



**Paul's Behavior Problem: Principles from Rom 7:15: *Agents Provocateurs*, *Ménage à Trios*, & Spiritual Quislings; Conclusions from v. 15**

20. Principles from verse 15:

1. We learn from verse 15 that Paul has a desire to produce divine good but confesses that his tendency and trend is to produce sin.
2. Paul has a desire to submit to the authority of his new Husband, Jesus Christ, but his propensity is to have a *ménage à trios* with his first husband, the sinful nature.
3. Therefore, Paul's good intentions are neutralized by his inability to remain loyal to his new Husband while under the tempting allurements of his first husband.
4. These tempting allurements emanate from the lust pattern, the sinful nature's inside agent for leading the believer astray: *piprask* □ in verse 14.
5. There is another French phrase which perfectly describes the part the lust pattern plays in this battle for control of the soul: *agent provocateur*.

**Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. 11th ed. (Springfield: Merriam-Webster, 2003), 24:**

**Agents provocateurs** lä' zhä' prō-vä' ka-ter': one employed to associate himself with members of a group or with suspected persons and by pretended sympathy with their aims or attitudes to incite them to some illegal or harmful action that will make them liable to apprehension and punishment.

**Morris, William (ed.). The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. (Geneva: American Heritage Publishing, Co., 1971), 24:**

**Agents provocateurs.** A secret agent hired to penetrate some organization to incite trouble designed to make the organization or its members incur punishment.

6. This term helps illustrate the conspiracy operating within Paul's members: the sinful nature desires to regain control of the body but its power to do so has been broken.
7. In order to reacquire its power it needs the cooperation of the believer's volition which controls the soul's stream of consciousness.
8. The sinful nature deploys its SWAT Team, the ten commandos of the lust pattern, to serve as inside agents, or *agents provocateurs*, to infiltrate the soul and take over its command post.
9. The lust pattern fires up vectors from the cerebral cortex which bring into the conscious mind wheel-tracks preserved in long-term memory traces during Paul's time in unbelief.
10. At this point the soul is under assault and volition must decide whether to protect the soul or submit to the *agents provocateurs*' tempting proposition.
11. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul is reminded of biblical problem-solving devices which serve to defend the soul against the outside adversity presented by the lust pattern.



12. However, according to Paul's testimony, his tendency and his trend is to submit to the temptation. Why? There are two possible answers:
  - a. He has no problem-solving devices stored in long-term memory traces and thus the Holy Spirit has nothing to recall from his memory.
  - b. Paul does possess problem-solving devices but they are not facilitated into paths of least resistance.
13. Obviously the latter, the temptations from the lust pattern overwhelm Paul's soul and he decides to take a fling with his first husband.
14. Volition issues orders to the brain to act on the facilitated wheel-tracks of wickedness.
15. Sin is committed, the lust pattern is assuaged, the sinful nature is back in control of the soul, and Paul finds himself again doing those things he does not desire to do and which he knows are wrong.
16. In doing so, Paul is guilty of a grotesque tryst. He has committed spiritual adultery against his new Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ.
17. Guilty of a spiritual *ménage à trios*, Paul has been led astray by his first husband's *agents provocateurs*, the lust pattern of the sinful nature.
18. With regard to his marriage to Jesus Christ, he is a spiritual adulterer. With regard to his responsibility to govern his own soul against all temptations that would cause him to betray his second Husband, he is a spiritual quisling. This word is an antonomasia, a figure of speech that applies a famous proper name to a person alleged to share some quality associated with it.
19. Vidkun Quisling was a Norwegian army officer and politician who actively collaborated in the German conquest of Norway in 1940. His attempts to convert Norway to National Socialism aroused fervent opposition. After the liberation of Norway in 1945, Quisling was found guilty of treason and shot. His name was immediately adopted as a synonym for a traitor, a collaborator, or one who betrays another's trust or is false to an obligation or duty.
20. Biblical quislings include Ahithophel whose betrayal of David led to the Absalom Revolution and Judas Iscariot whose betrayal of Jesus Christ led to His arrest in Gethsemane.
21. It becomes obvious that the terms *ménage à trios* and "quisling" perfectly describe the believer who submits to the temptations of his sinful nature and "goes a whoring after the heathen."
22. If these terms, especially *ménage à trios*, offend and even repulse you, consider what the Lord thinks of your infidelities toward Him as your second Husband.
23. A lascivious person clearly understands the implication of Paul's behavior problem but the self-righteous ascetic, who would never consider marital betrayal, often fails to get the message.
24. The reality that you can be involved in a spiritual *ménage à trios* may be repulsive to you but it is intended as a goad to teach the point that sin is an adulterous act against the Lord.



25. The Lord is gracious. He will not divorce you. He will accept you back. All you have to do is confess your tryst to God and you will be restored to the filling of the Holy Spirit and to fellowship with God and Christ.
21. Conclusions from verse 15:
  1. The linear action of the progressive present indicates behavior patterns that Paul consistently commits in subjection to his first husband rather than remaining loyal to his true authority, Jesus Christ.
  2. This means Paul has great difficulty making volitional decisions to defend his own soul from the assault of his first husband.
  3. But no member of the human race is capable of fully ridding himself of the corrupting influence of his sinful nature.
  4. However, God has provided the perfect eternal solution to our sin problem through the provision of His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.
  5. Once saved, God provides the perfect temporal solution to our sin problem through the provision of divine operating assets, three of which are indispensable in the process: the filling of the Holy Spirit, the mentorship of the Holy Spirit under GAP, and the problem-solving devices starting with rebound.
  6. God knows we cannot maintain status quo spirituality; this is why He provided rebound.
  7. God knows we cannot override wheel-tracks of wickedness which have been facilitated into paths of least resistance; this is why He provided His Word as divine viewpoint for the renovation of our souls.
  8. When we facilitate the three spiritual skills, we have the delegated power to override our wheel-tracks of wickedness and walk in newness of life.
  9. The fact Paul knows he has a problem contributes a great deal toward its solution. It is his knowledge of the Law that reveals to him the need for a change. Paul's challenge is to discover the process and procedure which will facilitate that change.

**Romans 7:15** - For what I continue to accomplish [ *katergazomai* ]—what works its way out of me—on each occasion, I do not understand [ *ginōskō* ], because what I desire [ *thelō* ] on such occasions, these things I have a tendency not to practice [ *prassō* ]; but what I keep on detesting [ *miseō* ] I continue to perform [ *poieō* ].