

Solutions are Found in the Soul, not the Body; Romans 7:18b

NOTE: Due to a scheduling conflict with Chesterfield Day School, Bible class for Thursday, 30 May 1996, was cancelled.

Therefore, the first dash in the diagram is:

The nine-month gestation period during which Paul's entire body was contaminated with the sinful nature genes. The moment of physical birth when the justice of God imputed Adam's original sin to the sinful nature.

The simultaneous imputation of soul life to biological life. The resultant human life exists in a dichotomy: Paul was physically alive but spiritually dead. Why? Physical life activated the sinful nature genes in his brain's neurons.

The imputation of Adam's original sin brought about total depravity of which spiritual death is a part.

The activation of the sinful nature genes in the neurons of the brain turned control of the soul immediately over to the sinful nature. Paul was born separated from God and in need of a Savior.

All of these things are a part of the first dash. The dot indicates the finished result at the point of physical birth. The second dash indicates that the condition continues to exist as a "*finished product*." We can express it this way:

- (contamination and imputation)
- (total depravity & spiritual death)
- (a body of corruption)

Thus, the first dash illustrates a process occurring in past time. The dot indicates that the action reached a point of culmination.

The second dash denotes the continuation of that completed action as a "*finished product*." This is what Paul knew. He learned it through the process of GAP which reached a point of culmination in long-term memory with the existing results that he knows it now and states it.

"In fact, I know..."

Next comes a very important prepositional phrase; the proposition *en* + the singular pronoun: *ego* - "*in me*."

This is followed by a parenthetical statement which begins with the demonstrative pronoun: *houtos* - "*that*."

Used to introduce Paul's explanation. It is accompanied by the present active indicative of the verb: *eimi* - "*is*."

present - Aoristic; denotes punctiliar action in present time thus setting forth the action as presently occurring. active - Paul's flesh produces the action of having no good thing in it.

indicative - Declarative; a fact.

"In fact, I know that in me (that is, ...)"

Clarification is stated next by the prepositional phrase: *en* + *sarx* + *ego* - "*in my flesh*."

Refers to the human body with emphasis on the neurons of the brain in which are found the base of operations for the sinful nature.

The description of what Paul says is not found there comes next, the negative *ou* + the present active indicative of the verb: *oikeo* - "*there does not reside*."

present - Historical; views a past event with the vividness of a present occurrence. The absence of intrinsic good from the realm of the sinful nature is a fact established at physical birth but it may be viewed as a present occurrence.

active - The principle that no intrinsic good is found in the flesh produces the action.

indicative - Declarative; a statement of historical as well as biblical fact.

“In fact, I know that in me (that is, in my brain) there does not reside...”

What does not reside in Paul’s flesh is the accusative singular of the adjective used as a noun: *agathos* - “intrinsic good.”

This refers to excellence, value, or merit possessed as an indigenous quality.

agathos describes the innate virtue of God. He is intrinsically good. This is stated throughout the gospels, for example, our Lord’s statement in:

Luke 18:19 - Ουδεις αγαθος ει με εις ηο τηος

Luke 18:19 - No one is good except God alone.

The Greek language distinguishes between that which is intrinsically good and that which is good in human terms. For example, in order to designate something which is pleasing or beautiful but related to man, such as the human body, the word used is *kalos*.

Paul may consider his body to be *kalos* but he most definitely does not consider it to be *agathos*.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit filling his soul can be classified as *agathos* but the presence of the sinful nature in his flesh is not.

“In fact, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) there does not reside any good of intrinsic value...”

We need to stop our exegesis at this point and draw some conclusions from what we have studied. Principles

Paul is demonstrating that he views his situation objectively by saying “*in me, that is, in my flesh.*”

Paul has discovered that there is an inner conflict which rages for the control of his soul and that his body is a major adversary in that conflict.

In the members of his body lie the presence of his first husband, the sinful nature. Paul has become aware that the problem he faces is in himself.

No one can solve any problem they face until they become aware of what the problem is. Awareness of one’s sin problem requires objectivity. Only objectivity can make a person who is wrong come to grips with the fact that the problem is within himself.

The presence of the sinful nature in his body caused Paul to do the things he knew he should no longer do. This sets up the inner struggle for control of the soul. In this warfare, the artillery is competing wheel-tracks, the battleground is the cerebral cortex, and the victor’s prize is control over the soul. Volition determines who wins each battle. In order to solve this problem one must first determine where the solution lies—in the body or in the soul.

The body is totally depraved and although physically alive, it is spiritually dead. Spiritual death implies more than having no fellowship with God. It also means that the unbeliever is ignorant of God’s plan, policy, and purpose. As long as a person continues in spiritual death, he cannot possibly come to understand God’s solution to his problems.

Once saved, the believer is transformed into a new spiritual species with the creation of the human spirit. But defeats in the spiritual conflict enable the sinful nature to regain control of the soul. When this occurs, solutions can only be found in wheel-tracks of righteousness which can only be accessed and acted upon by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Under the power of the flesh the only solution is rebound and it is only a recovery technique, it is only a corrective procedure. All rebound can do is reactivate for the believer the three spiritual skills. Therefore, the solutions to the problems presented by the spiritual conflict in our members is found in the soul, not the body.

“In fact, I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) there does not reside any good of intrinsic value ...”