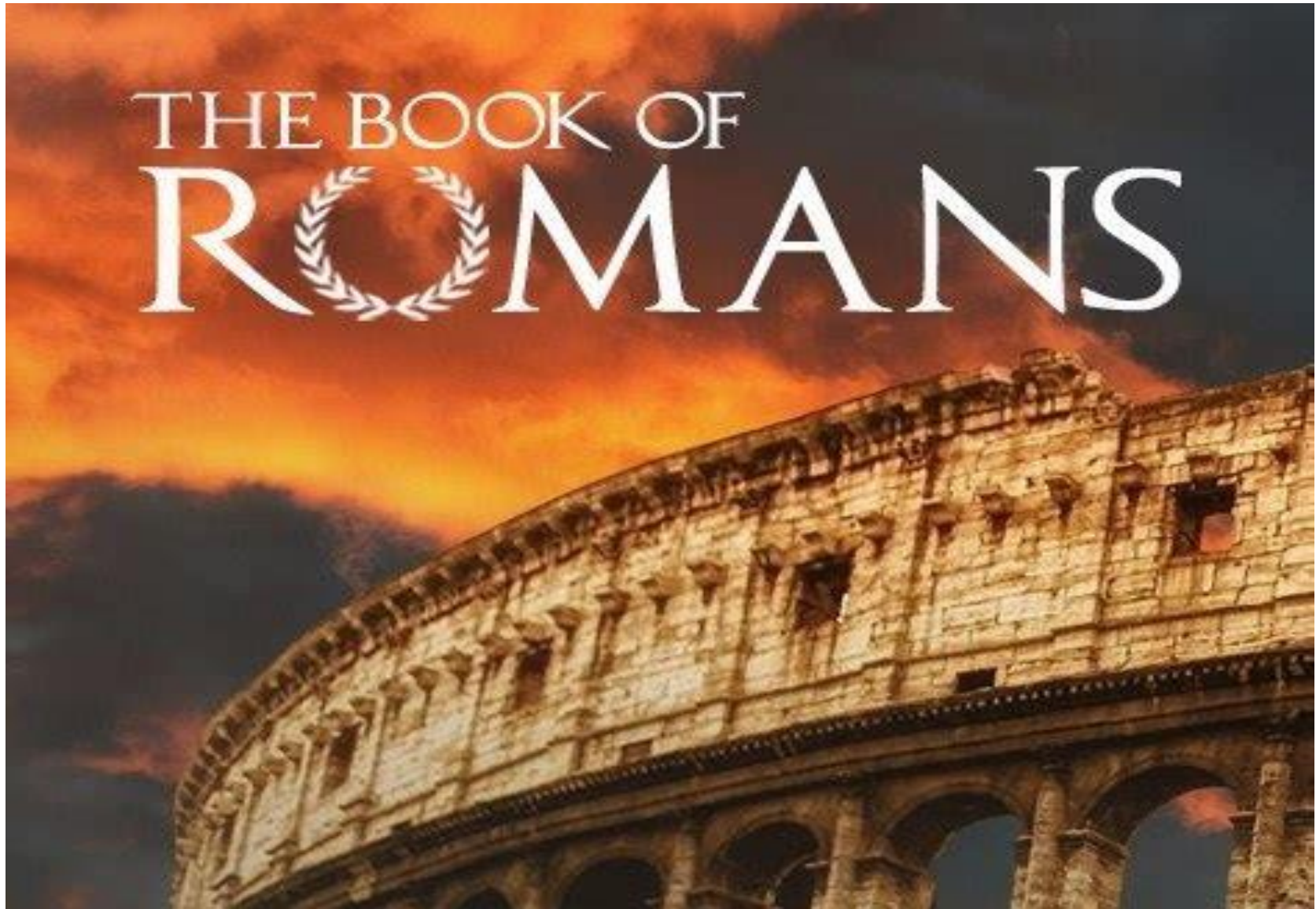


Rom 7:21-23 The Principle That Evil Is Present in Me



Definition/Important words used in Chp. 7:14-24*

- Paul's position as a believer: a new creation
in Christ (2 Cor:5:17)
- Paul uses "I" and "me" to designate this position
- Paul's condition as a believer: but I am carnal
(Rom 7:14)
- So Paul's condition is carnal even though he is
a new creation in Christ
- **the sin** = the sin nature, also called the flesh or
the evil
- **law system** – any set rules either from God
or man

* edited from H. Molloy

1 Cor 2:14 But a **natural man** [*psychikos* - **unbeliever**] does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

1 Cor 2:15 But **he who is spiritual** [*pneumatikos*] appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

The three men in Paul's letters



1 Cor 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to **men of flesh** [*sarkikos* - carnal], as to infants in Christ.

In Rom 7:14 Paul will expand upon what is a “carnal” believer.

Overview of Rom 7:14 to 7:24*



- Three reasons are given why a believer cannot live the Christian life under any law system.
- Paul uses his own personal account with the commandment “You shall not covet.”
- He states first the reason, then the proof, followed by the conclusion.
- **Reason one** – v:14b I am fleshly [carnal], permanently sold under the sinful nature.
 - **Proof 1**– v:15b For that which I desire, this I do not practice. But that which I hate, this I am doing.
 - **Proof 2**– v:16b What I do not desire, this I do.
- **Conclusion** – v:17 **So now**, no longer is it I who do it, but the sinful nature which indwells me.
- Now more on the reason and conclusion!

Wuest NT

[More details on Reason one](#)-v:14b I am fleshly [carnal], permanently sold under the sinful nature.



- Paul is saying he continuously exists in a state of carnality
- Next he says that he is sold under the sin nature - perfect tense
- Past completed action with abiding results; idea of permanence
- Somebody in the past sold out mankind – Adam
- Paul is not comparing himself to a spiritual Christian
- Paul is stating his condition as a believer with an indwelling sin nature in control

adapted from Merryman

[More details on Conclusion](#) – v:17 So now, no longer is it I who do it, but the sinful nature which “indwells me”

- This is a giant leap forward in the restoration of fellowship with the Lord
- The recognition of the source of our sin

Molloy

Overview of Rom 7:14 to 7:24*



- **Reason two** – v:18a I know positively that there does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh, good
 - **Proof 1** – v:18b for the willing is present in me, but the doing of “the good” is not
 - **Proof 2** – v:19 for that which I desire, good, I do not [do]; but that which I do not desire, evil, this I practice
- **Conclusion** – v:20 that which I do not desire, this I do, no longer is it I who do it, but the sinful nature which “indwells me” does it

Wuest NT Scriptures

- This is a wonderful discovery!
- This is what every believer needs to discover!
- That we cannot “will” to live the Christian life because when we do – we don’t have the power to work it out.

Molloy

Overview of Rom 7:14 to 7:24*



- **Reason three** – v:21 I find then the [law] principle that evil [the sin nature] is present in me, the one who wants to do [the] good.
 - **Proof 1** – v:22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man
 - **Proof 2** – v: 23 But I see a different kind of a law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind, making me a prisoner of war to the law of the sinful nature which is in my members
- **Conclusion** – v:24 Wretched man, I. Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? Wuest NT Scriptures

- This is a cry of distress

- I'm in pain but I'm not giving up

McCalley

Today's Verses



21 I find then **the [law] principle** that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

22 For I joyfully concur with **the law of God** in the inner man,

23 but I see **a different law** in the members of my body, waging war against **the law of my mind** and making me a prisoner of **the law of sin** which is in my members.

21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me,
the one who wants to do good.



I find then the [law] principle

find - *heuriskō* - metaphorically, to find, i.e., to perceive or learn by experience (present tense cont. action)

- Rom 7:10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved [or was found] to result in death for me.

[law] principle – *nomos* - of a force or influence impelling to action (law in the KJV)

that – next we are given this principle

[the] **evil is present in me** [the new creation]

the evil – the sin nature in the context of Rom 7

is present - *parakeimai* - to lie beside, to be near
(present tense cont. action, middle voice)

21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me,
the one who wants to do good.



in me - *ego* – in the new creation in Christ

- So we have the law principle of the evil being present in the sin nature continually

But now he give us the amazing contrast!

the one who wants to do [the] good

the one [me] – the new creation in Christ

wants - *thélō* - to be decided upon, seeing one's desire to its execution (present cont. action)

to do - *poieo* - to produce an output - something tangible

[the] **good** - *kalós* - meaning to act well, virtuously

- I've got the good and evil inside of me McCalley

21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.



More comments:

- Paul finds a condition that when he desires to do good, this evil nature always asserts itself against the doing of that good. Wuest
- He [Paul] brings out the same truth in Gal 5:17 where he says, “The flesh (evil nature) has a passionate desire to suppress the Spirit, and the Spirit has a passionate desire to suppress the flesh.” Wuest
- It is the denial of this fact that has wrecked thousands of lives! For evil will be present until the Lord comes, bringing in the redemption of our bodies. Newell

22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,



for – *gar* - indeed

I delight - *synēdomai* - to delight in something with others
(present tense, middle voice)

- So I Paul as a new creation in Christ continually delight for his (Paul's) own benefit

in the law of God

- Even though the law of God via the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind
- I delight in it because it is holy, righteous and good
- Next we are told where this law of God lives

22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,



with respect to [in] the inner Man

- Who is the inner man?
- Eph 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.

inner - *ésō* - the inner man means the mind [our new creation in Christ] being renewed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit Zodhiates

- 2 Cor 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.
- This inner man is “the new man in Christ” Molloy

23 but I see a different law in the members of my body,
waging war against the law of my mind and making me
a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.



but – *de* – in contrast to “the law of God”

I see a different law in the members of me Interlinear

I see - *blepō* - It especially stresses the thought of the
person who sees (present tense)

- lit: I am continually seeing

This “different law or principle”?

different - *heteros* - expresses a qualitative difference
and denotes “another of a different sort.”

- So “the quality” of this different law will be explained in
the remainder of the verse

²³ but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.



- this “different law principle” is:

1st - in the members of me

members - *melos* - since our bodies and their "members" belong to the earth, and are the instruments of sin, they are referred to as such (see Rom 7:5) Vine

- Rom 7:5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in **the members** of our body to bear fruit for death.
- This different law principle is described as “the law principle that evil is present in me” in verse 21

23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.



2nd – waging war against the law of my mind

waging war against - *antistrateúomai* - metaphorically, to war against, oppose (present tense)

3rd - making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members

making me a prisoner - *aichmalōtizō* - to subjugate, to bring under control - lit: capturing (present ten.)

- It can capture us and put us in bondage*
- It will cause us our deepest heartaches*
- It is our greatest enemy and it is at enmity with God*
- Jer 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? * Molloy

Final Thoughts*



Paul has described himself as follows in Romans 7:

1. He is a new creation in Christ [believer].
2. He longs to do good and shun evil.
3. He was conscious and aware of the righteousness of the Law.
4. He wanted to perform it [the Law] because he thought it meant divine approval.
5. He set out to do right [in God's eyes] and he determined to do it in his own strength.
6. His efforts were all marked by dismal failure.
7. His problem was not the Law itself but it was the production of what the Law commanded (in his own strength).
8. His problem was inside himself: the flesh or sin nature.

* Merryman

