

Paul's Behavior Problem: The Neurological Explanation of Paul's Dilemma in Romans 7:14- 25 - I. Introduction

Restek, Richard M. The Modular Brain: How New Discoveries in Neuroscience Are Answering Age-Old Questions about Memory, Free Will, Consciousness, and Personal Identity. New York: (1st ed.) Simon & Schuster, 1995, pp. 120-121:

The concept of oneself as a unified, freely acting agent directing our behavior is firmly entrenched in our written and spoken language. But even a casual effort at introspection reveals that even the most balanced of us are often of two or more "minds." One part of us wants desperately to do something, while another part resists with a ferocity that leaves us feeling disjointed and conflicted. At such times we wonder if more than one person occupies our bodies.

II. The Attacks of the First Husband (Romans 7:15-Romans 7:21)

We have established that at salvation, guilt is transferred from the sinful nature to the believer whose volition tendentially follows the trends of her ex-husband. The sinful nature continues to struggle for control over his ex-wife's life by sending up temptations to her soul in hopes of leading her astray.

The first assault on the soul which is described by Paul begins in Romans 7:15 and is introduced by an explanatory conjunctive particle: *gar* - "For." This is where Paul begins to present himself as an example of how the believer falls prey to the temptations of his sinful nature even though its power has been broken.

The neuter pronoun whose antecedent is Paul's tendential post-salvation behavior pattern comes next: *hos* - "what." Refers to the specifics of Paul's cosmic production under the rulership of the first husband. This is followed by the present middle indicative of the verb: *katergazomai* - "to achieve, accomplish, bring about, produce, cultivate, to work out."

Again, we see our old friend from Philippians 2:12 which literally means to "work out." We have developed the concept of cultivation of the soil and how that procedure is used by Paul to describe the cultivation of thought in the believer's soul.

Once divine thought is preserved into long-term memory traces then it will produce fruit under pressure. Thus, one may cultivate his soul to the point of divine-good production through the second spiritual skill of the grace apparatus for perception. That would be cultivation of the soul by inculcation of thoughts from the Divine Academy of Grace Didactics.

By the same token, the soul may also be cultivated to produce sin, human good, and evil under the authority of the sinful nature. That would be cultivation of the soul by inculcation of thoughts from the Satanic Academy of Cosmic Didactics.

In this latter case, what works out of the body of the believer is a lifestyle and behavior pattern that may be classified as the production of the flesh cultivated by the influence of the sinful nature.

The best translation for this opening portion of Romans 7:15 is: "For what works out of me ..."

present - Duration; denotes something that happens in the past with results that continue up to the present time.

This is also referred to as a progressive present which indicates action which began retroactively in past time but which continues in present time.

The progressive aspect of the tense shows that the action in question is in a state of progress. Thus, the durative, or the retroactive progressive present says that what works its way out of Paul began in the past and continues to the present in a progressive manner.

We may insert at this point information which we have gleaned from our study of the theology of neurology: during the period of Paul's first marriage, his sinful nature developed wheel-tracks of wickedness which were progressively facilitated into paths of least resistance and which now reveal themselves as behavior patterns and character traits.

middle - Deponent; active in meaning. Paul produces the action of the verb by exhibiting a behavior pattern developed during his first marriage and under the authority of the first husband, the sinful nature.

indicative - Declarative; a statement of fact. This is the propensity which Paul faces in his post-salvation life. Wheel-tracks of wickedness work their way out of him.

As a believer, Paul becomes confused over the fact he continues to behave in the same manner he did as an unbeliever. He continues with the negative adverb: *ou* - "not," + the present active indicative of the verb: *ginosko* - "I know not." This is better translated into the English by the phrase, "I do not understand."

CTL: "For what I do, what works its way out of me, I do not understand ..."