



Paul's Behavior Problem: Awareness of Sin Means the Law is Advantageous, Rom 7:16; Volition Grants Permission to Sin, the Sin Nature Is the Source, v. 17

Romans 7:16:

1. Verse 16 reads this way in the New King James Version:

Romans 7:16 - (NKJV) If, then, I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

2. This verse starts out with the conditional particle **ei, ei** which, along with the declarative indicative mood of the verb, serves to introduce the protasis of a first class condition and thus denotes a supposition from the viewpoint of reality. The verb is the present active indicative of:

(#8) **ποιέω, poieō** - “Now if I keep on performing”

NOTE: **Poieō** is the eighth verb on your list whereas the next verb, **thelō** is number seven. This is because in the Greek manuscript **thelō** comes before **poieō**. However, for a smoother translation into English it is more convenient to approach them in reverse order. I have listed the verbs on your chart in the order they occur in the Greek. This is how the verse appears in the Greek manuscript:

Romans 7:16 - Εἰ δέ ὃ οὐ θέλω [#7] τοῦτο ποιῶ [#8]: “But if what I would [**θέλω, thelō: desire**] not, this I do [**ποιέω, poieō: perform**] ...

We will examine **poieō** first: “Now I keep on performing”:

present: Durative; denotes what is going on and is in a state of persistence. Paul finds himself involved in a behavior pattern produced by facilitated wheel-tracks of wickedness. **[R(1)c.]**

active: Paul as a carnal believer produces the action under the influence and authority of his ex-husband, the sinful nature. This action is linear and thus presently ongoing.

indicative: Declarative; with the particle **ei** it indicates the protasis of a first class condition – a supposition from the viewpoint of reality.

3. What Paul asserts that he is in reality performing a facilitated wheel-track of wickedness. This behavior pattern is mentioned next by the phrase, **ὅς, hos**, plus **οὗτος, houtos** and is translated, “this thing.” Then comes the verb, the present active indicative of:

(#7) **θέλω, thelō** - “to desire” This is accompanied by the negative adverb **οὐ, ou** which cancels the idea of the verb. Thus far we have the following translation:

Romans 7:16 - Now if I keep on performing [poieō] this thing which I do not desire [thelō], and I do ...

present: Customary; denotes that which habitually occurs or may be reasonably expected to occur. Paul knows he is doing the wrong thing but does it anyhow. **[R(2)]**

In status quo spirituality he never desires to live this way but inevitably he winds up doing so. Since his memory traces have been so facilitated, he finds that he is easily tempted by his lust pattern and is led astray before he can catch himself.



active: The negative *ou* indicates that Paul has the proper attitude of not desiring to commit sin, however this desire does not successfully prevent the undesirable behavior from occurring.

indicative: Declarative; a statement of fact.

4. Principle: When a facilitated wheel-track of wickedness is vectored into the conscious mind by the lust pattern the volition is so conditioned to respond to this path of least resistance that the believer's earnest desire to overcome the behavior is often overwhelmed.

5. This is why Jesus Christ went to the cross. We are going to sin! Through spiritual growth the advancing believer will make progress and in time will overcome many of his faults and failures. However, there are going to be times when the flesh wins.

6. Consequently, grace is sufficient. Rebound and keep moving!

7. If Paul keeps performing a lifestyle contrary to what he consistently desires to do, then he says it results in his agreeing with the Law's righteous message which prohibits this very lifestyle. This is his conclusion expressed in the apodosis which begins with the present active indicative of the verb:

(#9) **σὺμφημι, *sumphēmi*** - "I keep agreeing"

present: Perfective; denoting existing results. It refers to a fact which has come to be in the past but is emphasized as a present reality. Paul began to agree with the Mosaic Law once he understood the 10th Commandment and this continues to be the case at present.

[R(1)b.]

active: Paul produces the action of agreeing with the Law.

indicative: Declarative; a statement of fact.

8. What Paul agrees with is indicated by the instrumental of association:

τῷ, *tōi* plus **νόμος, *nomos*** - "with the Law"

9. The thing on which Paul and the Law agree is introduced by the conjunction **ὅτι, *hoti***: "that it is":

καλός, *kalos* - "good."

10. But this is not good of intrinsic value as is found in the word **ἀγαθός, *agathos***, but that which denotes quality, i.e., that which is noble, praiseworthy, or advantageous.

11. This completes verse 16 and we now have a corrected and expanded translation:

Romans 7:16 - Now if I keep on performing [***poieō***] this thing which I habitually do not desire [***thelō***], and I do, I keep agreeing [***sumphēmi***] with the Law that it is advantageous.

12. Principles from verse 16:

1. Paul's recognizes that his behavior problem is part of an habitual lifestyle and that it is producing wrong action in his life.

2. Paul does admit that he is in agreement with the Law even though he does not submit to its counsel not to lust.

3. Therefore, the Law is an advantage in that it reveals to Paul that he has a behavior problem.



4. In this verse, Paul is affirming that the Tenth Commandment contributed standards to his conscience which give him guidance and leadership in the field of right thought, decision, and action which should result in righteous behavior.
5. Knowing the solution to the problem, Paul faces an ongoing struggle for power between his two husbands.
6. In this battle, he enjoys the indwelling residency of a new marriage Counselor, the Holy Spirit.
7. Under His filling ministry, the Holy Spirit recalls standards learned from the Law—“you will not lust”—to define Paul’s sinfulness and to stimulate rebound.
8. Further, the Holy Spirit’s mentorship will ultimately define the issues of human good and evil and offer guidance for their avoidance.
9. From the Spiritual Code of the Mosaic Law, plus principles reiterated and revealed in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is able to lead and guide the believer away from concepts of human good and evil in the field of establishment truth.
10. From the New Testament, and primarily from its epistles, the Holy Spirit is able to lead and guide the believer into thinking that will enable him to execute the sophisticated spiritual life of the Church Age.
11. At this point Paul is not efficient enough in controlling his own soul so that his advance in this system is efficient. In fact, in the next verse, Paul admits that once the sinful nature has regained control over his soul, he cannot control its influence with human power.

Romans 7:17

Romans 7:17 - (NKJV) Now, then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

1. This verse is introduced by the adverb of time **νυνί *nuni*** combined with the conjunction **δέ, *de***. Together they form an idiom that is best translated, “But as the case really stands.”
2. This is followed by the negative conjunction **οὐκετι, *ouketi*** plus the personal pronoun **ἐγώ, *egō***, translated “I am no longer.”
3. Next comes the verb, the present middle indicative of:

(#10) **κατεργάζομαι, *katergazomai*** - “accomplishing”

present:	Customary; denotes that which habitually occurs, or may be reasonably expected to occur. [R(2)]
	This verb may also be viewed as an iterative present describing what occurs at successive intervals denoting repeated action.
	Both indicate a facilitated wheel-track of wickedness.
middle:	Deponent; Paul uses himself to represent the modus operandi of the human race under the control of the sinful nature.
indicative:	Declarative; a statement of fact.
4. What Paul accomplishes is indicated by the neuter pronoun **αὐτό, *autos***, translated, “this thing.”



5. “This thing” refers to the facilitated accomplishment of the sinful nature which now has dictatorial control over Paul’s soul.
6. Paul next introduces the second clause of verse 17 with the adversative conjunction **ἀλλά, *alla*** translated “but.” After a negative, in this case the conjunction ***ouketi***, it sets up a contrast between the first and second clauses.
7. The second clause begins with the noun **ἁμαρτία, *hamartia***, translated “the sinful nature.”

Romans 7:17 - But as the case really stands, I am no longer accomplishing this thing but the sinful nature ...

8. This is followed by the verb, the present active participle of:
 - (#11) **οἰκέω, *oikeō*** - “to reside”

present:	Durative; denotes what began in the past at physical birth and continues to the present time even after salvation. The sinful nature is genetically passed down in procreation and becomes operational at physical birth. [R(1)c.]
active:	The sinful nature produces the action by being the source of carnal production of sin, human good, and evil.
participle:	Circumstantial; indicates the part volition plays in the process. Without volitional participation the sinful nature would be incapable of producing fruits of the flesh.

Romans 7:17 - But as the case really stands, I am no longer habitually accomplishing [*katergazomai*] this thing [**fruit of the flesh] but the sinful nature which keeps on residing [*oikeō*] in me.**

9. Several questions arise from this corrected translation. Let me suggest four:
 1. Is Paul projecting his poor volitional decision to submit to the lust pattern’s temptations onto his sinful nature?
 2. Is Paul thus denying any responsibility for the resultant sin, human good, and evil?
 3. Is Paul setting up a rationale whereby he can conveniently ignore his involvement in sin by claiming that it’s not really him who does it but the sinful nature?
 4. Is Paul engaged in the three arrogant skills: (1) self-justification, (2) self-deception, and (3) self-absorption?
10. Definitely not! But what is being said here is very important and, once understood, sheds great light on the inherent challenges of executing the Christian way of life while living in a body of corruption.
11. It doesn’t matter what lust pattern ultimately gains control of the soul, once it does it dominates that person’s life until he adjusts to the justice of God.
12. If an unbeliever, the individual is in slavery to the desires of the flesh and this tyranny cannot be broken until he submits to the salvation solution and then begins a concentrated campaign of spiritual growth that results in major renovation of his soul.



13. If a believer, the individual has volitionally placed himself under slavery to the desires of the flesh and this tyranny cannot be broken until he submits to the rebound solution and then resumes his spiritual growth that results in major renovation of his soul.
14. With these things in mind it becomes very instructive to analyze the meaning of Romans 7:17. Here once again is the corrected translation of this verse:

Romans 7:17 - But as the case really stands, I am no longer habitually accomplishing [*katergazomai*] this thing [**fruit of the flesh**] but the sinful nature which keeps on residing [*oikeō*] in me.