

### Ignorance of Doctrine Neutralizes Divine-Good Production

The wheel-tracks recalled are facilitated and volition operates from a position of weakness since counter wheel-tracks of righteousness are not facilitated. As Counselor of the second marriage, the Holy Spirit nonetheless brings these counter measures up into Paul conscious mind along side the temptation.

Volition must decide between the two choices: reject the temptation and maintain status quo spirituality or submit to the temptation and assume status quo carnality. 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.

Please, note: it is only by means of the Holy Spirit that this defensive action can be accomplished. If attempted by means of human energy, the facilitated wheel-track of wickedness will win out every time. 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.

When divine good is produced, credit must go to the Holy Spirit, not the believer. The Spirit gets the credit, the believer benefits. This is grace! 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 desire of the flesh.

A thought process has transpired and a decision has been made. 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.

The sinful nature, under orders from volition, fires the first neuron in the memory trace and Paul sins. All of this is implied when Paul says in Romans 7:20,

**“Now if I am doing...”**

present - Progressive of description; Indicates action that is now going on. Also called the pictorial present since it presents to the mind a picture of events in the process of occurrence.

active - Paul, in using himself as an example of the modus operandi of the carnal Christian, produces the action of the verb.

indicative - Declarative; as statement of fact.

But what, in fact, is Paul doing? We have the pronoun, *hos*, + the personal pronoun, *ego*, and the present active indicative of the verb: *thelo* - “*I do not desire to do.*”

**“Now if I am doing 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 has facilitated memory traces which go way back into his experience in Judaism. Throughout Paul's experience as an unbeliever, he developed a behavior pattern motivated by a sincere desire to please God and serve Him. His desires were never fulfilled since he did not understand the policy, plan, or purpose of God. Paul was the ultimately religious unbeliever.

**Philippians 3:4b** - If anyone has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

**Philippians 3:5** - Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee.

**Philippians 3:6** - as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.

This ingrained self-righteousness caused him to become spiritually blinded by the Law and thus incapable of seeing the grace of salvation in Christ. Later Paul said his status-quo carnality resulted in him becoming history's worst sinner.

**1 Timothy 1:15** - It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

The Lord had to strike spiritually-blinded Paul with literal blindness on the Damascus Road before Paul could successfully see Him as Savior.

**Acts 26:10** - Not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.

**Acts 26:11** - And as I punished them often in all the synagogues, I tried to force them to blaspheme; and being furiously enraged at them, I kept pursuing them even to foreign cities.

**Acts 26:12** - While thus engaged, as I was journeying to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests,

**Acts 26:13** - at midday, O King Agrippa, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.

**Acts 26:14** - And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

**Acts 26:15** - And I said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.'

**Acts 26:16** - But arise, and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

**Acts 26:17** - delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,

**Acts 26:18** - to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

Acts 9:8 verifies that Paul was blinded by this incident and thus among those who were in darkness. He was instructed to continue on to Damascus where he would be told what to do. There a disciple named Ananias was to minister to Paul.

**Acts 9:17** - ... after laying his hands on him, Ananias said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

**Acts 9:18** - And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was baptized.

All the way up to this point Paul has been involved in a sincere desire to serve God. It is apparent that since he was spiritually blind and in status-quo unbelief, all of Paul's desires, although sincere, were ineffectual and of no consequence.

Now saved, Paul brought all of these wheel-tracks of sincerely desiring to please God into the Christian life. But until he learned the doctrines which would replace the old wheel-tracks, the old ones would remain as dominant. Thus, whether Paul was in status quo unbelief or as a believer, his sincere efforts to please God did not accomplish their desired objective. This proves once again that desire plus emotion produces a sincere Christian but one who accomplishes no divine good production. Paul's desire to please God is facilitated but his capacity to accomplish his desire is undeveloped. Therefore, he keeps on doing what he doesn't 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 which indicates otherwise.

The best English translation of the verse up to this point is: “Now if I am doing what I do not desire to do (and I am)...”