

Paul's Ménage à trois, The Sinful Nature's Coup d'état

Next comes the introduction of the apodosis which will document the sinful nature's coup d'état. It begins with the temporal adverb: *ouketi* - "I am no longer."

Again, we see the same nuance we first noted in Romans 7:17. There we noted that Paul's volition is responsible for the sins he commits but the actual performance of these trends originates in the sinful nature.

Romans 7:17 - But as the case really stands, I am no longer habitually performing this thing but the sinful nature which keeps on living in me.

The principle being made is this:

Volition decides to surrender control of the soul over to the sinful nature. Once done, the sinful nature performs the sinful act. With the sinful nature back in control, volition is neutralized, held hostage by its first husband. From that point on, volition operates from a position of weakness, unable to override the desires of the flesh.

Thus, Paul's volition commits a ménage à trois which permits the sinful nature to execute a coup d'état. This enables us to see a contrast between the first and second marriages.

In the first marriage, the volition was enslaved without recourse to a tyrannical husband. But at salvation, due to retroactive positional truth, the power of the sinful nature has been broken. This means that in the second marriage, volition is free to avoid the assaults of the first husband. In either case, the sinful nature is the source of all sin, but in the second marriage, volition must take the responsibility.

In the first marriage, the sinful nature had the authority to dictate policy and to enforce compliance. However, in the second marriage, the sinful nature becomes an influence peddler, like a former politician out of power who lusts for recovery of lost sovereignty.

The only successful defense against his assaults includes:

1. The enabling power of the Holy Spirit under His filling ministry.
2. The metabolization of Bible doctrine under His teaching ministry.
3. Development of doctrinal constellations in the norms and standards of the conscience.
4. The enabling power of the Holy Spirit to recall pertinent principles under pressure.
5. The enabling power of the Holy Spirit to execute wheel-tracks of righteousness to experience.

It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit's functions of guidance and leadership are handicapped by ignorance of doctrine. With absolute principles of right and wrong retained in long-term memory traces of the conscience, the Holy Spirit is able to recall them into the believer's conscious mind. When this occurs, the believer knows what is the right thing to do. When volition becomes aware of the right thing to do, the Holy Spirit will enable the believer to make the right decision.

Romans 7:20a - Now if, as a result of my personal volitional decision, I am doing what I do not desire to do (and I am), I am no longer...

Next comes the present middle indicative of the verb: *katergazomai* - "the one producing it."

present - Progressive; denotes action in progress or in a state of persistence, therefore strong linear action.