for provision, as the "fertility god," and they were counting on Baal for comfort and security. Could it be that our culture has led us to a god and taught us a religion, a set of beliefs, and a means of doing life, that relies on things that lead us off track—just as the gods surrounding the Israelites led them astray in Hosea's time? Could this be a core reason why so many of us are anxious and depressed?

The false religion of today that harms us the same way the Israelites of Hosea's time were harmed, is really more about us relying on ourselves than anything else. Our images, idols, our false religion of today, is centered on "self." No, not in the form of a wooden-statue God like Baal, but not unlike it either. Our idols are self-serving too. Today we often look to ourselves for provision, for protection, etc. Where does God fit into our lives?

Our self-serving-ness and self-protectionism is what we will uncover in this book as we connect our heart motives to most of the defense mechanisms we use today to buffer us from feeling anything uncomfortable.

"Me" worship is the religion of our day, which is evident in our need for material possessions, our need for constant entertainment, our pervasive offense with each other, but even more so in how independent we are. We just plain and simple tend to rely only on ourselves.

Think about it: Who do most people depend on to run their lives?

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Who do they go to for comfort? Where do they find the answers and opinions that will solve their problems and concerns?

God is not usually the answer to these questions, even for devoted Christians. The answer isn't typically "those we trust" or "those who have more experience in certain areas of life." Generally, we don't trust very well, and we usually believe we either have or can find the answers to our own issues, so we rely on ourselves.

We go to ourselves!

It is interesting that this "me" worship and its accompanying self-protection stance is recognized by both psychology and most religions as being wholly unfulfilling to the human heart. Both groups know it is one of the most prevalent root causes of depression and anxiety in our lives. Our self-centered mindsets are best seen in our emotional distancing—distancing from one another and from God. These self-centered, me-centered tendencies are highlighted and mapped out in this book so you can see them in your own thinking patterns.

Like Gomer, we are divided. We believe in Jesus, but we trust ourselves more. We want two things at the same time.

This divided heart teaching will likely confront the ways you rely on yourself instead of God. If this is the case, just remember that God loves you by confronting you, just as he used the Hosea and Gomer situation to confront Israel with their dividedness so they could return to Him.

Our spiritually divided hearts will be exposed as a major cause behind our mental health and relational problems. God disciplines those He loves (Heb. 12:6). He has been watching you; He sees the wrong paths you are on, and He is ready to intervene. He is chasing you down to reconcile and restore you the same way Hosea did with Gomer!

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Why did God choose to have Hosea go through all this heartache? Why did He confront the Israelites and find fault with them? Because He was still in love with His people, even after they went astray. He wanted them to have a human example. One that would illustrate how His heart felt the same way ours does when it is betrayed. God wanted to reconcile. He wanted to have compassion on them and to walk out life together in covenant relationship wholeheartedly again. He says about His wayward people:

*How can I give you up... How can I hand you over...  
My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is  
aroused. (Hosea 11:8)*

God created our hearts, so much of our discussion about our hearts and the healing of our hearts must focus us on Him and how He created us. Christian and non-Christian readers alike, please stick with these pages. Reject the attempts of your internal defense mechanisms to cover over what the Bible describes as the “deep waters” of your heart (Prov. 20:5) to shield you from the tough spiritual questions that need to be explored and resolved within you so you can find the truly fulfilled life you were created to have.

Now, take a minute to reflect before you read on. This is the start to the journey into your divided heart. You and I are alike. We all have divided hearts like the Israelites did in the days of Hosea.

Jesus is calling. He is using unique ways to communicate with you, just as He did with the Israelites through Hosea.

God has paid for you with the life of His own son, Jesus, on the cross. He did this to give you a way back to Him, like Hosea did with Gomer, to the place with Him where there is peace, rest, and unconditional love. You too can have “heaven on earth.” It is possible! You will see this in the testimonies of people in the pages to come.

