



**Paul's Behavior Problem: Inner Battle for the Soul; Paul's *Ménage à Trios*; the Sinful Nature's *Coup d'État*; Paul Does what He Doesn't Desire, Rom 7:20a**

32. God honors our loyalty to truth under pressure by means of rewards and blessings including escrow conveyance in both time and eternity.
33. It is within this environment of constant conflict that the battles of the Invisible War are carried out.
34. The inner battle is tenacious since the first husband is still alive in our members.
35. His desire to win back his first wife causes him to wage siege warfare on the believer's soul and launch missiles of duplicity and deceit toward his free will.
36. The ensuing struggle for control means that the will of God is frustrated in the life of the believer by the function of the sinful nature and is advanced by the function of the Holy Spirit.
37. Only divine policy—wheel-tracks of righteousness—learned and applied under the power of the Holy Spirit, enables the believer to practice the will of God.
38. Doctrinal thought must precede all decisions. The power of the Holy Spirit must energize all actions.

**Romans 7:20**

**Paul's *Ménage à Trios*; the Sinful Nature's *Coup d'État*:**

**Romans 7:20 - (NKJV) Now if I do what I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.**

1. Verse 20 begins with the post positive conjunctive particle **δέ, de** which is used in the transitional sense and translated, "Now."
2. This is accompanied by the conjunctive particle **εἰ, ei**, translated "if."
3. When the verb is in the indicative mood—which indicates a statement of fact—then this particle introduces the protasis of a first class condition: the supposition is viewed from the standpoint of reality.
4. The verb is the present active indicative of:
 

(#22) **ποιέω, poieō** - "I am performing"

present:	Durative; denotes that which has begun in the past and continues into the present. <b>[R(1)c.]</b> It may also be viewed as a "descriptive" present to denote what is now going on. This is also called the "pictorial" present since its distinctive force is to present to the mind a picture of the events as in process of occurrence. <b>[R(1)a.]</b>
active:	Paul, in using himself as an example of the modus operandi of the carnal Christian, produces the action.
indicative:	Declarative; a statement of fact.
5. Then comes the verb that, in the Greek, actually appears first in the verse, the present active indicative of:
 

(#21) **θέλω, thelō** - "what I do not desire to do"



present: Customary; denotes that which habitually occurs or may be reasonably expected to occur. The act is assumed to be true in the past or future as well as the present. Paul habitually desires to please God.

active: Paul produces the action of being a “sincere Christian.”

indicative: Potential of obligation. We will go right on doing what we think we should do as Christians until we acquire the doctrine that counsels otherwise.

The negative *οὐ*, *οὐ* cancels the intent of the verb, therefore Paul does *not* do that which he desires.

“Now if I am continuing to perform what I do not desire (and I do)”

6. In the verb *ποιε*□ we find the durative present tense emphasizing the function of facilitated wheel-tracks of wickedness.
7. But in addition to this Paul goes on to confirm that he is performing something which he does not desire to do, the customary present of *θη*□.
8. PRINCIPLE: It is impossible for the human body to perform an act which is not, first of all, decided upon, and secondly, initiated by stimuli from the soul’s volition.
9. All actions must be preceded by thought and decision followed by positive signals to the cerebral cortex before the brain can activate any wheel-track.
10. Consequently, when Paul writes, “If I am continuing to perform,” it indicates that he has personally made a decision to activate a memory trace which runs counter to advice offered by the Counselor of the new marriage, the Holy Spirit.
11. Here is the sequence: the sinful nature seeks to regain control of Paul’s soul but its power has been broken by the spiritual death of Christ on the cross and experientially disempowered by the filling of the Holy Spirit.
12. In order to regain power and subsequent control over Paul’s soul, the first husband must manipulate Paul into sinning.
13. The sinful nature therefore sends in his commandos, the *agent provocateurs* known as lust patterns.
14. Temptations are vectored out of Wernicke and Broca’s areas and old wheel-tracks of wickedness are recalled into his conscious mind.
15. Paul considers the temptation and his volition faces a challenge to submit to the temptation or utilize the Holy Spirit’s power to override it.
16. The wheel-tracks recalled are facilitated and volition operates from a position of weakness since counter wheel-tracks of righteousness are not facilitated.
17. As Counselor of the second marriage, the Holy Spirit nonetheless brings these counter measures up into Paul’s conscious mind alongside the temptation.
18. Volition must decide between the two choices: (1) reject the temptation and maintain status quo spirituality or (2) submit to the temptation and assume status quo carnality.
19. If Paul decides to go with the wheel-track of righteousness then the Holy Spirit will facilitate that memory trace and thus override what is, in reality, the path of least resistance.



20. Please note: it is only by means of the Holy Spirit that this offensive action can be accomplished. If attempted by means of human energy, the facilitated wheel-track of wickedness will win out every time.
21. This point amplifies the principle that no divine-good production can possibly be performed by the believer without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.
22. When divine good is produced credit must go to the Holy Spirit, not the believer. The Holy Spirit gets the credit, the believer gets the benefits. This is grace!
23. However, if Paul does not access the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, then volition, weakened by dependence upon human energy, will choose to submit to the path of least resistance which will fulfill the desires of the flesh.
24. A thought process has transpired and a decision has been made.
25. Paul's volition thus issues permission to the cerebral cortex to execute the facilitated wheel-track of wickedness instead of the wheel-track of righteousness recalled by the Holy Spirit.
26. Volition, under submission to the sinful nature, fires the first neuron in the memory trace and Paul sins.
27. All of this is implied when Paul says in verse 20, "Now if I am continuing to perform what I do not desire ..."
28. The verb *thel* □ with the negative *ou* is translated "what I do not desire." Paul's desire to *not submit* to the sinful nature is *not* being fulfilled.
29. The problem Paul struggles with is legalism, first developed as a young student under Gamaliel \ga-m□' li-el\, the famous teacher of Jewish law in Jerusalem, and later as a Pharisee himself.