

Obligation to Delight in God's Principles, Romans 7:22

NOTE: No Bible class on Thursday, 4 July 1996.

The attitude of delight at having divine truth in one's soul is revealed here to be both a potential as well as an obligation. It remains a potential from the moment of spiritual birth up until enough doctrine is inculcated to produce the attitude.

But no matter what one's spiritual status, it is every believer's obligation to achieve a mental attitude of delight at having God's Word in his soul. The obligation is associated with the necessity of having some means of counteracting the presence of the principle of evil within one's members.

If the believer is going to serve the God who made him and honor the Lord who saved him, he must acquire the power to do these things. The power is in the Word!

Rector, Robert. . National Review, 15 July 1996, pp. 30-33.

God and the Underclass: Liberalism sneers at religion and scorns God. The Welfare State and the underclass follow accordingly.

It is mentioned next in the locative of sphere from the noun: *nomos* - "law," or "principle."

This is the third way in which this noun is used in Romans 7. We have noted in the first and second paragraphs that it referred to the Mosaic Law in general and to the laws of divine establishment in particular.

In Romans 7:21 we first noted *nomos* used to indicate a principle much like the laws of science. There Paul said he had—*heurisko ton nomon to kakon* - "discovered the law of evil" present within him.

Just as Archimedes discovered the scientific law of displacement in the public baths of Syracuse in circa 270 B.C., so Paul discovered the spiritual law of evil in the first century A.D. The word "law" is commonly used to designate discoveries of absolute truths, such as those of displacement and evil. However, since in our passage *nomos* has so often referred to the Mosaic Law, we will begin at this point to translate it with the word "principle" in order to avoid confusion.

"For, along with other believers, I delight in God's principles..."

The concluding prepositional phrase indicates that Paul speaks from the standpoint of his own personal spiritual advance at this point in his epistle. Even though he has advanced spiritually, he still has the problem of the principle of evil ever present within his body. Nevertheless, he now has available to him the artillery of divine thought present within his soul.

The phrase begins with the preposition: *kata* - "in" + the accusative definite article: *ton* - "the" followed by the adjective: *eso* - "inner" which describes the noun: *anthropos* - "man," "...in the inner man."

The term "inner man" refers to the soul which is the battleground for the Angelic Conflict. Let's document this from several sources:

The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary, s.v. "inner man":

An expression used by Paul to distinguish the spiritual self ... from the "outer man ... who is subject to the law of sin."

Wuest, Kenneth S. "Romans in the Greek New Testament." Vol. 1 of Wuest's Word Studies. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974; p. 124:

The incongruity between inclination and action has its roots in a division within man's nature. The law of God legislates for him, and in the inner man he delights in it. It is called inner because it is not seen.

International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, s.v. “inward man”:

The Greek original, ἄεσω ἄνθρωπον, *eso anthropos* is defined “*the internal man,*” i.e. “*soul,*” “*conscience.*” It is the immaterial part of man in distinction from the “*outward man*” which “*perishes.*” As the seat of spiritual influences, it is the sphere in which the Holy Spirit does His renewing and saving work. Briefly stated, it is spirit, mind, soul ... man’s higher nature, spiritual, intellectual, moral.

Please note what we have here.

1. The “*inner man*” is defined as being the “*soul*” with emphasis on the “*conscience.*”
2. It is said to be the “*seat of spiritual influences*” indicating that its principles—i.e., norms and standards—have intrinsic authority since their source is divine imperatives.
3. The soul is said to be the “*sphere*” in which “*renovation*” of thought takes place.
4. Since that renovation is dependent upon the filling and mentorship ministries of the Holy Spirit, then the environment for renovation is the divine power system.
5. The system by which renovation occurs is defined as “*spiritual,*” “*intellectual,*” and “*moral.*”
6. This describes the stages of metabolization of truth through the Grace Apparatus for Perception:
 - a. The Holy Spirit teaches doctrine to the human “*spirit.*”
 - b. “*Intellectual*” understanding is clarified in the conscious mind, the association cortex of the brain, or the nous.
 - c. Doctrine believed is stored in the seven compartments of the stream of consciousness, or the *kardia*.
 - d. This includes the conscience where constellations are developed regarding right and wrong, i.e., “*moral*” norms and standards.

Paul also uses this term in two other passages:

Ephesians 3:16 - That God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit in the inner man;

Ephesians 3:17 - so that Christ may dwell in your streams of consciousness through faith...

2 Corinthians 4:16 - We do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.