

## Chapter 3: A Detailed Examination of Romans 7

The context of Rom 7 was examined in chapter 2 of this study. This chapter will consist of a deeper examination of Rom 7.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. An Examination of Justification and Sanctification

The identity of the emphatic “I” is dependent in part on understanding the experience of justification and sanctification. There can be no justification without sanctification. Justification is understood as momentary; sanctification, however, is understood in three ways: momentary, process and final. Sanctification as momentary is to be seen in justification. This means that when a person is justified, that person is also sanctified. When a person believes in Christ, this person becomes “in Christ.” Christ is now their sanctification. This can be seen in 1 Cor 1:30 where it is written that “it is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God, which is our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” The word translated “righteousness” is δικαιοσύνη, which means: “uprightness, justice as a characteristic of a judge, in a moral and religious sense\uprightness, righteousness, the characteristic required of men by God, righteousness in the sense of fulfilling the divine statutes, righteousness, uprightness as the compelling motive for the conduct of one's whole life.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robinson writes that “more ink has been spilled over Rom 7:7-8:4 than any other,” J.A.T. Robinson, *Wrestling With Paul* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1979), 82.

<sup>2</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 196.

Holiness in the NIV is translated from ἁγιασμός, which means: “holiness, consecration, sanctification; the use in a moral sense for a process or, more often, its result (the state of being made holy).”<sup>3</sup> Girdlestone says that ἁγιασμός should best be translated as sanctification.<sup>4</sup> He goes on to say that true sanctification is the separation of the spirit from all that is impure and polluting.<sup>5</sup> This separation of the spirit from all that is impure is sanctification considered as a process. This means that sanctification is not completed in this life; the process of sanctification is a life-long process.<sup>6</sup> Käsemann adds that sanctification is the living out of justification.<sup>7</sup> Murphy-O’Conner is of the opinion that “For the followers of Christ, Christ’s victory is a victory in principle; it must be translated into reality with the aid of the Spirit.”<sup>8</sup>

When a person believes in Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit indwells that person. The Holy Spirit, being God's Spirit, is righteousness, sanctification and holiness. The Holy Spirit is not only imputed to the believer. The Holy Spirit actually indwells the believer. The Holy Spirit is “given” or one can say, “imparted” to the believer. This is to say that when a person is declared righteous, that is justified, that person is also indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The believer is not only indwelt by the Holy Spirit; the believer is also righteous. The righteousness of the believer is both imputed, that is reckoned to the believer because of the righteousness of Christ (Rom 4:22-25), and the righteousness of Christ is imparted to the believer. This is done through the actual indwelling of the Holy

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>4</sup> R. Girdlestone, *Synonyms of The Old Testament*, 180.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> There is a life-long growth that takes place for the Christian. This growth process occurs both before the moment of sanctification and afterwards.

<sup>7</sup> E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 183.

<sup>8</sup> J. Murphy-O’Conner, *Paul His Story*, 201.

Spirit in the believer. The Holy Spirit is the righteousness of the believer.<sup>9</sup>

Sanctification as final is experienced when Christ appears. It is written that when He appears, we will be like Him (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 15:49; 2 Cor 3:18).

## 2. A Definition of Sin

To understand the experiences of justification and sanctification, it is necessary to understand the concept of sin. The most fundamental understanding of “sinner” is one who lives in sin.<sup>10</sup> Sin is defined as rebellion.<sup>11</sup> Murphy-O’Conner claims that Paul uses ἁμαρτία in an unusual way.<sup>12</sup> He is of the opinion that Paul used *sin* “to crystallize his vision of society as the victim of a massive disorientation. The origin of this disorientation is to be traced back to the sin of the one person, (Rom 5:12).”<sup>13</sup> Neyrey is of the opinion that sin “is a personified agent of Satan, the twin of death.”<sup>14</sup> Also S. Paul Schilling who puts forth his understanding of sin as “trusting ourselves rather than God, placing ourselves in the center instead of the One who alone is our true Center and substituting our own limited ends for the inclusive purposes of God.”<sup>15</sup> Jones posits that

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<sup>9</sup> See 1 Cor 1:30.

<sup>10</sup> This statement will be explained further in the discussion that follows.

<sup>11</sup> See D.B. Garlington, *Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 84-107 for his discussion of sin. In summary, he states that sin is “idolatry, rebellion” (93,100). See also S. Marrow, *Paul: His Letters and His Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 211.

<sup>12</sup> J. Murphy-O’Conner, *Paul A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 335.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 336.

<sup>14</sup> J. Neyrey, *Paul: In Other Words* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 173.

<sup>15</sup> S.P. Schilling, “Evil and Freedom Revisited,” *QR* 4 (1991): 4-17. For an interesting variant on this understanding of autonomy see J.Vogelsang who defines modernism as “marked by belief in the autonomous nature of the self or individual, faith in technology and reason as the tools for progressively improving the human condition,” (Doing the Right Thing in a Postmodern Society, *QR* 4 (1992): 3-13). The relationship between sin and modernism is beyond the scope of this study. What is

sin at its core is “the arrogance of taking things for granted.”<sup>16</sup> In response to Jones’ position<sup>17</sup> is the various terms used for sin throughout the Bible and the account of the Fall<sup>18</sup> in Gen 3.

Sin as rebellion can be seen from Gen 3:5.<sup>19</sup> This passage states: “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” In Hebrew the word translated “like” is כ, which means: “as, like”, according to Holladay<sup>20</sup> and Harris.<sup>21</sup> The Septuagint translates כ as ὡς, which means: “like, as.”<sup>22</sup>

It is clear that by the meaning of both the Hebrew and the Greek for the word “like” in Gen 3:5 that the essence of sin is the attempt or desire to be “like, as” God. The attempt or desire to be “like” God means that the sinner has placed something else in the place of God. To place something else in the place of God means that God has been “removed” from the place that belongs to Him. The desire or attempt to be “like” God means that God is not the One who is the Lord of the sinner. This means that the sinner is not listening to, nor obeying God. The attempt or desire to be “like” God means that the

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interesting in this discussion, however, is the point of intersection between sin and modernism which is the autonomous self. See also A. Du Toit, “Forensic Metaphors in Romans,” 213-246.

<sup>16</sup> W.P. Jones, “In Wait for My Life: Aging and Desert Spirituality,” *QR* 2 (1992): 17-27.

<sup>17</sup> It is hard to find Jones’ position that the core of sin is taking things for granted as recorded in Gen 3 and also in the various terms for sin used throughout the Bible.

<sup>18</sup> Whether Gen 3 is viewed as the account of the Fall of the human race or as a religious story which conveys truth, the essence is the same in regards to the essence of sin as choosing self over God.

<sup>19</sup> S.P. Schilling who claims that he has taken his understanding of sin, (see chapter 3 of this study), from Gen 3, who says that Adam and Eve “trusted the serpent instead of God (You will not die) and succumbed to the temptation to eat the fruit which would give them knowledge equal to God’s: (Your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil,” S.P. Schilling, *Evil and Freedom Revisited*, 11.

<sup>20</sup> W. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of The Old Testament*, 149.

<sup>21</sup> *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament*, 425.

<sup>22</sup> J. Lust; ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint, Part II* (Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), 527.

sinner is one's own god, or is one's own highest authority.<sup>23</sup> To say this in another fashion is to say that whatever is a person's highest authority will determine for that person what is "right or wrong" or "good and evil" for that person. Gen 3:5 states that the desire to be "like" God meant that Adam and Eve replaced God, in their own lives, with another authority. This "other" authority determined for them what was "good" and "evil" or it can be said, "right" and "wrong." Thus, this "other authority" has become god to that person. The reason for this is: only God has the "right" to determine good and evil, right and wrong. Whatever determines good and evil, right and wrong, is a person's god. God has been replaced either by the sinner him or herself or by something of the sinner's choosing. This is rebellion, the refusal to obey God as God, which is the essence of sin.<sup>24</sup>

The essence of sin, being the refusal to obey God as God, leads to a discussion of the understanding of sin.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the Old Testament states that there are two fundamental categories of sin. These two categories of sin are: unintentional sin (Lev 4, 5) and willful sin (Num 15:30). Lev 5:17 defines unintentional sin. This verse states: "If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the Lord's commands, even though he does not know it, he is guilty and will be held responsible." The second category of sin is the willful sin. Willful sin is translated from the Hebrew and means "sins with a high hand" (Num 15:30).

Within the Old Testament teaching there is forgiveness for unintentional sins.

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<sup>23</sup> D.B. Garlington states that Gen 3's account of the fall of Adam is to the "effect that Adam endeavored to set himself in the place of God," *Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 90.

<sup>24</sup> Mr. B. Carradine, *The Old Man* (Albany, Oregon: Sage Library, CD, 1996), 263; also R.S. McGee, *The Search For Significance*, 15.

<sup>25</sup> F. Josephus, in writing about Adam and Eve, says that sin is "thinking that they were happier than they were before, as they discovered what they were in want of" ("The Antiquities of the Jews, Book I," *Josephus, Complete Works* (trans., W. Whiston; Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1981), 26).

This is recorded throughout Lev 4, 5. However, for sins “with a high hand,” there is no forgiveness offered, according to the Old Testament. This understanding is also stated in Heb 10:26 where it is written that if we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left. The word in Heb 10:26 which has been translated “deliberately” is ἐκούσιως - which means “willingly, without compulsion, deliberately.”<sup>26</sup>

Not all agree with the above statements, however. Wesley is of the opinion that sin is “a voluntary transgression of a known law.”<sup>27</sup> Purkiser says that Wesley's definition of sin “is a useful and scriptural formulation.”<sup>28</sup> Barth is in agreement with Wesley's definition of sin when he writes that sin is “the willful and conscious dishonoring of God.”<sup>29</sup> However, there are some difficulties with this definition.

The first difficulty to be listed is: What does Wesley do with the many Greek and Hebrew words that define sin as more than a “willful violation of a known law?” How will Wesley answer the Old Testament teaching that there are willful and unintentional sins? What will Wesley do with the understanding of sin, as “ignorance of what one ought to have known?” These are only two of the difficulties that cause one to question Wesley's definition of sin. There maybe help from Finney, however, in answering these questions. Finney states that sin is a wrong aim or intention.<sup>30</sup> According to Finney, sin is to choose the wrong ultimate and supreme end of life. When a person chooses something

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<sup>26</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 243.

<sup>27</sup> J. Wesley, “On Perfection,” *The Works of John Wesley* (Sermon; CD-ROM; Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1995), 417.

<sup>28</sup> W.T. Purkiser, *Exploring Our Christian Faith* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1960), 211.

<sup>29</sup> K. Barth, trans. by E. Hoskyns, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 192; K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, (trans G.W. Bromiley; New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 120-132.

<sup>30</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1976), 117.

other than God as the ultimate and supreme end, purpose of life, this is to sin. Both, Finney and Wesley seem to have as their fundamental understanding of sin as, volitional. The ability to choose would imply knowledge of the choices available.

The word for sin that truly is the most difficult for Wesley's definition of sin is ἀγνόημα, which means, according to Trench, “ignorance of what one ought to have known.” Arndt and Gingrich define ἀγνόημα as “sin committed in ignorance.”<sup>31</sup>

If sin is only a willful transgression of a known law, then the sinner must “know” the law that is being transgressed. It stands to reason that “an unknown law” cannot be willfully violated. The question that Wesley's definition of sin does not answer is: How can a sinner willfully violate a known law in ignorance? This is a very important question. Both Trench and Arndt and Gingrich define ἀγνόημα as a sin committed in ignorance. In combining this word with Wesley's definition of sin, there are difficulties in holding strictly to the understanding of sin as a willful transgression of a known law. The conclusion, therefore is, that it is impossible to hold strictly to Wesley's definition of sin and to include all of the words that the Scripture uses to define sin.

The above is not the only difficulty that arises out of Wesley's definition of sin. Lev 4, 5 state that a person can sin unintentionally. The word translated “unintentionally” is: שגגה, which means, according to Holladay, “commit error, sin inadvertently.”<sup>32</sup> שגג is also defined as a “sin which may result from two causes. These causes are negligence or ignorance. Either the perpetrator knows the law but unintentionally violates it or he acts without knowing he did wrong.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 11.

<sup>32</sup> W. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of The Old Testament*, 360.

<sup>33</sup> *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament*, 904.

These definitions add another question to Wesley's definition of sin. How can a sinner sin willfully “unintentionally?” If sin is only a willful violation of a known law, then a sinner cannot sin “unintentionally.” According to Wesley, every sin must be a willful, intentional transgression of a known law. His definition states that there simply cannot be any sins committed “unintentionally.” Nor, according to Wesley, can there be any sins committed in ignorance.<sup>34</sup>

Finney writes that, “Sin consists in selfish ultimate intention.”<sup>35</sup> He goes on to say that holiness always is singleness of eye or intention.<sup>36</sup> His understanding of sin and holiness leads Finney to the conclusion that no blame or charge can be laid against someone if their intention is pure. Finney states that the human obligation is not to be measured by the “views God has” concerning an object of choice.<sup>37</sup> Human responsibility is determined by that human's knowledge. If a person's intention is equal to his or her knowledge, then that person's obligation and obedience is perfect.

Finney's definition and understanding of sin has within it the same major components that Wesley's definition of sin has. Wesley and Finney's definition of sin focuses on the “will” or “intention” as the focus of sin. Both of their views place a lot of emphasis on the knowledge of the person. Also, their views seem to leave out some of the

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<sup>34</sup> The answer to this question may be found in Wesley's definition of sin, as a willful transgression of a known law, coupled with his use of infirmities that cause the Christian believer to make mistakes. Mistakes may be the unintentional sin of the Old Testament.

<sup>35</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 119.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 39. See also A. Edersheim who states that “the sin-offering and the trespass-offering applied only to sins through ignorance in opposition to those done presumptuously (or with a high hand). For the latter the law provided no atonement. By sins through ignorance we are to understand, according to the Rabbis, not only such as were committed strictly through want of knowledge, but also those which had been unintentional or through weakness, or where the offender at the time realized not his (*sic!*) guilt,” *The Temple* (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans, 1982), 128.

<sup>37</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 41.



words and concepts that the Old and New Testament use for sin.<sup>38</sup>

To discover the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7, a further examination of the teaching of sin must be undertaken. The above discussion has covered some Scriptural words used for sin, especially the words found in the New Testament. There has also been a brief look at the Old Testament's teaching on the two categories of sin, which is intentional and unintentional. However, the journey to discovering the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 must now lead to a discussion of original sin.

Although the phrase “original sin” is not found within Rom 5-8, the teaching of original sin is found within Rom 5 in the discussion concerning the First and Second Adams. It is for this reason that the phrase “original sin” is included in this study.

In the discussion concerning original sin, Berkhof posits that original sin has two elements included within it. The first element is original guilt and the second element is original pollution.<sup>39</sup> By original guilt, Berkhof means the guilt of Adam's sin, as the federal head of the human race, was imputed to all his descendants.<sup>40</sup> Berkhof teaches that “in Adam” all sinned and the guilt of that sin is imputed to all. Adam, being the federal head of the human race, sinned and thus every member of the human race sinned

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<sup>38</sup> L. Richards in defining sin writes: “On the one hand Scripture says sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). On the other hand, sin is described as a principle living in and with us, warping us against our will (Rom 7:16-25). The biblical words for sin reflect this same duality. One set of Old Testament words pictures sin as rebellion: conscious acts willfully taken against what we know to be right. Another set of Old Testament words portray sin as falling short: missing the mark in spite of our best efforts to hit the target God has set before us. The New Testament words carry the same meanings. Willful sin involves the choice of wrong. But the other kind of sin throws us into a different turmoil. The other kind of sin forces us to suffer the effects of what we have not chosen. We suffer for what we are,” *Remarriage: A Healing Gift From God* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1981), 45. The above definition for sin is Richard's. The position in today's New Testament studies is that the understanding of sin as “missing the mark” is not an accurate definition for sin. The purpose for including L. Richard is to show that sin is many faceted and that there is not complete agreement on the definition of sin; for a summary of the various meanings of sin, see T. Brittain, *The United Methodists: What We Believe and Why* (Columbus, Georgia: Brentwood Christian Press, 1986), 36-40.

<sup>39</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1984), 245-6.

<sup>40</sup> See also R.S. McGee, *The Search For Significance*, 15.

“in Adam”.

He further claims that the teaching that all sinned “in Adam” is found in Rom 5:12-19. Finney, in disagreement with Berkhof, claims concerning Rom 5:12-19 that the Bible once and only intimates that Adam's first sin has in some way been the occasion of all people.<sup>41</sup>

Finney's comment needs to be discussed. He affirms that the Bible “once and only once” in an incidental way, claims that Adam's first sin has affected the human race. Now, if the Bible teaches in just one place other than in Rom 5:12-19 that Adam's sin has affected the entire human race, then Finney's comment must be discarded. The reason for this is that Finney's emphasis was on “once and only once,” that the Bible teaches that Adam's sin has affected the entire human race. There is at least one other place that the Bible teaches that “in Adam” all die. This place is 1 Cor 15:22. In Adam all die” is the English translation. Death is the result of sin (Rom 6:23), the Bible states. Thus, when 1 Cor 15:22 claims that “in Adam” all die, the question to be asked is: How do all die in Adam?

Rabbinic theology states that, “the judgment in heaven makes the community responsible for the sins of the individual. They indeed fall heavily into the scale, but not on the ground of imputation, but by reason of solidarity, which was very strongly felt in the Ancient Jewish community.”<sup>42</sup> Schechter goes on to infer “the great principle was: all Israel are surety for one another.” He defines this by saying that Israel, according to Ancient Rabbinic teaching, is like one body and one soul, if one of them sinned, they are

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<sup>41</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 189.

<sup>42</sup> S. Schechter, *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology: Major Concepts of The Talmud* (New York: Schocken Books, 1909), 191.

all punished.<sup>43</sup> The point here is that Ancient Rabbinic theology teaches the solidarity of Israel. Israel is “surety” for one another. In other words, what one does, affects the whole.<sup>44</sup> It is important to remember that Paul, being a Jewish Christian, carried many of the Jewish beliefs with him after his conversion on the road to Damascus.

This is what Paul is stating in Rom 5:12-19 and 1 Cor 15:22. Paul is stating that the human race is a whole, that there are not “races” but one race, the human race. He is also stating that the human race's federal head, which is defined as representative for the whole race, was Adam and now is Christ<sup>45</sup>. Joubert holds the position that Paul's use of Adam and Christ in Rom 5:12-21 are representatives of two different spheres.<sup>46</sup> His understanding seems to be in agreement with the position of Christ being the Second Adam that is Christ as the Federal Head of the human race.

To deny the federal headship of Adam, which Finney seems to do, is to deny the federal headship of Christ. If Adam is not the representative of the race in his actions in the Garden, then Christ is not the representative of the race in His actions on the Cross. Paul's point in Rom 5:12-19 is not only to discuss “original sin” as occurring in Adam but also to discuss “righteousness” being given in Christ. In this discussion, Adam and Christ are compared and contrasted. They are compared in that both of their actions have affected the whole race (Rom 5:17-19). They are contrasted in that the “one sin” of Adam has brought the whole race into sin (Rom 5:15); while the gift of righteousness is given

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> W. Barclay agrees with this position regarding the solidarity of the nation, (*The Letter to the Romans*, 79).

<sup>45</sup> See M. Gorman, *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 208.

<sup>46</sup> S.J. Joubert, “ΧΑΡΙΣ In Paul: An Investigation Into The Apostle's ‘Performative’ Application Of The Language of *Grace* Within The Framework Of His Theological Reflection On The Event/Process of Salvation,” in *Salvation in The New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology* (ed. J.G. van der Watt; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 187-211.

because of the many transgressions (Rom 5:15, 16). The point at issue is that Rom 5:12-19, while not being the only place in the Bible where the federal headship of Adam is taught, does teach that Adam's sin is the sin of all the race, thus all are guilty because of the sin of Adam.

The federal headship of Adam and Christ offer help in understanding Finney's and Wesley's emphasis on sin as volitional, even though the biblical text states that sin is more than willful. As Schechter stated, rabbinic theology taught that Israel was surety for one another. According to Rabbinic theology, what one did, all did. Thus, according to Rabbinic theology and Rom 5, when Adam chose to sin, the whole human race chose to sin. In other words, the first act of sin was not only a private affair, but it was a cosmic affair. The first act of sin was indeed volitional.

In 1 Cor 15:22, the Greek word for "die" is ἀποθνήσκουσιν – in the present tense. This would seem to indicate that not only have all people "died" in Adam, but those who are still in Adam are still dying.<sup>47</sup> This can be understood in the sense that in Adam, all have died; that is in their relationship to God all are dead. The answer to this "death" is the experience called regeneration or the new birth. Regeneration infuses in and imparts to the believing sinner a new life, God's righteous and holy life. In the experience of regeneration the sinner and God are now reconciled.

The present tense of "dying" which is stated in 1 Cor 15:22 can be understood as a living experience of being dead in relationship to God. Those who are still "in Adam" have not only "died" in the sense that their relationship with God does not exist, but, those who are still "in Adam" are dying in the sense that, even in their physical life, they

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<sup>47</sup> It is true that the present tense can be used in an historical sense to describe the past. However, the present tense is also used to describe the present.

do not have true life. Living in their physical life they simply exist. To exist means that day-by-day they die a little more.

The main point to be brought out here is that those who are dying are dying “in Adam.” There is then a relationship between dying and being “in Adam.”

The second element that is included in original sin, according to Berkhof, is original pollution.<sup>48</sup> By original pollution, Berkhof means: the absence of original righteousness and the presence of evil.<sup>49</sup> Berkhof also is of the opinion that original pollution is called total depravity. He defines total depravity in this manner “the inherent corruption extends to every part of man's nature, to all faculties and powers of both soul and body.”<sup>50</sup> Again, Finney disagrees with Berkhof. Finney's position is that sin must be a choice or intention and not a substance.<sup>51</sup> In this Baruch is in agreement. He is of the opinion that sin “is not a thing. It is not a genetic defect.”<sup>52</sup>

Finney defines moral depravity as selfishness.<sup>53</sup> He explains that moral depravity

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<sup>48</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 246.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 246-7. See also, H.R. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, (New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1951), 112.

<sup>51</sup> C. Finney writes: “We deny that the human constitution is morally depraved, because it is impossible that sin should be a quality of the substance of soul or body. It is, and must be, a quality of choice or intention, and not of substance. To make sin an attribute or quality of substance is contrary to God's definition of sin” (*Finney's Systematic Theology*, 185); See also A. Barnett, *The Church: Its Origin and Task* (Nashville: National Methodist Student Movement, 1960), 62-64.

<sup>52</sup> M. Brauch, *Hard Sayings of Paul* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 28.

<sup>53</sup> C. Finney's complete definition of moral depravity is: “Moral depravity does not consist in, nor imply a sinful nature, in the sense that the substance of the human soul is sinful in itself. It is not a constitutional sinfulness. It is not an involuntary sinfulness. Moral depravity consists in selfishness; in a state of voluntary committal of the will to self-gratification. It is a spirit of self-seeking, a voluntary and entire consecration to the gratification of self. It is selfish ultimate intention; it is the choice of a wrong end of life; it is moral depravity, because it is a violation of moral law. It is a refusal to consecrate the whole being to the highest well-being of God and of the universe, and obedience to the moral law, and consecrating it to the gratification of self. Moral depravity sustains to the outward life, the relation of a cause. This selfish intention, or the will in this committed state, of course, makes efforts to secure its end, and these efforts make up the outward life of the selfish man. Moral depravity is sinfulness, not of nature but of voluntary state. It is a sinfully committed state of the will to self-indulgence. It is not a sinful nature, but a sinful heart. It is a sinful ultimate aim or intention,” (*Finney's Systematic Theology*, 167).

is located in the will or ultimate intention. The wrong ultimate intention, of course, is expressed in sinful words, thoughts and deeds. But a wrong ultimate intention or will is not always expressed in sinful words, thoughts or deeds. Sometimes a wrong ultimate intention is expressed in “moral” behavior. This moral behavior is not an expression of a true desire to serve and please God. If the ultimate intention or will is set on self-gratification, it does not matter what kind of behavior is expressed - the will is sinful.

Berkhof says that original pollution is not a change in the substance of the soul nor is it something “infused” into the human soul.<sup>54</sup> In this Berkhof and Finney agree. Berkhof also claims that the sinner, apart from the grace of God in conversion, cannot “change his fundamental preference for sin and self to love for God.”<sup>55</sup> Again, there is the agreement between Finney and Berkhof in that the will of the sinner is set on self and not on God. Finney claims that the will set on something else other than God, as the ultimate intention in life, is moral depravity. Berkhof asserts that original pollution extends further than the will. Original pollution extends to all the faculties not just the heart or will.<sup>56</sup>

Original sin<sup>57</sup> in all its dimensions “damages” the person in “all of his/her faculties” by the presence of evil in the soul.<sup>58</sup> Sin does not just damage the will of the person. Sin damages the total person. This understanding is supported by M. Henry who states that Paul, in Rom 7:19-23, is complaining about the indwelling corruptions which

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<sup>54</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 246.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>57</sup> Melancthon defines original sin as “a certain corruption in the nature of man which is condemned by the Law of God,” P. Melancthon, *Commentary on Romans*, 160.

<sup>58</sup> G. Noyce writes: “Original sin means at very least that everyone needs God. Our experience of that need may take the form of guilt or fear, or existential anxiety or a lost sense of purpose for our lives, of despair or an unforgiving resentment and spitefulness against the human community,” G. Noyce, “Presuming Pain,” *QR* 4 (1993), 65-69.

remain.<sup>59</sup> Henry goes on to say that “the remainders of indwelling sin are a very grievous burden to a gracious soul.”<sup>60</sup>

The damage of sin and original sin that is done to “all the faculties” means that the sinner is damaged on all levels of their being. When it is stated that sin and original sin damage all levels of a person’s being, what is meant is both the conscious and sub-conscious levels. The reason for this is that original sin damages “all the faculties” of a person. The effect that original sin has had on every human being is one of distortion, twisting, and depraving. This means that when people act, behave and live, they act out of a damaged being. The reality is that, apart from God, no one knows the extent of the damage that original sin has caused in the heart, mind, and soul of people. Original sin also damages people differently. This is to mean that sin damages one person in one way and will damage another person in a different way. The particular individual is not fully aware of the damage done to him/her by original sin. Thus, when a person acts, behaves and lives, they act out of the damage done to them by original sin.

The discussion of original sin leads to another of the words or phrases that Paul uses in the context of Rom 5-8. The word that will now be examined is “flesh.” Murray says that the flesh is the “complex of sinful desire, motive, affection, propensity, principle

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<sup>59</sup> M. Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible in One Volume* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1960), 1770.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 1770. See also C.G. Boeree, *Personality Theories: “Sigmund Freud,”* internet article copyright 1997. Boeree summarizes Freud’s position in this manner: “The unconscious is the source of our motivations. It includes all the things that are not easily available to awareness.” See also M. Fogiel, *The Psychology Problem Solver*, (Research and Education Association, 1980), 481; L. Meyers & N. Grossen, *Behavioral Research: Theory, Procedure and Design* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1974), 25; R. Watson, *Psychology of The Child* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1965), 15. In addition see L.D. Weatherhead who states: “From both parents and teachers, then, on the one hand, and from the collective unconscious, on the other, we build up a ‘super-ego’. The source of authority of the ‘super-ego’ remains unconscious,” *Psychology, Religion and Healing* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1951), 317. And again L.D. Weatherhead posits that from the “depths of the unconscious” we are swayed,” (*Psychology, Religion and Healing*, 319).

and purpose. And to live after the flesh is to be governed by that complex.”<sup>61</sup> Barclay writes that flesh is human nature apart from and unaided by God.<sup>62</sup> Stewart is of the position that flesh is human nature in its frailty and weakness and need of help. It is a person apart from God.<sup>63</sup> Stewart's definition of “flesh” moves beyond the definition that Murray offers. Stewart says that flesh is “man apart from God.” This is much different than saying that flesh is desire, motive or purpose.

Anderson records that the flesh “is that tendency within each person to operate independent of God and to center his interests on himself.”<sup>64</sup> He also claims that the flesh is his learned independence.<sup>65</sup> Moo writes that the flesh is not the human body, but the worldly orientation that all people share.<sup>66</sup>

Gifford, in his understanding of “the flesh” sees in its usage two different meanings. The first meaning which Gifford has of “the flesh” is a state in which believers once lived but no longer.<sup>67</sup> By this understanding, Gifford means that the flesh has reference to sinners; this is to say those who have not experienced regeneration. According to this understanding, once a sinner believes the Gospel and is born-again, that person is no longer “in the flesh.” This understanding of “flesh” is to be understood as relational. The sinner, that is the one in the flesh, has a different relationship with God than the believer, those who are not “in the flesh.” The flesh in the sinner is not simply

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<sup>61</sup> J. Murray, *The Epistle to The Romans*, 293.

<sup>62</sup> W. Barclay, *The Letter to The Romans*, 93; S.B. Marrow, *Paul, His Letters and His Theology* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 232.

<sup>63</sup> J. Stewart, *A Man in Christ: The Vital Elements of St. Paul's Religion*, 104.

<sup>64</sup> N. Anderson, *Victory Over The Darkness*, 81.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>66</sup> D. Moo, *The New International Commentary: The Epistle to The Romans*, 486.

<sup>67</sup> E.H. Gifford, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 136; see also G.T. Montague, *The Living Thought of St. Paul*, 175.



fallen nature,<sup>68</sup> which is how Epp defines the flesh,<sup>69</sup> but, for the sinner, the flesh is their moral center. Gifford's second understanding of flesh is the “seat of moral weakness and temptation to which believers are still subject.”<sup>70</sup>

Smart defines the flesh as the total life of the old era, which is to say those who are in Adam.<sup>71</sup> Ladd also defines flesh as man as a whole, seen in his fallen-ness, opposed to God.<sup>72</sup> He goes on to say that the phrase “in the flesh” means life that is lived solely on the human level. This life that is lived on the human level, excludes everything else, especially God.<sup>73</sup>

Flesh is then to be understood in two lights. The first understanding for flesh is to be unregenerate, that is to still be in Adam. In this understanding of flesh, flesh means the total person. This person, however, is in opposition to God, that is in rebellion against God. The person who is “in the flesh” or who “lives according to the flesh” is the person whose god is not the true and living God. This person, in following their god, lives a life in violation of God's law. To be in the flesh, or to live according to the flesh, means that the person's moral center is not God in Christ. It must be stated and understood that the life of the person in the flesh or who lives according to the flesh, maybe moral, that is, this person may live a life that follows accepted human standards. However, the essence of sin and the meaning of “in the flesh” have nothing to do with morality. The essence of

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<sup>68</sup> W. Barclay states that flesh is “human nature in all its weakness and its vulnerability to sin.” He summarizes his understanding of flesh when he says that flesh is the “lower side of man’s nature” (*The Letter to the Romans*, 102). See also G.T. Montague, *The Living Thought of St. Paul*, 3.

<sup>69</sup> T. Epp, *How God Makes Bad Men Good: Studies in Romans*, 139; S.B. Marrow, *Paul: His Letters and His Theology*, 232, where he writes that flesh “expresses all that is not God.”

<sup>70</sup> E.H. Gifford, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 136. See also F.F. Bruce, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*, 42, where he states the flesh is the propensity to sin inherited from Adam.

<sup>71</sup> J. Smart, *Doorway To A New Age: A Study of Paul's Letter to The Romans*, 105.

<sup>72</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of The New Testament*, 472.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 483; and also G. Hawthorne, R. Martin, D. Reid, eds.; *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 304.

sin and the meaning of “in the flesh” are relational. The person who does not have a correct relationship with God in Christ is “in the flesh”. It does not matter how this person lives. This person's life maybe more caring, more compassionate, more law-abiding than Christians; however, this person is still in the flesh, that is they are not regenerate. To be in the flesh, then, means that the person does not have a correct relationship with God.

The second understanding of flesh is that part of the fallen human being which remains in the believer. The person who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is born-again. This person has experienced regeneration. They, therefore, are no longer in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In the flesh and in the Spirit are contrasted with each other in Rom 8:8, 9. Those who are in the flesh are not able to please God (Rom 8:8). This means that they are unregenerate. Those who are in the Spirit have the Spirit of God dwelling within them. These people are born-again, that is they are regenerate.

The person who has been born-again, though not being in the flesh, still has the flesh remaining within him or her.<sup>74</sup> Thus, to be in the Spirit, means that in the believer remains the flesh, or the residue of the old person,<sup>75</sup> the person who was in the flesh, but is now no longer. This can be seen stated by Paul in Rom 13:14. He writes that we are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts. Here it is stated that within those who have put on the Lord Jesus Christ remain the flesh.

The flesh is understood as lusts that are contrary to Christ (Rom 13:8-14). Paul

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<sup>74</sup> N. Anderson defines the new birth in this manner: “When you were born-again, your old self died and your new self came to life and you were made a partaker of Christ's divine nature. But your flesh remains. You brought to Christ a fully conditioned mind-set and life-style developed apart from God and centered on yourself. You learned to live your life independent of God. It is the learned independence that makes the flesh hostile toward God,” (*Victory Over The Darkness*, 82).

<sup>75</sup> D. B. Garlington, *Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 131-133.

writes that love is the fulfillment of the law (Rom 13:8-10). Within this discussion, Paul states that love, the fulfillment of the law<sup>76</sup> does no wrong to anyone (Rom 13:8). Paul then quotes part of the 10 commandments (Rom 13:9) and says that the purpose of the 10 commandments is summed up in the saying, “you shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Rom 13:9). Here it is clearly stated that the purpose of the law is love. He then states that love, which does no wrong to a neighbor, is contrasted to the lusts of the flesh, which remain in the one who has put on the Lord Jesus Christ and which are in part to be understood as violating the law, which does not love others. Paul also writes that the lusts of the flesh are seen in carousing, drunkenness, in sexual promiscuity, sensuality, in strife and jealousy (Rom 13:13). He then states that the lusts of the flesh remain within those who have put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 13:14).

The next phrase to be examined in the journey to discovering the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is the phrase “sold under sin,” which is found in Rom 7:14.

### **3. Sold Under Sin**

Gifford has written that “sold under sin” means “that the man is thus described as having been brought under the dominion of sin as completely as a slave under the power of the master to whom he has been sold.”<sup>77</sup> Murray agrees with Gifford in the definition of the phrase “sold under sin.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> M. Gorman, *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 218.

<sup>77</sup> E.H. Gifford, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 140.

<sup>78</sup> “It is one thing to sell oneself to do iniquity (see Ahab in 1 Kgs 21:20, 25) and it is another to be sold under the power of sin. In the former case the person is the active agent, in the latter he is subjected to a

Before commenting, it is necessary to look into the Old Testament at 1 Kgs 21:20, 25: “Ahab said to Elijah, ‘So you have found me, my enemy!’ ‘I have found you’, he answered, ‘because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord’” (NIV). 1 Kgs 21:25 states: “There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord, urged on by Jezebel his wife.”

In 1 Kgs 21:20,25, the word translated “sold” is *התמכר*, meaning “sell.”<sup>79</sup> *מִשָּׁר* is used in the hithpael form, which is primarily reflexive in meaning. It more often indicates an action less directly affecting the subject, and describes it as performed with regard to or for oneself, in one's own special interest.

To return to Rom 7:14, the word used is *πυπράσκω*, which means: “sell someone.”<sup>80</sup> The form of this word used in Rom 7:14 is a perfect passive participle. Dana and Mantey write that the “tense of the participle, as to kind of action, is the same as in the finite moods.”<sup>81</sup> They go on to describe the perfect tense as “the tense of completed action. Its basal significance is the progress of an act or state to a point of culmination and the existence of its finished results.”<sup>82</sup> Dana and Mantey, as that use of the verb that denotes the subject as receiving the action, describe the passive voice.<sup>83</sup>

It can be seen that the form of the verb in Rom 7:14 that is translated “sold under sin” is a perfect, passive participle. The perfect tense is the tense that describes a completed action with continuing results. In this context, then, it can be seen that the

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power that is alien to his own will. It is the later that appears here in Rom 7:14. It becomes clear how different are the two states, that of one man who with resolute and abandoned will sells himself to iniquity and that of the other who reproaches himself for the sin he commits and bemoans his being carried away captive by it,” (J. Murray, *The Epistle to The Romans*, 260).

<sup>79</sup> R.L. Harris, ed., *Theological Wordbook of The Old Testament*, 504.

<sup>80</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 659.

<sup>81</sup> H.E. Dana & J. Mantey, *A Manuel Grammar of The Greek New Testament*, 230.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

action of “selling” the person by sin is over. The results of that action remain, however.

The passive voice describes the subject as being acted upon. In other words, something or someone else is acting upon the subject of the passive voice. The context of Rom 7:14 states that the emphatic “I” has been acted upon by sin. This means that the emphatic “I” is not the one performing the action. Thus, the emphatic “I” has not sold itself to sin.<sup>84</sup> The emphatic “I” has been sold by sin. Sin is “the one” which has performed the action of selling the emphatic “I”.

The description by Dana and Mantey in regards to the perfect tense and the passive voice agree with the opinion of Murray that there is a difference between selling oneself to sin, as Ahab did, and being sold by sin, as the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 was.

Another word in Rom 7:14 to be discussed is “carnal”. This word in the Greek is σάρκινος, which means: “fleshy, made of flesh, fleshly, belonging to the realm of the flesh in so far as it is weak, sinful and transitory, carnal in older usage.”<sup>85</sup> Arndt and Gingrich claim that σάρκινος has two fundamental meanings. These meanings are: made of flesh and carnal. Trench disagrees in part with this understanding of σάρκινος. He claims that σάρκινος means: having flesh for its material. He asserts further that words which end in -ινος most frequently designate the stuff of which anything is

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<sup>84</sup> D.B. Garlington is of the opinion that the selling to sin, of which Paul wrote about, has to do with the “I’s” “capture and subjection to death at the hands of sin, the condition of the “I” within the epoch of sin and death. But taking into account the more distant background, it also makes sense to see an allusion to Adam’s sin as the occasion when all in union with him became sold under sin,” (*Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 123). He states further that “the starkness of the language does not necessarily preclude Paul the believer, even in view of the aorists of 7:4-6, because, as in chap. 6, the early aorists (6:1-11) are qualified later by the exhortation for the Christian to become what he already is. In fact, it is characteristic of chaps. 6-8 for Paul to state a proposition in seemingly absolute terms and then qualify. Theologically speaking, this is due to the salvation-historical fact that a new beginning has been made in Christ without the total obliteration of the present evil age,” (123, 124).

<sup>85</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 743.

made.<sup>86</sup>

Trench does not agree with Arndt and Gingrich in their giving to σάρκινος the meaning of “carnal.” Trench claims that “carnal” is the meaning of σαρκικός.<sup>87</sup> He writes further that the man/person, who gives to the flesh a place that does not belong to it, is σαρκικός. When the flesh is under the authority of the Spirit, then all is well. But when the flesh is not obedient to the Spirit, but asserts its own, then it is the source of all sin and all opposition to God.<sup>88</sup>

The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is σάρκινος, made of flesh, and not σαρκικός, actively opposed to God. This understanding helps in the discovery of the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. The reason for stating this is that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 desires to serve God (Rom 7:22) and thus it must be seen that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is not in opposition to God.

#### **4. The Desire of the Emphatic “I”**

The emphatic “I” does not desire to sin. This is seen in Rom 7:15 where it states “what I am doing, I do not desire to do”.<sup>89</sup> This leads to the statement that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is in agreement with the law of God (Rom 7:16). The emphatic “I” calls the law of

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<sup>86</sup> R. Trench, *Synonyms of The New Testament*, 272.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, F.F. Bruce agrees with Trench in his understanding of σάρκινος, which means, according to Bruce, “fleshly, i.e. unscriptural,” (*The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 152).

<sup>88</sup> R. Trench, *Synonyms of The New Testament*, 273.

<sup>89</sup> D. Harrington states it this way in his comments on Rom 7:15: “I am completely at a loss to account for my own behavior. Means: (1) The sense could be that I do not understand my own behavior—that is the gap between what I want and what in fact I do, alternately, but less likely, (2) the sense could be that I do not approve of my own behavior,” (*Romans* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 231).

God, “good,” καλός, (Rom 7:16). Καλός means, according to Berry, “beautiful, physically or morally. It is however, distinctly the beauty which comes from harmony, the beauty which arises from a symmetrical adjustment in right proportion, in other words, from the harmonious completeness of the object concerned.”<sup>90</sup> Louw and Nida define καλός as “pertaining to a positive moral quality, with the implication of being favorably valued, good, fine, praise worthy.”<sup>91</sup> In other words, the emphatic “I” considers the law of God as a morally harmonious whole. The law is not just “good.” The law, to the emphatic “I” is something that brings moral harmony to, not only the one who obeys it, but to all of life. The emphatic “I” also states that he/she is in agreement with the Law, that is, that s/he desires to obey it (Rom 7:16, 22). The emphatic “I” desires to do the good (Rom 7:19). The good is to be understood as obeying the law of God. The emphatic “I” desires to do the good. The good is the law of God, according to the emphatic “I.” The emphatic “I” also agrees with the law of God. The conclusion based on the statements of the emphatic “I” is that the emphatic “I” desires to obey the law of God. It can be seen from the above statements, that the “will” of the emphatic “I” is set on obeying the law of God, that is, set on doing the good.

The emphatic “I” acts and does both “what it desires” and “what it does not desire.” The desires of the emphatic “I” which leads to “action” can be found in Rom 7:15b, 15c, 16a, 19a 19b, 20a. Within these verses three words are used. J. Lambrecht says that ποιέω, πράσσω and κατεργάζομαι are synonyms and mean “do”.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> G.R. Berry, *A Dictionary of New Testament Greek Synonyms*, 19.

<sup>91</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 743.

<sup>92</sup> J. Lambrecht, “The Line of Thought in Romans 7, 15-20,” *Bib* 3 (2004): 393-398.

This study will first look at what the emphatic “I” desires to “do” and will then look at what the emphatic “I” does not desire to “do”.

The desire of the will of the emphatic “I” is to do the good. This is very important. The word for “desire” is θέλω, which means: “the active resolution, the will urging on to action.”<sup>93</sup> This means that the “will” of the emphatic “I” is truly set on doing the good. It can also be seen that the emphatic “I” not only 'desires' to do the good, but, according to the meaning of θέλω, the emphatic “I” is also acting on that desire. Doing the good is not simply a passing thought to the emphatic “I.” The emphatic “I” has set their will, which also includes their acting in conformity with their will, on doing the good. The emphatic “I” not only “desires” to do the good, but is also acting and attempting to do the good, which is to obey the law of God.

Another factor that is to be seen in Rom 7:15-23 is that the emphatic “I” does what it does not desire (θέλω) to do. This certainly must be understood as the emphatic “I” as acting against its will. This is to say that the emphatic “I” does what it does not “will” to do. The emphatic “I” does that which it does not desire to do (Rom 7:15-23). The doing of that which the emphatic “I” does not desire” is not intentional. If it was intentional, then the emphatic “I” could not say that he/she does not desire to do it. It is to be seen that the emphatic “I” does things “unknowingly” or “does not understand what it does.” The doing of things “unknowingly” is the result of original sin and is the actions which come out of the “unconscious aspects” of a person.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> G.R. Berry, *A Dictionary of New Testament Greek Synonyms*, 25.

<sup>94</sup> See the discussion on original sin, earlier in this chapter for a clarification on what is meant by the “unconscious” aspects of a person.



The unconscious aspects of the behavior of the emphatic “I” comes from a number of reasons. Here, it must be said that the emphatic “I” is not robotic, that is, the emphatic “I” acts without any knowledge of what it is doing. The word “know,” γινώσκω, can also mean, “understand.”<sup>95</sup> What is to be seen in this is that the emphatic “I” acts without always understanding why it acts in a particular way.

The behavior of the emphatic “I” comes out of many “subconscious” reasons.<sup>96</sup> The discussion above<sup>97</sup> concerning original sin damaging the total person must include damage done on levels of a person’s being that he/she is not aware of. These levels of a person’s being are levels out of which a person acts, thinks, and chooses. These subconscious reasons include family background.<sup>98</sup> The emphatic “I” has learned ways of acting, relating, understanding, speaking, and being by living in a family. These “learned” behaviors are for the most part “subconscious.” That is to say that the person will act in a

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<sup>95</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 161.

<sup>96</sup> See also M. Fogiel, *The Psychology Problem Solver*, 481; Lawrence Meyers and Neal Grossen, *Behavioral Research: Theory, Procedure and Design* (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1974), 25; S.P. Schilling who writes: “All human beings are from an early age inescapably influenced by the families and societies in which they belong through no choice of their own. Before the child is able to make ethical distinctions, he or she unconsciously adopts the ways of thinking and acting observed in the parents. By the time moral accountability is attained, ideas of what is right and wrong are already deeply ingrained and the deeds that embody them have become habitual. As we grow older, we are potently influenced by the mores of the various communities to which we belong, and the achievement of independent judgment always has to contend with the pressure, indeed often with the authority of the practices accepted as normative by our peers,” (*Evil and Freedom Revisited*, 12); See also R. Bellah, R. Madsen et al., *Habits of the Heart* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 275-296; A. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), 342; A. Sung Park, *Racial Conflict & Healing: An Asian-American Theological Perspective* (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 96-98; R. Schreier, *Constructing Local Theologies* (New York: Orbis Books, 1986), 93; S. Haurwas, *After Christendom?* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 18; T. Oden, *Agenda For Theology: After Modernity...What?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 195-199; D. Seamands, *Healing for Damaged Emotions* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986), 92.

<sup>97</sup> See chapter 3 of this study for a discussion on original sin.

<sup>98</sup> M. Fogiel, *The Psychology Problem Solver*, 432; J.E. Horrocks, *Assessment of Behavior* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1966), 694; D. Hamer & P. Copeland, *Living With Our Genes* (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 25; A. Adler, *Understanding Human Nature* (W.B. Wolfe, trans.; New York: Greenberg Publishers, 1946), 5; R. Pollack, *Signs of Life: The Language and Meanings of DNA* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1994), 30.

way that reflects their family background without “knowing” or “understanding” that they are acting “out of the learned behaviors” which are the result of his/her family background.

Another of the subconscious reasons out of which the emphatic “I” acts and which “form” him/her is the cultural setting<sup>99</sup> in which each and every person grows. Within a person's cultural environment is their particular family background, the 'regional' culture in which they live and grow, the ethnic grouping to which they belong, the nation to which they belong, the purpose for which they live their lives, the faith to which they have embraced, and decisions that they have made throughout their lives. These factors form, influence and are the “source” out of which people act and behave. As it has been stated in the discussion over family background, these factors also, are for the most part, “subconscious.” That is that they form, influence people without the individual's conscious realization. People act, behave, speak and possess and exhibit a multitude of many other behaviors, subconsciously, from these and other factors that they are not aware of.<sup>100</sup>

A third “grouping” of “subconscious” factors that form, or influence, people is original sin. Every human being has been affected by original sin.<sup>101</sup>

The family background, regional culture in which they live and grow, ethnic grouping, national culture and other factors “form” each and every person. The formation made by the various factors in a person's life, is, as has been said, “subconscious.” This means that the values, ways of thinking and behaving, which are “normative” for that

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<sup>99</sup> M. Fogiel, *The Psychology Problem Solver*, 46, 433. Also W.P. Jones, “In Wait for My Life,” 18-19.

<sup>100</sup> M. Fogiel, *The Psychology Problem Solver*, 45.

<sup>101</sup> See the discussion on original sin, corruption and depravity, earlier in chapter 3 of this study.

particular region and group become part of the “subconscious” ways of acting of each and every person. In other words, very few, if any, “know” or understand to the full extent why they act and behave.<sup>102</sup> Thus, when the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 states that it does not understand what it is doing, this may be seen as a very insightful statement regarding the complexity of a human being and the reason why the emphatic “I,” while growing closer and closer to God in holiness, sees him or herself and cries out, “O wretched man” (Rom 7:25).

The emphatic “I”, at times acts out of the “subconscious”<sup>103</sup> factors that have formed and influenced it and not out of its will.<sup>104</sup> The emphatic “I” cries out that it does what it hates and that this means that the indwelling sin is the one that is performing these hated deeds (Rom 7:15-17). This cry, coupled with the statement that there is in the members of the body a different law which is at war with the mind affirms that within the emphatic “I” there is the mind to do the will of God and there is also within the members of the body the “sub-conscious” factors that have influenced and formed it.

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<sup>102</sup> J.A. Beet states: “For not what I wish: accounts for not knowing what results he is working out, by saying that his conduct is not determined by, but runs counter to, his own will,” *A Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to The Romans* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1887), 212; See also B. Byrne, *Romans*, 231, for agreement with this position. See also H. Arnold who writes: “Natural emotions or images in the fantasy can frequently be traced back to earlier impressions on our feelings,” *Freedom From Sinful Thoughts* (Rifton, New York: Plough Publishing House, 1973), 39. However, for an opposing view see J.G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000), 127, who writes: “Rom 7:15, 19 come from Greek literature, (Euripides Medea, about to slay her children, she laments, ‘I know that what I am about to do is evil, but passion is stronger than my reasoned reflection,’ ‘these verses,’ J.G. Gager, continues, “evoke not Jewish but specifically Greek dilemmas. Paul unsurprisingly uses Greek tradition to convince Greeks.” J.G. Gager’s position ignores the context of Rom 7. The context of Rom 7 is a person under the spotlight of the law of God and sees him or herself as a sinner. The frequent use of the “law” in Rom 7 is enough to seriously question J.G. Gager’s position. In addition, for an opposing view to J.G. Gager see M. Gorman, who states that it is hard to “imagine a more tortured reading of Romans, one more driven by ideology than by historical or textual reality than Gager,” *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 343-344).

<sup>103</sup> See also D.B. Garlington, *Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 86, 87 for his defining of sin as “a state of estrangement and condemnation”.

<sup>104</sup> G. Osborne, in principle, agrees. He states that “culture, to some extent, does condition the conscience,” However, G. Osborne states very strongly that because of the “created order, everyone is without excuse for their sin,” (*Romans*, 48).

It can be seen from the statements of the emphatic “I” that it fails to completely accomplish what it desires and what it has set its will on. In Rom 7:20 it is written that the emphatic “I” does what it does not desire (θέλω) to do. This means that the 'will' of the emphatic “I” is not only set on doing the good; the will of the emphatic “I” is set against sin.<sup>105</sup> The emphatic “I” itself cries out that it does not desire (θέλω) to do what, at times it does. There is to be seen in this statement that not only does the emphatic “I” not desire (θέλω) to act against the law of God, but the emphatic “I” is also 'acting' in conformity with its desires. From this it can be seen that the emphatic “I” is doing what it can to obey the law of God and to not sin. The meaning of θέλω leads to this understanding. As it has already been stated, θέλω means more than simply “desire”. It means “desire” which leads to action. The action, which comes out of this “desire”, must be action that is in conformity with this “desire”. Thus, it can be seen that θέλω means desire that is accompanied by action which is in agreement with the desire.

The sinful mind that is the unregenerate person cannot please God, nor is it able to (Rom 8:7). The sinful mind belongs to those who are in the flesh (Rom 8:8). Those who are in the flesh are those who do not have the Spirit of God (Rom 8:9). This means that those who are in the flesh are not Christians. Those who do not have the Spirit of God do not belong to Christ (Rom 8:9). The ones who are in the flesh are not able to please God (Rom 8:8), nor do they desire to please God. Packer is in agreement here. He states that the person who has not experienced the new birth has no desire for true holiness. The reason for this, according to Packer, is that this desire for holiness comes from “the

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<sup>105</sup> S.P. Schilling writes: “Sensitive Christians who are honest with themselves know from experience what Paul is talking about when he writes, ‘I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.’ There are many times when we feel not free but bound, lacking the strength to act as we really want to” (*Evil and Freedom Revisited*, 11).

motivational level” in a person and that in a person who has not experienced the new birth, this “motivational level” is controlled and dominated by sin.<sup>106</sup> The desire to please God, on the other hand, is the evidence of God dwelling within (Phlp 2:13). In Phlp 2:13 it is written that it is God who works in you to will, desire, θέλειν, and to act according to His good purpose.

Those who do not have the Spirit of God follow their own ungodly desires.<sup>107</sup> The ones who do not have the Spirit of God have set their minds, or wills, on the things of the flesh (Rom 8:5). The mind, the will, set on the things of the flesh means that the mind, or will, is not set on the things of God (Rom 8:5). The mind set on the flesh is enmity towards God (Rom 8:6), not submission to the law of God, nor is it able (Rom 8:7). Here it can be seen that the mind /will set on the flesh cannot agree with the law of God. The reason for this is that the law of God does not belong to the realm of the flesh. A further statement is that the mind set on the flesh and the mind that is set on the law of God is against each other (Rom 8:5-7). The mind set on the flesh, being against the law of God and being opposite to the law of God leads to the result that the mind set on the flesh is at war with the law of God and will not desire to obey the law of God. Thus, when the mind is set on the things of the flesh, the law of God is not an object that the fleshly mind desires. The mind set on the flesh is not set on the things of God (Rom 8:5). The mind set on the flesh, which means those who are in the flesh, are those who do not desire the things of God in order to do them or to obey them (1 Cor 2:14). Here, it must be seen that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 must be a Christian, that is one whose mind set on knowing, obeying and desiring the things of God as expressed in and through the law of God (Rom

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<sup>106</sup> J.I. Packer, *Keep In Step With The Spirit*, 107.

<sup>107</sup> Jude 18, 19.

7:15).

The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is not perfect. This reality can be seen throughout Rom 7.<sup>108</sup> The emphatic “I” says: “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Rom 7:15). Two facts are to be noticed from this verse. The first is that the emphatic “I” does things “unknowingly” or “does not understand what it does.” Here, it must be said that the emphatic “I” is not robotic, that is, the emphatic “I” does not act without any knowledge of what it is doing. The word, “know”, γινώσκω, can also mean, “understand.”<sup>109</sup> This is confirmed by Louw and Nida when they define γινώσκω as: “to come to an understanding as the result of ability to experience and learn-to come to understand, to perceive, to comprehend.”<sup>110</sup> What is to be seen in this is that the emphatic “I” acts without always understanding why it acts in a particular way.<sup>111</sup>

The second fact that is to be seen in Rom 7:15 is that the emphatic “I” does what it does not desire (θέλω) to do. This certainly must be understood as the emphatic “I” as acting against its will. This is to say that the emphatic “I” does what it does not “will” to do. The situation where the emphatic “I” is acting against its will is also seen in Rom 7:19. Here it is stated that the emphatic “I” does not do what it desires (θέλω) to do. In Rom 7:19 it can thus be clearly seen that the emphatic “I” does what it does not desire (θέλω) to do.

The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 has two “laws” within them, out of which they act, speak and behave. When the emphatic “I” acts not consistent with their will, their desire,

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<sup>108</sup> See also J.W. Shepherd, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1950), 404.

<sup>109</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 161.

<sup>110</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 382.

<sup>111</sup> B. Byrne, *Romans*, 231.

(θέλω); the emphatic “I” is not the one acting, but the “sin that indwells in them.” Here it can be seen that there are two “laws” out of which the emphatic “I” acts. The first law is the will, or the desire (θέλω), and the second law is the “sin that indwells.” The emphatic “I” calls the “sin which indwells” another law which operates within the members of their body (Rom 7:23). This “second” law is a law that is in opposition to their will, their νοῦς, which is, according to Berry, the “moral center of a human being.”<sup>112</sup> Louw and Nida agree with Berry when they write that νοῦς means: “a particular manner or way of thinking.”<sup>113</sup>

This struggle of the emphatic “I” with this other law, which operates within the members of the body, is not a struggle between the material and the spiritual. The law that operates within the members of the emphatic “I” which is in opposition to their will is the sin that indwells them (Rom 7:15). The emphatic “I” goes on to say that when they sin, when they act against their will (νοῦς), it is not they who are sinning, but the sin that indwells them (Rom 7:20). The emphatic “I” acts, at times consistent with their will (νοῦς), and at other times, the emphatic “I” acts not consistent with their will, but in opposition to it.

The experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 can be described in this manner. The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 has set their will (νοῦς), on the good, that is on pleasing God by obeying His law. However, at times, the emphatic “I” finds that it acts in opposition to their will. In these times of acting in opposition to their will, the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 fails to do what is right, holy and well pleasing in the sight of God. In other words, the

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<sup>112</sup> G.R. Berry, *A Dictionary of New Testament Greek Synonyms*, 25.

<sup>113</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 350.

emphatic “I” sins.

Because the emphatic “I” does sin, a discussion on sin,<sup>114</sup> at this point is appropriate. Wesley defined sin as a willful transgression of a known law.<sup>115</sup> The question that is to be asked is: Does the emphatic “I” sin willingly? The answer to that question is negative. The desire of the emphatic “I” is to do what pleases God. Rom 7:15, 18, 19, 20 all clearly state that the emphatic “I” desires, not to sin, but to please God. Rom 7:15 states: “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do, I do not do, but what I hate I do.” Here it can be clearly seen that the emphatic “I” does not do what it wants, or desires (θέλω), to do. The emphatic “I” cries that I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. These verses clearly state that the desire of the emphatic “I” is to do what is good, what is pleasing to God.

The emphatic “I” sins, but he/she sins “unwillingly” (Rom 7:16). The emphatic “I” does not desire to sin, nor does the emphatic “I” ‘will’ sin. Because the emphatic “I” does not sin willingly nor will to sin, the sin of the emphatic “I” must belong to Wesley's

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<sup>114</sup> See C. Anderson Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 51ff for a discussion on “sin as a subjugating power and sin as expression of thought and deed in its relationship to corrupt personality”. See also W. Grundmann’s article “The Teacher of Righteousness of Qumran and The Question of Justification by Faith in the Theology of St. Paul,” in *Paul and The Dead Sea Scrolls*, (ed. J. Murphy O’Conner; New York: Christian Origins Library, 1990), 112, where he says that “sin is a breaking away from God.” F. Cunningham defines sin as: “A human action lacking its proper ordination to the true ultimate end of man; it is a voluntary act including in its concept an essential disorder, a lack of conformity with right reason and divine law,” *The Christian Life* (Dubuque: Iowa, The Priory Press, 1959), 167. In addition see M. Gorman, *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 133ff for his discussion on sin. See also D.B. Garlington, *Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 84-107 for his discussion of sin. In summary, he states that sin is “idolatry, rebellion,” (93,100).

<sup>115</sup> J. Wesley, “*On Obedience to Parents*,” *The Works of John Wesley* (Sermon; CD-ROM; Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1995), 107. F. Cunningham, agreeing with Wesley, states that “only the will is the sufficient and completing cause of sin’s being accomplished, just as the will alone is the sufficient and completing cause of any other human act,” (*The Christian Life*, 178). In addition see M. Gorman, *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 33.



categories of mistakes or involuntary failings. Wesley said that the Christian who is perfect in love would, as long as they are in a mortal body, make “mistakes.” He writes: “Christian perfection does not imply an exemption either from ignorance or mistakes or infirmities.”<sup>116</sup> He also asserts that weaknesses and infirmities will remain while this corruptible body remains.<sup>117</sup> Wesley defined infirmities as involuntary failings.<sup>118</sup> Thus, according to Wesley's own definitions, it must be seen that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 sins, not willingly, but unwillingly, that is involuntarily.

## 5. The Wretched Man

At this point I return to the discussion of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. The emphatic “I” desires to do what is good and pleasing to God (Rom 7:15-25). While desiring to do what is good and pleasing to God, the emphatic “I” also realizes that it does not always act the way it desires. The emphatic “I” does desire to please God and at times accomplishes its desire. The emphatic “I” claims that it does serve God in the will, νοῦς. The word translated “serve” is δουλεύω, which means: “be a slave, perform the duties of a slave, serve, obey” especially in the expression δουλεύω τῷ θεῷ, serve God, where God is thought of as κύριος and man as δοῦλος. It can be seen from this that the emphatic “I” does desire to serve God and at times accomplishes this desire.

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<sup>116</sup> J. Wesley, *Christian Perfection, The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 6* (Sermon; CD-ROM; Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1995), 5. See also chapter 5 of this study for a further discussion of Wesley's infirmities and mistakes.

<sup>117</sup> J. Wesley's sermon, *The End of Christ's Coming*, Vol. 6, 277.

<sup>118</sup> J. Wesley's sermon, *The First Fruits of The Spirit*, Vol. 5, 92.

However, the emphatic “I” does not always act in a way that is consistent with its desire to please God. When the emphatic “I” acts in a way that is contrary to its own desire to please God, this acting not in conformity to its own desire to please God, causes the emphatic “I” to cry out in anguish and pain. This cry is “O Wretched Man.”

The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 desires to please God, yet at times fails to accomplish its own desire of pleasing God (Rom 7:15-20). This failure to please God causes the emphatic “I” sorrow and pain (Rom 7:24). However, it must be said, that the sorrow and pain that the emphatic “I” experiences is not only for what it does, that is for its failure to please God (Rom 7:15); the sorrow and pain of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is also because of what it is. Rom 7:24 states that the emphatic “I” not only is in pain for what it does (Rom 7:15-19), but also for the fact of its own existence and condition. The cry of “Wretched Man” is not simply a cry of pain and anguish over one's acts, deeds, misdeeds and failures. The cry of “Wretched Man” is also a cry over one's true and sinful condition. The word *ταλαίπωρος* means: “wretched man.”<sup>119</sup> The cognate *ταλαιπωρία* means: “wretchedness.”<sup>120</sup> *Ταλαιπωρία* describes the inner, existential condition of the *ταλαίπωρος*. It can be seen from this that *ταλαιπωρία* describes the condition of being wretched. For a soul to cry out that it is “wretched” means that the soul has seen itself in the light of God's holiness and greatness. The reason for this is: the only place a soul will see its own wretchedness is in the light of God's holiness and greatness.<sup>121</sup> Thus, when the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 cries out that it is “wretched,” this means that the emphatic “I” has

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<sup>119</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 803.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 803.

<sup>121</sup> D. Guthrie posits that Paul is viewing himself in the light of God's law, *The New Bible Commentary*, 1029. This in essence is in agreement with seeing oneself in the light of God's holiness. God's law is an expression of God's holiness, thus, both statements are saying the same thing. See also J.W. Shepherd's book, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 404-407 where agreement with Guthrie's position is put forth.

seen itself in the light of God's holiness and greatness. The cry of the emphatic "I" can be seen as the cry over its own "wretched" condition.

The emphatic "I" of Rom 7 also sees itself as, it truly is, "A wretched person" (Rom 7:24). The emphatic "I" desires to please God (Rom 7:15, 19, 20). This desire of the emphatic "I" to please God is evidence that it is a Christian believer (Phlp 2:13). Packer confirms this understanding of the desire to please God is the evidence of Christian salvation.<sup>122</sup> The emphatic "I" also knows that it commits sins. This is also evident from Rom 7:15, 19, and 20 where it says that the emphatic "I" does what it does not desire. The "doing" recorded in these verses is a testimony by the emphatic "I" that it has and is, at times, still committing sins. However, starting from Rom 7:22, the discussion by the emphatic "I" goes to a different dimension. The "testimony" of the emphatic "I" begins to describe not just its own "committing" of sin, but the existential existence of the emphatic "I." The emphatic "I" sees within itself an existential "rift".<sup>123</sup> There is the inner person (Rom 7:22) who desires to serve God (Rom 7:25) and there is the "other law" (Rom 7:23) which wages war against the inner person. This existential "rift" causes the emphatic "I" to cry out "O Wretched Man, who will save me from the body of this death" (Rom 7: 24). This is not a cry of a person who is still under the law, which is to say who is unregenerate.<sup>124</sup> This is a cry of a regenerate believer who is approaching ever closer to God. The emphatic "I" of Rom 7 is a believer who sees the truth that he or she not only commits acts of sin, but that they are also, in the existential

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<sup>122</sup> J.I. Packer, *Keep In Step with The Spirit*, 94.

<sup>123</sup> R. Stedman puts it this way. He writes that "It is in his spirit that he is made a slave to righteousness, while in his soul the struggle with sin goes on," (*From Guilt to Glory*, 231).

<sup>124</sup> J.W. Shepherd, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 406.

self, sinners.<sup>125</sup> To be a sinner, in this sense, is to see oneself as “a lump of sin.” To see oneself as “a lump of sin” is to realize that there is nothing good within oneself, that is apart from Christ.

To see oneself as a “lump of sin” is not the expression of a poor self-perception but recognition of one’s true condition, i.e. a good self-perception. Within the study of psychology is the discussion between the organized and disorganized self. Guthrie states that Paul in Rom 7:15-19 is viewing himself within this psychological discussion of the organized and disorganized self.<sup>126</sup> Barclay agrees with this when he says that in Rom 7:14-25, Paul “is baring his very soul; and he is telling us of an experience which is the very essence of the human situation.”<sup>127</sup> Black is also in agreement with this assessment of Rom 7:14-25 as being an explanation of the psychological experience<sup>128</sup> of not only the human situation, but he would add that Rom 7:14-25 is also the psychological description of the experience of salvation.<sup>129</sup> J. Smart agrees to the position just stated. He puts forth the opinion that the Coming of Christ, i.e. salvation, does not put an end to the dividedness of the self, the person, the Christian believer. The Coming of Christ, i.e. salvation, not only does not put an end to this dividedness in the Christian believer, but salvation, Christ, exposes the full depth of this division.<sup>130</sup> Stedman agrees with this

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<sup>125</sup> E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 209. For an opposing view see E.H. Maly, *Romans*, (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979), 60.

<sup>126</sup> D. Guthrie, *The New Bible Commentary*, 1029; for an opposing view see B. Rigaux, *Letters of St. Paul*, (Franciscan Herald Press, Chicago, 1962), 51 who states that “any attempt to establish a psychological preconditioning process towards conversion is not sound.” See also W. Hamilton, *The Christian Man* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), 43.

<sup>127</sup> W. Barclay, *The Letter to The Romans*, 98. See also, E.A. Wcela, *Paul the Theologian* (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1977), 52; A. Das, *Paul and Jews* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 148.

<sup>128</sup> B. Rigaux, however, disagrees, *Letters of St. Paul*, 51.

<sup>129</sup> M. Black, *The New Century Bible Commentary: Romans*, 85.

<sup>130</sup> J. Smart, *Doorway to a New Age: a Study of Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 100.

understanding.<sup>131</sup>

## 6. A Discussion of Paul's Jewish Experience

To develop the idea, that Rom 7 is describing the experience of a mature, Christian believer and not a person under the law or of Paul the Jewish believer struggling with the law, further, a look at Paul's Jewish background will be undertaken. Paul, before his conversion to Christianity, was a Jewish believer. He immediately recognized the threat to Judaism that belief in Jesus posed. He quickly became the most ardent persecutor of Christianity.<sup>132</sup> However, a question to be asked is: Did Judaism place its followers under such a strain to live according to its precepts? Sanders does not think so. He is of the opinion that "Jewish altar ritual did not stand out as being excessive, burdensome or

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<sup>131</sup> He states: "Our bodies and souls, which have functioned for years under the control of sin, are still going on in the same way, living according to the patterns built up under the reign of sin. Our habits, thoughts and actions are already established along wrong lines. That is where the evil and sin in a believer's life come from. His spirit is freed from sin, his soul and body are yet under its control," (R. Stedman, *From Guilt to Glory*, 177). See J.W. Shepherd who writes that "the body of man is of flesh and blood. It is the half-wrecked body of death, doomed to pass away and be succeeded by a spiritual body. The present body is full of weakness and the seat of temptations to evil," (*The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 404). See also E. Palmer, *Salvation By Surprise: A Commentary on the Book of Romans* (Waco: Word Books, 1975), 86 who states that Paul in Rom 7:18-8:10 discusses the nature of mankind, that is body, flesh, mind and spirit and then goes on to discuss the "crisis, the civil war that harasses the Christian person with painful tensions within his/her very nature (7:14-25)." Also, C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 152, who claims that Paul, in Rom 7:14-25 writes that this paragraph concerns "insights from the Christian life"; See also W. Baird, *Paul's Message and Mission* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1960), 107, 155 who agree with this position. For an opposing view, W.D. Davies writes that "we may assume in Rom 7 Paul reflects the rabbinic doctrine of the two impulses," (*Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1948), 27). Also J.C. Beker, *Paul The Apostle*, 217.

<sup>132</sup> W. Barker, *Everyone in the Bible* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1966), 276; G.T. Montague, *The Living Thought of St. Paul*, 3.

anxiety producing.”<sup>133</sup> Stendahl agrees with Sanders and claims the very same thing for Paul.<sup>134</sup> He states that Paul suffered no qualms of consciousness over his experience as a Jew.<sup>135</sup> Gathercole also agrees. Furthermore, he is of the opinion that Jewish writers

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<sup>133</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE-66CE*, 191; J. Fitzmyer, *According to Paul* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 8.

<sup>134</sup> He writes, “No where in Paul’s writings is there any indication that he had any difficulties in fulfilling what he a Jew understood to be the requirements of the law.” He further claims that Paul, the Jew, before his conversion to Christianity, never expressed any remorse, even for his persecution of the Christians. It was only after his conversion to Christianity that Paul felt remorse for this behavior (K. Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 12, 13). See also P. Achtemeier, *Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), 127 who states: “There is no evidence, when Paul does mention his life as a Pharisee that the law drove him to despair. In fact, quite the opposite is the case. Paul claims that far from being in despair at his supposed inability to fulfill the law, he was in fact quite convinced he had fulfilled it (Phlp 3:6; Gal 4:14); Achtemeier goes on to say: “Paul’s shift in attitude toward the Law was not motivated by despair at his inability to fulfill the law,” (127); E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 154, who writes, “Paul’s critique of Judaism is a critique which covers what Judaism is by definition. He does not say that the law was unable to be fulfilled by some and is therefore inadequate as a means of righteousness; nor does he say that fulfilling it leads to self-righteousness on the part of a few. Inability and self-righteousness do not figure at all in his statements about the law”. He also claims that “for most Jews in Paul’s day, the laws demands were held in tension with a gracious framework of election and provision for failure” (155); S. Westerholm, *Israel’s Law and the Church’s Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 220; who posits that the “evidence of the epistles does not support the view that Paul, before his encounter with the risen Christ, was tormented by an inability to keep the law”; J. Ziesler, *Pauline Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 103, who puts forward the same position when he argues that “Judaism did not suppose that people could earn God’s favor. On the contrary, favor was freely given, without deserving on Israel’s part, in election and covenant. The role of the law was to show the nation how to live within that covenant in order to maintain (not create) the relation to Yahweh. Its role was not to enable people to find a place within the community of Israel in the first place. More over, perfect obedience was not expected and there were means of atonement and forgiveness.” Das agrees (*Paul and The Jews*, 155) and further states that “nowhere does Paul ever say that he had harbored any doubts about his elect status as a Jew. As a Pharisee, he was blameless. He was a guide to the blind, alight to those in darkness,” (A.A. Das, *Paul and The Jews*, 187); C.J. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 7; N. Brox, *Understanding the Message of Paul*, 15; M. Taylor, *Paul: His Letters, Message and Heritage* (New York: Alba House, 1997), 174; C. Augrain, *Paul: Master of the Spiritual Life, Vol.2* (New York: Alba House, 1968), 44; J.W. Shepherd, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 404; F.F. Bruce, *Paul and Jesus*, 25-26.

<sup>135</sup> His description of Paul is that: “Paul experienced no troubles, no problems, no qualms of consciousness, no feelings of shortcomings. He was a star pupil, the student to get the thousand dollar graduate scholarship in Gamaliel’s seminary, if we can trust Acts 22:3” (K. Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 12-13). See also J. Fitzmyer who, in his book, *According to Paul*, 8, states that “Paul did not look back, even as a Christian, at his Jewish past as one of failure to cope with the demands of the Law.” J. Fitzmyer, in quoting Paul’s own assessment of himself, claimed that Paul considered himself blameless (Phlp 3:6), *According to Paul*, 8; G.T. Montague, *The Living Thought of St. Paul*, 3, states that “Paul was genuinely convinced that he was championing the rights of God (Acts 26:9) when he was persecuting the Church.” A. Edersheim, *Sketches of Jewish Social Life* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1980), 177-180. For an opposing view see H. Lockyer, *All The Apostles Of The Bible*, 213. He puts forth the opinion that “Paul had been exceedingly sensitive to the requirements of the Law, which he himself had observed most meticulously, yet doubts arose that the Law was able to save a man

themselves felt that “Israel was an obedient, holy and pious nation” and that “the element of obedience was indeed believed by a number of Jewish writers of the Second Temple Period, to be not only possible but also accomplished, both by the nation as a whole and by individuals.”<sup>136</sup> This appears to agree with Paul’s own assessment as found in Phlp 3:4-6 and Gal 1:13-14.<sup>137</sup> In addition, in Acts 22:20, Luke records Paul as stating that he, Paul, stood watching the stoning of Stephen and gave his approval to Stephen’s death. This certainly does not imply a man who was divided against himself and the law. Sanders, in apparent agreement with the above, makes the claim that Judaism’s most distinctive point was the extending of the law to every part of a person’s life and as such it was more concerned with what people did than with what people thought.<sup>138</sup> Fitzmyer seems to agree with Sanders when he writes that Paul was proud of his life as a Jew of the Pharisaic tradition.<sup>139</sup> Montague, also in agreement, claims that Paul was “convinced that he was championing the rights of God (Acts 26:9) when he was persecuting the Christian Church.”<sup>140</sup> Stendahl agrees with this understanding of Paul the Jew. He claims further that most of Paul’s theology and anthropology “clearly reveals his Jewish background”<sup>141</sup>

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accused. Gradually he came to despair of ever fulfilling the demands of the Law, and his intense, almost savage attempt to obliterate Christianity only reflected a sense of insecurity prompted by misgivings and doubts.”

<sup>136</sup> S. Westerholm, review of S. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting*, *JQR* 95 (2005): 700-704.

<sup>137</sup> S. Marrow agrees. He writes: “He speaks of his former life in Judaism as one in which he advanced beyond many of his own age among his people. So extremely zealous was he for the traditions of his fathers (Gal 1:13, 14)—which was no idle boast and certainly no small accomplishment. Reluctant though he was to boast, there can be no mistaken his pride in what he was. This is a point of utmost importance,” (*Paul: His Letters and His Theology*, 30).

<sup>138</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE-66 CE*, 420.

<sup>139</sup> J. Fitzmyer, *Paul and His Theology*, (Englewood, Prentice Hall, 1987), 28.

<sup>140</sup> G.T. Montague, *The Living Thought of St. Paul*, 3.

<sup>141</sup> J. Fitzmyer, *Paul and His Theology*, 28.

and that Paul was a “very happy Jew.”<sup>142</sup> Bruce agrees with this position. He writes that “Until the last moment of his pre-Christian career, Paul showed himself to be (in his own words) ‘as to zeal a persecutor of the church’ (Phlp 3:6).”<sup>143</sup> Marrow, in agreement, writes that not only did Paul know who he was but he was proud of who he was.<sup>144</sup> The fact that Paul was proud of who he was as a Jew is extremely important in understanding Paul’s conversion. Paul’s conversion was not a result of inner turmoil, anguish or guilt.<sup>145</sup> Joubert also agrees when he writes that Paul “was convinced that he would be raised from the dead in glory, because he was ἄμεμπτος according to the δικαιοσύνη required by the law (Phlp 3:6).”<sup>146</sup>

Rigaux sums up this position when he puts forth the opinion that “the reasoning underlying any attempt to establish a psychological pre-conditioning process towards conversion in the case of Paul is not sound.”<sup>147</sup> What Rigaux is stating is that to try and find psychological reasons in Paul the Jew which made Paul the Jew a “wretched man” is, in Rigaux’s own words, “not sound.”

F.F. Bruce who in his understanding of Rom 7:14-25, argues that Rom 7:14-25 is “a self-portrait of a man who is conscious of the presence and power of indwelling sin in

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<sup>142</sup> K. Stendahl states very frankly “Paul, a very happy and successful Jew, one who can even when he thinks about it from his Christian perspective, say, ‘as to the righteousness under the law (I was) blameless’ (Phlp 3:6) (*Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 12-13).

<sup>143</sup> F.F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 73.

<sup>144</sup> S. Marrow, *Paul: His Letters and His Theology*, 30.

<sup>145</sup> S. Marrow writes: “For all too often, Paul’s conversion is seen in light of the great conversions of a sinful Augustine, a tormented M. Luther, or an anguished P. Claudel; guilt, anguish, and human frailty in quest of forgiveness, healing and hope. This was not the case with Paul. He was not having what in today’s jargon is called an identity crisis - far from it. He knew all too well who he was and was more over proud of what he was,” (*Paul: His Letters and His Theology*, 30).

<sup>146</sup> S.J. Joubert, “ΧΑΡΙΣ in Paul,” 195-196.

<sup>147</sup> B. Rigaux, *Letters of St. Paul*, 51.



his life and hates it.”<sup>148</sup> Bruce goes on to describe the person of Rom 7:14-25 as “an anguished soul.”<sup>149</sup> Packer agrees with this understanding of Rom 7:14-25.<sup>150</sup> If Judaism did not place its followers under strain to obey, as Sanders and others puts forth,<sup>151</sup> then Bruce’s statement that Rom 7:14-25 as the self-portrait of a man<sup>152</sup> who *hates* the indwelling sin seem to be at odds with Paul being a “happy Jew” if the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is unregenerate. However, if Rom 7 is describing a mature, spiritual Christian believer who is more and more conscious of his/her broken-ness before God and not a person under the law or Paul the Jew,<sup>153</sup> then there is no discrepancy between Paul the happy Jew and the wretched man of Rom 7. What can be seen from Paul’s own background is that as a Jewish believer, he considered himself legalistically righteous

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<sup>148</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 152.

<sup>149</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 151. D.B. Garlington also agrees that Rom 7:14-25 is a description of a person struggling with sin. He further states that “it is the very presence of strife which argues forcefully that this segment of Romans is the product of Paul’s Christian consciousness. Whereas in vv.7-13 Paul is simply dead because of sin—revealing law, in vv.14-20 (21-25) he is actively resistant to the impulses of indwelling sin in that he *wills* to do what is right—in itself a sign of life,” (*Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 120).

<sup>150</sup> He writes, “The belief that full deliverance from all known sin is enjoyed by consecrated, spirit-filled Christians makes reading Rom 7:14-25 impossible in the natural way. Rom 7:14-25 is best seen as a frank and representative acknowledgement by a lively, healthy Christian (Paul) that sin, stirred up in him by the very law that forbids and condemns it, still controls him to an extent that is grievous to contemplate,” (J.I. Packer, *Keep In Step With The Spirit*, 161). See also B.H. Carroll, *Studies in Romans*, 70, whose position is that, Paul in Rom 7:14-25, writes that a believer is chained to a dead body. Carroll writes: “He alive, that body dead. It was a miserable condition: ‘Who will deliver me from this body of death?’” See also C.E.B. Cranfield who writes that “it is only in the Christian believer, that the corruption of fallen human nature appears conspicuously,” (*The Epistle to the Romans: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary, Vol. I*, 359).

<sup>151</sup> See the discussion above for some of the other commentators who agree with this position.

<sup>152</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 151. Bruce claims that Rom 7:14-25 is the “personal experience of an anguished soul.” This person is the Christian who lives in 2 worlds simultaneously and there will always be tension.”

<sup>153</sup> A. Ross & M.M. Stevenson claim that Paul wrote Romans “out of a powerful firsthand experience of being a Jew seeking to live by the law, judging others, opposing and persecuting the church,” *Romans* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 1999), 44. The opposing view is given by E.P. Sanders who claims that “there is no charge that Judaism historically includes what we now call self-righteousness; nor is there a charge that individual Jews harbored that attitude,” (*Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*, 157); Also P. Achtemeier, (*Romans*, 149). See also E.P. Sanders, *Paul, The Law and the Jewish People*, 154ff for a discussion that states in summary that Paul’s critique of Judaism is not one in which he claims that the law was unable to be fulfilled. See the discussion in this chapter of this study regarding “Paul the happy Jew” for a counter to Ross and Stevenson.

(Phlp 3:6) and did not hate his own flesh nor did he see himself as a wretched man. The change from happy Jew to wretched man is the change that occurs at regeneration and growth in grace.

In addition, if Rom 7 is describing Paul the “happy Jew”, there is a discrepancy with Paul “the happy Jew’s” opinion of Jesus Christ as found in Rom 7:25 and 1 Cor. 15:9. Paul stated that he persecuted the Church of God (1 Cor 15:9). It is also to be understood that Paul’s persecution of the Church was also a persecution of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:4). Why would Paul the “happy Jew” offer thanks to God-through Jesus Christ our Lord and at the same time be persecuting Jesus Christ? Paul the “happy Jew” would not cry out “Thanks be to God –through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom 7:25).

Paul, in addition, calls Jesus, “our Lord” (Rom 7:25). A Jewish believer would not consider Jesus, “Lord”. Thus, it can be seen that Rom 7 cannot be describing Paul the Jewish believer. Thus it is to be seen that Rom 7 and the experience of the emphatic “I” is describing a spiritually mature Christian believer who acknowledges Jesus as “Lord”.<sup>154</sup>

The realization of the believer growing closer to God is the very thought, realization and expression of the emphatic “I.” The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 sees it-self as a sinner and realizes that within itself, apart from Christ, there is nothing good in it (Rom 7:18). The cry of the emphatic “I” of “Wretchedness” is the cry of a mature Christian believer.<sup>155</sup> Stott agrees with this view of the “wretched man.” His position is that the cry

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<sup>154</sup> See W. Baird, *Paul’s Message and Mission*, 107 and J.W. Shepherd, *The Life and Letters of St. Paul*, 406.

<sup>155</sup> Those who claim that the cry “Wretched Man” is the cry of the unregenerate do not take into account F.F. Bruce’s claim that “we have no evidence that Paul, before his conversion, suffered from an uneasy conscience,” (*The Letter of Paul to the Romans*,139). In fact, Paul’s own statement is that as to righteousness, which was found in the law, he was blameless (Phlp 3:6). There certainly is no uneasy conscience in Paul, according to Paul’s own statements. Paul adds to his self-appraisal before his

of the wretched man/person can only be that of a regenerate believer.<sup>156</sup> Smart makes the same claim when he says that in Rom 7, Paul is laying bare his struggle that he still has with sin and that all Christian believers still have with sin.<sup>157</sup> Stedman agrees with this position when he writes that “it is a struggle to re-educate the soul and the body and we fail many times.”<sup>158</sup>

## 7. Analysis of verb tenses used in Rom 7

The predominant tense used in Rom 7:7-13 is the aorist tense. The predominant tense used in Rom 7:14-25 is the present tense. The meaning of the tenses used in Rom 7 cannot be determined apart from the overall contextual setting and meaning of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7.

The overall contextual meaning and setting of the emphatic “I” is, as has been shown, to be a believer. When it is understood that the emphatic “I” is a believer, then the meaning of the tenses used in Rom 7 can be arrived at. The meaning of the tenses used in

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Christian conversion in Gal 1:14 where he claimed that he was advancing in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries. Again, we find in Gal 1:14 no uneasy conscience regarding sin.

<sup>156</sup> J.R.W. Stott says that the cry of the wretched man can only be a regenerate believer. His full reasons for stating this are: “Now who but a mature Christian believer thinks and talks of himself like that? The unbeliever is characterized by self-righteousness and would never acknowledge himself a miserable creature. The immature believer is characterized by self-confidence and does not ask who is going to deliver him. Only the mature believer reaches the place of self-disgust and of self-despair. It is one who recognizes with clarity that in his flesh dwells nothing good” (*Men Made New: An Exposition of Romans 5-8*, 72-3); In addition see P.A. Feider, *Paul’s Letters* (Mystic, CT.: Twenty-third Publications, 1982), 89; See also chapter 7 of this study for a list of other scholars who hold this position. See E.A. Wcela, *Paul The Theologian*, 52 for an opposing view. He says that the “I” sums up the experience of all human beings; also L. Cerfaux, *The Spiritual Journey of Saint Paul* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1968), 121.

<sup>157</sup> J. Smart, *Doorway to A New Age: A Study of Paul’s Letter to The Romans*, 75; R.J. Austgen, *Natural Motivation in the Pauline Epistles* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), 105.

<sup>158</sup> R. Stedman, *From Guilt to Glory*, 178.

Rom 7 must be and is a statement concerning the life of the emphatic “I”. The use of the aorist/past tense used in Rom 7:7-13<sup>159</sup> must be referring to a time in the life of the emphatic “I” before the writing of the letter of Romans.<sup>160</sup> The use of the present tense in Rom 7:14-25 must be referring to the life of the emphatic “I” at the time of the writing of the letter to the Romans.<sup>161</sup>

The analysis of the verb tenses used in Rom 7 shows that there is a line of demarcation at verse 14. Before this line of demarcation, the predominate verb tense used is the aorist. The aorist tense is regarded as punctiliar.<sup>162</sup> This means that the action of the aorist tense maybe represented as a point. Chamberlain has written that the aorist tense “expresses punctiliar action in past time.” He goes on to say that the term aorist means undefined. He defines this by saying that the action is stated without describing it.<sup>163</sup>

If Rom 7:7-25 was describing the “present” life of the emphatic “I”, then, there would be no reason at all to use the aorist tense in Rom 7:7-13 and the present tense in Rom 7:14-25. If the whole passage of Rom 7:7-25 was describing the “present” life of the emphatic “I,” then the dramatic change of the verbal tenses would have no meaning at all. If Rom 7:7-25 was describing the “present” life of the emphatic “I”, then the present tense or the aorist tense could have been used throughout Rom 7:7-25 with the same meaning

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<sup>159</sup> J. Neyrey’s opinion is that Rom 7:7-12 tells the story of the attack by Evil Spirits, (*Paul: In Other Words*, 174).

<sup>160</sup> D.B. Garlington’s claim is that there is a continuity between Paul’s experience in Rom 7:7-13, which is describing his past and Rom 7:14-25, which is describing Paul’s present. He bases his opinion on the imperfect which is used in Rom 7:7 which he says is describing Paul’s coveting. He states that the imperfect used here is describing a continuing experience; an experience that Paul still is facing, (*Faith, Obedience and Perseverance*, 121).

<sup>161</sup> In disagreement with this statement is E. Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, 199. Käsemann is of the opinion that Rom 7:7-13 refers to the pious Jew and in Rom 7:14-25 the subject of the “I” is broadened to include all sinners, (*Commentary on Romans*, 195).

<sup>162</sup> H.E. Dana & J. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of The Greek New Testament*, 179.

<sup>163</sup> W.D. Chamberlain, *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1941), 75.

and emphasis. However, since there is such a sharp distinction in Rom 7:7-25 of the verb tenses used, this distinction must have a meaning in itself. The meaning of the distinction of the verb tenses used in Rom 7:7-25 is a description of the life of the emphatic “I” into two different “parts.” Rom 7:7-13 describes the life of the emphatic “I” before a life changing event and Rom 7:14-25 describes the life of the emphatic “I” after this life-changing event. Rom 7:7-13 describes the “past” life of the emphatic “I” while Rom 7:14-25 describes the present life of the emphatic “I”. The life changing event that divides the life of the emphatic “I” must be an event of such magnitude that the emphatic “I” sees its life as having two different “parts”. The two different “parts” of the life of the emphatic “I” are set out by the predominate use of the aorist tense in Rom 7:7-13 and the present tense used in Rom 7:14-25. The only event of such a magnitude could be the conversion of the emphatic “I”. Thus, Rom 7:7-13 describes the life of the emphatic “I” as an unbeliever and Rom 7:14-25 describes the life of the emphatic “I” as a believer.

After the line of demarcation at verse 14, the predominate tense used in Rom 7 is the present tense. The fundamental idea of the Greek present tense is of progress.<sup>164</sup> Chamberlain expands on this idea when he writes that the present tense normally expresses continued action going on at the time of writing or speaking.<sup>165</sup>

The dramatic change in tenses at Rom 7:14 from the aorist/past to the present states that there was a dramatic change in the life of the emphatic “I”. Robinson disagrees with this position. He is of the opinion that the present tense in Rom 7 “is to express the purely general proposition that the law is spiritual.”<sup>166</sup> He goes on further to add that the

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<sup>164</sup> H.E. Dana & J. Mantey, *A Manuel Grammar of The Greek New Testament*, 181.

<sup>165</sup> W.D. Chamberlain, *An Exegetical Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 70.

<sup>166</sup> J.A.T. Robinson, *Wrestling With Paul*, 88.

difference in the tenses used in Rom 7 is not “between what I was and what I am”.<sup>167</sup>

There are many opinions regarding the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. The context of Rom 1-8 and especially the text of Rom 7 itself teach that the identity of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is Paul, a representative of all believers.<sup>168</sup> The question remaining is a question concerning Paul’s spiritual maturity as this representative of all believers. Was the emphatic “I” an immature believer or as this study holds, a mature, spiritual believer? The understanding that the emphatic “I” is a mature, spiritual believer will be strengthened in the chapters that follow.

## 8. The Law in Rom 7

Throughout Rom 7 Paul writes concerning the Law.<sup>169</sup> The use of Law is in reference to: (1) the Mosaic Law and (2) a power residing within the emphatic “I”. The two uses of the Law will become clearer in this section.

Paul writes that the believer has died to the Law through the death of Christ (Rom

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> E. Käsemann disagrees. He posits that the I “concerns that person who lives in the illusion that he can and should help himself and thereby repeats the story of Adam even when he is acting piously and ethically” (*Commentary on Romans*, 210). This study is an attempt to answer Käsemann’s position.

<sup>169</sup> For a summation of the various positions on Paul and the Law, see *Paul and the Law*, by V. Koperski, (New York: Paulist Press, 2001); Also F. Amiot, *How To Read Paul* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964), 29ff; In addition, for a new understanding of the “commandment” of Rom 7: 9-11 which Jervis says that “the commandment” is the “commandment inherent to life in Christ” and not the commandment of Torah, see A. Jervis, “The Commandment which is Life (Romans 7.10): Sin’s Use of the Obedience of Faith,” *JSNT* 27, No. 2(2004) 193-216. Also P. Berthoud, “The Covenant and The Social Message of Amos,” *EuroJTh* 2 (2005): 99-109; N.T. Wright who writes that “the Law is not a convenient moral guide, ancient and venerable. It is that the Torah, like the Temple, is one of the places where heaven and earth meet,” N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 132. Wright is of the opinion that Christians are not meant to perform the Jewish Law, (*Simply Christian*, 131).

7:4). This mention is to the Mosaic Law. In Rom 4-6, Paul has written that righteousness is not found in keeping the law. Righteousness is found only in faith in Christ. He uses the illustration of marriage to explain that the believer has been set free from the law by the death of Christ. However, Paul goes on to write that the believer has not been freed from the law and now lives in lawlessness. The believer, in being freed from the law has been “enslaved to another law” (Rom 7:4; see also Rom 6:15-22). This new law is God in Christ. The believer, in being freed from the law is not free to do anything. The believer is freed from sin to righteousness. The evidence that a person is a believer is that his or her desire is to obey and please God in Christ (Phlp 2:13).

Rom 7:1-6 presents two laws. One law is death; the other law is life (Rom 7:4-6). The difference between the two laws are found in the terms spirit and written code (Rom 7:6). The law that is life is the law of Christ (Rom 8:2) is of the spirit. The law that is death is a written code. The law of written code is no longer in force. The death of Christ has set people free from this law. The law that is in force is the law of the spirit of Christ. The law of the written code and the law of spirit are both termed “law”. This is very important to remember for the discussion of law in Rom 7.

Because people have been set free from the written code, Paul then asks: is the law sin (Rom 7:7)? The answer given by Paul is no, not in any way. He writes and says that one purpose of the law was to reveal sin (Rom 7:7; see also Rom 3:20-21). The law was never intended to make a person righteous (Rom 3:20, 21). Its purpose was to reveal the utterly sinfulness of sin (Rom 7:13). The law reveals sin by arousing the sinful passions that exist within the flesh (Rom 7:5). It is also written that apart from law, sin is dead (Rom 7:8).

The use of law within Rom 7 must be understood within the context of Romans. When Paul writes that apart from law sin is dead, he is not only referring to the written code called the Mosaic Law.<sup>170</sup> He also means the law apart from the written code (Rom 2:12-15).

The law fulfilled its purpose in the life of Paul. He writes that at one time he was alive apart from the law, but when the law came, he died (Rom 7:7-10).<sup>171</sup> The law not only revealed sin, it also brought death. The reason for this is that sin is death (Rom 6:23). The law revealed sin and aroused the sinful passions that resided in Paul. Thus, the law brought death.

Paul is quick to write that the law did not kill. He writes that sin took opportunity through the commandment, deceived him and then killed him (Rom 7:11). The law did not kill him (Rom 7:12, 13). Sin killed him, not the law. The law is holy and good. Sin took advantage of Paul and used Paul's passions and then killed him. This is a very important statement. Paul is writing very positively about the law. He goes on to say that the law is not only good and holy; it is spiritual (Rom 7:12-14).

Paul then asks: did the good become death for him? The answer is no, not in any fashion. It was sin that became death for Paul. This happened that the true nature of sin, its utter sinfulness, might be seen. The law is holy, good and spiritual. However, there is another "power" which Paul also calls a law. This power or law is sin that resides within the flesh (Rom 7:23). This power/law deceived Paul (Rom 7:11), took advantage of Paul's passions (Rom 7:5), killed him (Rom 7:11) then sold Paul as a slave (Rom 7:14). It

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<sup>170</sup> H. Richards, *Reading Paul Today* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), 107.

<sup>171</sup> The discussion of Rom 7:9, whether Paul is referring to the age of accountability is a very interesting study. However, it is beyond the scope of this study and will not be discussed.



is important to state again that sin did this to Paul. The Law did not do this to Paul.

The Law being good, holy and righteous (Rom 7:12) is not the “enemy” of the believer. Nor is the law to be ignored by the believer. Jesus came not to abolish the law, but to fulfill it. If the law is the enemy, the antithesis of faith and righteousness, then why did Jesus not abolish the law? The answer is that the law reveals sin and points to righteousness by faith in Christ (1 Tim 1: 8-11).

The law, having been fulfilled by Christ, is not to be seen in commands. The essence of the law is love (Rom 13:8-10). The essence of the law as love can also be seen in Jesus’ answer to the question of what is the greatest commandment. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love God with all that you are and your neighbor as yourself (Matt 22; 35-40). The essence of the law being love is also seen in Jesus’ description of the Pharisees and Scribes. He stated that they, in their following of commands, had abandoned the law of God and were following human traditions (Luke 7:5-8). Thus it is to be stated that the legalistic understanding of the law is of human origin and not divine. The law was never given simply as commands to be followed. The Law, summed up, is love. The law was not sent as a set of rules to obey, was sent as a means to aid people into a relationship with God. Wright says that the law was not sent to try and keep it and “earn God’s favor” but the law was given as a means to “express your gratitude, your loyalty, and your determination to live by the covenant because of which God rescued you in the first place.”<sup>172</sup>

As has been stated above, the purpose of the law is to reveal sin (Rom 3:19-20). The revelation of sin would then lead people to faith as the means of being made

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<sup>172</sup> N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian*, 82.

righteous (Rom 3:31). Thus it is to be seen that the law and faith are not two opposite extremes or two different spheres. The law was never intended to make righteous (Rom 3:19-21). The law was to reveal sin and to establish faith as the means of being righteous (Rom 3:31). This progression and purpose of the law is clearly seen in Rom 10:4 where it affirms that Christ is the end, τέλος, of the law. Τέλος is understood as “end”<sup>173</sup> and as “purpose.”<sup>174</sup> Christ is the end and the purpose of the law. Here, the relationship between the law and faith is clearly seen. The law reveals sin and then leads people to Christ who is righteousness. The law was never intended to make righteous/perfect. The law is only a shadow. The reality is Christ (Heb 10:1).

Thus, it can be seen that the law and faith are not two opposite extremes. Nor are they opposed to one another. The problem arises between faith and law when the true purpose of the law is not seen, understood or is forgotten.

Rom 7:14-25 adds another dimension to the discussion concerning law. In this section law is also used of a power or principle that resides within the flesh. The use of law as the law of God is found in Rom 7:14, 16, 22 and 25. Law as a power/principle that resides within the flesh is found in Rom 7:15, 17-21, 23, and 25. This two-fold usage of law is important to recognize and to keep distinct in this discussion. Paul writes positively concerning the law of God as that which reveals sin then leads to faith in Christ. However, the usage of law as a power/principle that resides within the flesh and leads the emphatic “I” away from God cannot be the law of God. God’s law reveals sin; it never leads people away from God. Nor does the law of God present itself as something that it

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<sup>173</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 638.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 784.

is not. The law of God was never intended to make righteous/perfect, but the law was always to reveal sin and to point to Christ, who is the fulfillment of the law. Thus it can be seen that in Rom 7, Paul is using the word law to refer to God's law and to a power/principle, which he calls law that resides within the flesh of the emphatic "I." This power/principle that resides within the flesh of the emphatic "I" Paul has already called sin (Rom 7:17-20).

## **9. Concluding Statement**

To summarize this section on law it can be stated that the law of God is holy and does have a purpose. The purpose of the law is to reveal sin and lead people to faith in Christ. The law has a continuing purpose for the emphatic "I". As it is to be remembered, this study is presenting the emphatic "I" as a mature believer. This purpose of the law is to reveal sin, (Gal 3:19-29), the sin that remains within every believer and to lead every believer to holiness. This purpose, which is, to lead believers to holiness is clearly stated and seen in Rom 7 in the description and experience of the emphatic "I".

## Chapter 4: The New Life in Christ in the Pauline Corpus

After examining the context of Rom 1-8 and focusing on Rom 7, this study will now examine the teaching of the new life in Christ found within the wider Pauline Corpus. The purpose in researching Paul's statements regarding the new life in Christ is to discover a Pauline description of salvation.<sup>1</sup> This will mean of course, looking beyond the writing of Romans. The selection of the passages<sup>2</sup> discussed below is based on the fact that these selected passages discuss the new birth, justification, sanctification and the flesh, i.e. the elements of the new life in Christ that are pertinent to this study. These elements<sup>3</sup> are pertinent to this study because they describe not only God's action in salvation, but also the human experience in salvation that are fundamental to the experience of the new life in Christ. If, when comparing the experience of the new life in Christ within the Pauline Corpus with the experience of the emphatic "I" of Rom 7, the two experiences are found to be similar, then the conclusion is that the emphatic "I" of Rom 7 is regenerate.

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<sup>1</sup> Salvation has been chosen as a comprehensive term for the experience that God grants to those human beings who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is understood that the previous statement can be a topic of discussion and debate. However, this is the understanding that has been gained from texts such as Rom 10:9, 10. See also L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 181.

<sup>2</sup> The reason for choosing the passages studied below is that these passages do relate directly to the elements of salvation that are being discussed in this study.

<sup>3</sup> Salvation is a many-faceted experience. Truly there are many other aspects of salvation that are not mentioned in this study. However, due to the scope of this study and the topic of experience, certain elements, of necessity, had to be left out. The fact that these elements have been left out of this study by no means implies that they are not important elements to the experience of salvation. What is meant is that they do not fit within the scope of this study.

## 1. New Birth

The new birth is the beginning of the Christian experience.<sup>4</sup> A person, before the experience of the new birth, lives a life alienated from God and a life in rebellion to God (Rom 3:10-18). The life lived alienated from and in rebellion to God is more than simply an unethical or immoral life. There are many non-Christians who live a life of high ethical and moral standards. The life given in the new birth is not simply, or even to state primarily, an ethical or moral life.<sup>5</sup> The life given in the new birth is God's life, which is brought to the believer and is experienced in, through and by the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> It must not be understood or thought that the above statements are expressing the idea that the life given in the new birth is an unethical or immoral life.<sup>7</sup> God's life, though not primarily an ethical or moral life, is a holy life. There is a difference between an ethical or moral life and a holy life. When comparing Paul's statements regarding his former life as a Pharisee, Paul wrote that as for legalistic righteousness he was faultless (Phlp 3:6). Thus, it can be seen that a moral life is not enough for salvation. A person must be born-again.<sup>8</sup> When a person is born-again, this person receives a new nature.<sup>9</sup> This new nature, according to Chafer, "has divine qualities and longs after the things of God".<sup>10</sup> Berkhof adds: "regeneration is the act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man,

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<sup>4</sup> J.M. Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, 401.

<sup>5</sup> T. Epp, *Flesh and Spirit in Conflict: Practical Studies in Galatians* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Back To The Bible Broadcast, 1968), 12.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 21; also Rom 8: 9, 10.

<sup>7</sup> There is no intention of stating or supporting the idea, which has been called antinomianism.

<sup>8</sup> See John 3:3. Of course the Gospel according to John is not in the Pauline Corpus. However, John 3:3 are the words of Jesus, at least as quoted by John. The reason for quoting this verse is that Paul claims to have met the Risen Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-9) and claims to have received the gospel through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12). Based on Paul's own claims, it can be argued that Jesus did have some influence on him.

<sup>9</sup> L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 99.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy”.<sup>11</sup> He goes on to posit that “in regeneration the sinful principle of the old life is replaced by the holy principle of the new life.”<sup>12</sup> What is to be understood in this is that at the moment of the new birth a divine nature, new life is implanted in the soul of the Christian believer. This divine nature, new life, as Berkhof states, is a holy disposition in the soul. This holy disposition of the soul, this new life, although within the Christian believer, has to penetrate the conscious life of the Christian believer.<sup>13</sup>

The difference between a moral life and the new birth lies in the fact that an ethical and moral life, even a life that is based on the written and revealed standards found in the Bible,<sup>14</sup> lacks what is essential to a holy life. A holy life has as its essence conformity to God. This is so, because; a holy life given in the new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit who is given to and lives in and through a human being. Conformity to God is not primarily conformity to an ethical or moral standard. Conformity to God is essentially conformity to the heart and holiness of God.<sup>15</sup> God's heart is a heart of love and righteousness, which includes justice, equality, compassion and passion for the world. Many people, in and outside of the Church, live high ethical and moral lives but lack love; for God, their neighbor or the world. Those who live high ethical lives without love, according to Paul, are nothing (1 Cor 13).

The new birth, as a life-birthing experience, gives a life that has God as its source.

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<sup>11</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 469.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> When the terms such as “bible” and “scripture” are used in this study, the meaning is of the Historic Evangelical Protestant understanding of Bible and Scriptures. In many cases, in this study, the words are used interchangeably.

<sup>15</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 30.

This is to say that God is the origin, the source of the life of the new birth. When it is remembered that the life given in the new birth is the life of God, then the previous statement that the life given in the new birth has God as its source, is clarified.

The new birth is also a life that has God as its goal. Paul writes: “For we make it our goal to please Him” (2 Cor 5:9). The word φιλοτιμέομαι, means: “have as one's ambition, aspire.”<sup>16</sup> Here, Paul states that the goal, the purpose of the Christian life, that is the life given by God at the new birth has a goal, a purpose. This goal, this purpose, is to please God in Christ Jesus. The very heartbeat of the life given in the new birth is to please God in Christ. The one who has experienced the new birth, their ontological reason, the purpose that they exist, is to please God in Christ. This reason to exist, that is to please God in Christ, is a conscious, intentional choice and an orientation and purpose.

The new birth is experienced when a person believes in Christ as Lord and Savior (Rom 10:6-13). In this passage, Paul states that righteousness is based on faith (Rom 10:6) and the object of this faith is Jesus Christ (Rom 10:6,7,9,11). The specific faith confessions are that Jesus is Lord and that God raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 10:9). The confession that Jesus is Lord has as its fundamental aspect obedience to Christ.<sup>17</sup> There is also the faith that Jesus was raised from the dead. Paul teaches very clearly that Jesus died for transgressions and was raised because of justification (Rom 4:25). Thus, when Paul writes that one has to believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, behind this statement is the further understanding that Jesus died to save sinners (Rom 5:8). To put that in simple terms, the faith that leads to the new birth is faith in Jesus as Lord and

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<sup>16</sup> W. Arndt and W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 861.

<sup>17</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament, based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 139.

Savior.

The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 also has as its desire to do what is pleasing to God (Rom 7:18). The emphatic “I” also has faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Rom 7:24, 25 clearly points out the faith of the emphatic “I” in Jesus as Savior. Who will deliver me from the body of death? The emphatic “I” asks. The answer given is that salvation and deliverance is found only in Jesus Christ (Eph 1:13). This is clearly a declaration of faith in Jesus as Savior. The emphatic “I” also desires to obey Christ as Lord. Rom 7:22 states that the emphatic “I” desires to obey the law of God, i.e. to obey God. Here is seen a declaration of commitment to Christ as Lord. The statement of faith in Christ as Savior and the commitment to him as Lord is the means by which a person is born-again. Thus, it must be seen that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is born-again, i.e. a Christian.

## **2. Justification and Sanctification**

Paul writes and exhorts the believers to advance in holiness or sanctification (1 Thess 4:1). He writes that sanctification is living a life that is pleasing to God (1 Thess 4:1-30).<sup>18</sup> A life that is pleasing to God begins at the new birth or justification. This means that justification is the beginning of sanctification.<sup>19</sup> The one who has been justified has also been sanctified (1 Cor 6:11). This statement must be seen in two perspectives. The

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<sup>18</sup> E. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 187; J. Reese. *First and Second Thessalonians* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979), 43.

<sup>19</sup> L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 189.



first perspective is that the one who has been justified has been sanctified in that they have begun the process of sanctification. To state the same thing in a different way is to say: The person who is not growing more and more Christ-like, which is another way of stating, sanctification, for this person, there maybe questions concerning whether that person has been justified. The second perspective is that sanctification is an act that God performs for the believer. Christ is the sanctification of the believer (1 Cor 1:30), according to Paul. Christ becomes<sup>20</sup> for the believer sanctification. Thus, when Christ and the believer come into union with one another, the believer is sanctified.

Justification and sanctification are not two totally separate and unrelated experiences. Justification is the “door” to sanctification. The one who has been declared righteous, which is justification, has also been born-again.<sup>21</sup> The new birth is a relational, essential and ontological experience. What is meant is that the new birth is not just a moment to categorize and remember. The new birth is a life-breathing experience. The person who has been born-again has received and is living a new and entirely different life than that person lived before the experience of the new birth.<sup>22</sup>

In justification, God declares the believing sinner not guilty.<sup>23</sup> In the Divine declaration of justification, God both imputes Christ's righteousness to the believer and imparts Christ's righteousness to the believer.<sup>24</sup> God imputes Christ's righteousness to the believer in that the believer is “in Christ” and the righteousness of Christ is then reckoned

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<sup>20</sup> See further in this chapter for a more detailed discussion concerning the word *become*; in terms of Christ *becoming* the Christian believer's sanctification.

<sup>21</sup> L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 189.

<sup>22</sup> See above for clarification.

<sup>23</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 510; C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to The Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968),60; R.F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, 113; K. Quast, *Reading The Corinthian Correspondence: An Introduction*, 37.

<sup>24</sup> This statement will be demonstrated in that which follows.

to the believer. Paul writes in the letter to the Romans that God “reckoned”, ἐλογίσθη, righteousness to both Abraham and to all others who believe in Jesus Christ (Rom 4:22-24). Λογίζομαι means: “reckon, calculate, take into account, evaluate, estimate, look upon as, consider”.<sup>25</sup> Thus, when a sinner believes in Christ, God reckons, considers the believer as righteous in Christ. In this reckoning, God imputes the righteousness of Christ to the believing sinner. In other words, the righteousness of Christ is applied to the account of the believing sinner. The believing sinner thus has Christ's righteousness imputed, calculated or reckoned to them.

Righteousness is imparted to the believer when the believer enters into a living relationship with Christ. As has been stated earlier, Christ has become<sup>26</sup> for the believer, sanctification (1 Cor 1:30). The indwelling Christ is the sanctification that is imparted to the believer. When Christ is given to the believer, then righteousness is also given or imparted to the believer. The reason for this is that Christ has become for the believer, sanctification (I Cor 1:30). Berkoff is of the opinion that sanctification is “a divine operation in the soul, whereby the holy disposition born in regeneration is strengthened.”<sup>27</sup> He also goes on to say that the believer is expected to co-operate with God in this work of sanctification.<sup>28</sup> Righteousness is thus imparted to the believer in

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<sup>25</sup> *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 475, 476.

<sup>26</sup> The emphasis here is on the phrase “has become”. Paul states very clearly that Christ “has become” sanctification to the believer. This is clearly an existential, experiential statement. The tense of the verb, which is aorist, also states a fact that is accomplished. Thus, Christ is now, at least in reference to the time Paul wrote or dictated 1 Cor, sanctification for the believer. The believer is sanctified because Christ is the believer's sanctification. This is an accomplished reality, experience for the believer.

<sup>27</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 532.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 532; C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to The Corinthians*, 218; K. Quast, *Reading The Corinthian Correspondence: An Introduction*, 62; E. Richard, *First and Second Corinthians*, 218; J. Lambrecht, *Second Corinthians*, (Wilmington, Delaware, Michael Glazier, Inc., 1999), 101; R. Hays, *First Corinthians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997), 158; M.A. Getty, *First and Second Corinthians*, (Collegeville, MN., The Liturgical Press, 1983), 101; W. Barclay, *The Letters to The Corinthians*

regeneration when “the holy disposition is born”.<sup>29</sup>

Sanctification is also a process of growing more and more Christ-like. Paul exhorts the Ephesians to put on the new self that has been created in the likeness of God (Eph 4:24). This “putting on” is the process of sanctification. This process of growing more and more Christ-like is not a process of gaining more and more of the Holy Spirit or of gaining more Christ. Sanctification, the process of growing more and more Christ-like, is the process of becoming, in experience, what the believer is already in Christ.<sup>30</sup> Stedman is of the opinion that sanctification is righteousness that has worked its way out to visibility.<sup>31</sup> Cranfield agrees with the two definitions above concerning sanctification. He defines sanctification in this manner: “Those who have learned through the gospel message the truth of God's gracious decision on their behalf are under obligation to strive now with all their heart and strength to approximate more and more in their actual concrete living to that which in God's decision of justification they already are”.<sup>32</sup> The obligation to strive with all the heart, after receiving the knowledge of the Word of Truth can be clearly seen in 1 Thess 4:1-12. This obligation to strive with all the heart is the process aspect of sanctification. The heart is of utmost importance in the process of sanctification. Sanctification is not simply the high ethical or moral life. Sanctification is the heart striving to become what God's action and decision on their behalf declares them to be.

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(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 94; B. Fisk, *First Corinthians* (Louisville: Geneva Press, 2000), 60.

<sup>29</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 532.

<sup>30</sup> N. Anderson, *Victory Over The Darkness*, 86.

<sup>31</sup> R. Stedman, *From Guilt to Glory*, 255.

<sup>32</sup> C.E.B. Cranfield, *Romans: A Shorter Commentary*, 128; P. Gräbe, *The Power of God in Paul's Letters* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 264.

According to Paul, sanctification is: avoiding sexual immorality (1 Thess 4:3); it is learning to control one's own body in a way that is holy and honorable (1 Thess 4:4); sanctification is not wronging a brother or sister (1 Thess 4:6). The teaching here is that wrong sexual behavior wrongs the people involved and takes advantage of them. However, it would be limiting of the teaching on sanctification to say that the admonition to learn to control one's own body is only discussing sexual behaviors. The context also teaches that any time a person acts out of any and all passionate lust that person wrongs and takes advantage of others. Sanctification is also living a life of love (1 Thess 4:9); it is to work with one's own hands (1 Thess 4:11), which means to work so that one is not always receiving, but is able to contribute and help others, which in reality is part of what it means to live a life of love.

Paul writes twice in 1 Thess 4:1-12 that sanctification is not perfection. He states that sanctification is the going on to perfection.<sup>33</sup> This is seen in 1 Thess 4:1 and 10. In these passages Paul acknowledges that the believers were living a life pleasing to God (1 Thess 4:1) and that they loved other Christians (1 Thess 4:10). However, the point to be made here is that Paul exhorts them to more and more live lives that are pleasing to God and to increase in their love for others. This means that they were not living and loving perfectly, there was room for growth. To not live and love perfectly means that there were areas of their lives that were not perfect and that needed to be changed or sanctified. This also means that within them were areas or parts of their lives that were sanctified and there were other areas or parts that were not.

This is exactly the teaching of Rom 7 concerning the emphatic "I". The emphatic

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<sup>33</sup> E. Richard, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 218; J. Reese, *First and Second Thessalonians*, 43; L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 485.

“I” desires to do the good but at times is not able to (Rom 7:15-20). Paul writes that in his flesh there is no good (Rom 7:18). Within this context, good can only mean that which is pleasing to God. This understanding is derived from the comparison/contrast that Paul makes throughout Rom 7 between the desire to do good and at times the inability to not do the good. Rom 7:25 is the capstone on the position that the good is doing what is pleasing to God. In this verse Paul states that in his mind he serves the law of God. The law of God is spiritual (Rom 7:14) it is not simply an external set of regulations. Nor is law in this context an antithesis to faith. To summarize that the good in the context of Romans is pleasing God, Paul defines pleasing God as the presenting of one’s body to God as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1).

In addition to the desire to please God, the emphatic “I” also sees in his or her own life areas that are not yet sanctified (Rom 7:22, 23). The areas that the emphatic “I” states that they are not yet sanctified are the members of the body that are still under the control of the other law that wages war against their mind, heart and will. It can be seen that the experience of the emphatic “I” is a similar experience to the believers in Thessalonica.

### **3. Conformity to Christ**

Sanctification is also seen in conformity to Christ.<sup>34</sup> To please God in Christ is by

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<sup>34</sup> J.M. Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, 533.

conformity to Christ and by obedience to the words of Christ as Paul writes (Eph 5:1).<sup>35</sup> Conformity to Christ is to be understood as being imitators of God (Eph 5:1). Conformity to Christ is the goal of sanctification and thus is part of the discussion of sanctification. This conformity by obedience to Christ is not found in ethics or morality, but by conformity to the heart and holiness of God.

A digression at this point, maybe helpful in clarifying and strengthening the statement that conformity to God in holiness is conformity to God's heart of love. Conformity to God's heart of love is not seen primarily or even essentially, in ethics and

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<sup>35</sup> Pauline authorship of Ephesians is held to in this study. D. Guthrie lists reasons for Pauline authorship: (1). Ephesians self-claims. That is in the opening of the letter, the writer not only claims to be Paul but also claims the authority of an apostle by the will of God. (2). External attestation. Guthrie writes: "Ephesians appears to have been in wide circulation by the middle of the second century among both orthodox Christians and heretics. It was included in the earliest formal Canon, that of Marcion (c.AD 140), though under the name of Laodiceans." Its Pauline origin was therefore at this time undisputed, since Marcion acknowledged only the apostle Paul as his authority. In the Muratorian Canon (c.AD 180) it was included under the Epistles of Paul. It forms part of the Pauline Epistles in the earliest evidence for the Latin and Syriac versions. (3). Pauline structure. (4). Language and literary affinities. (5). Theological affinities (*New Testament Introduction*, 479-482). Guthrie finishes his discussion for Pauline authorship with these words: "When all the objections are carefully considered it will be seen that the weight of evidence is inadequate to overthrow the overwhelming external attestation to Pauline authorship, and the Epistle's own claims. The fact that the writer plainly calls himself Paul has not been greatly stressed in the preceding discussion in order not to prejudice judgment. But in spite of the fact that pseudonymity is regarded by many modern scholars to have been an established practice among the early Christians, the advocates of the traditional view are entitled to emphasize the self-testimony of the Epistle as support for their position until some satisfactory explanation is found which accounts for the universal acceptance of the Epistle at its face value. To maintain that the Paulinist out of his sheer love for Paul and through his own self-effacement composed the letter, attributed it to Paul and found an astonishing and immediate readiness on the part of the Church to recognize it as such is considerably less credible than the simple alternative of regarding it as Paul's own work," (*New Testament Introduction*, 507, 508). While R.E. Brown includes Ephesians in the category of DeuteroPauline, (*An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 441); he states that the Pauline Corpus does not contain all of Paul's thought, so the fact that new ideas which are found in other epistles (by this is meant the DeutroPauline Corpus), does not prove that Paul could not have written this new idea, R.E. Brown goes on to further state that "one would need to show that this new idea could not come from Paul," (*An Introduction to the New Testament*, 437). J.O. Buswell is of the opinion that while it cannot be definitely proven that Ephesians is genuinely Pauline; there are other considerations that must be included. He ends his discussion on the authorship of Ephesians with these words: "If the maxim 'innocent until proven guilty' is applied here, then the tradition which accepts Paul as the author of Ephesians is more recommendable than the suggestion of an unknown author. The burden of proof lies with those questioning the tradition. The evidence produced by those who disagree with Pauline authorship is neither strong nor harmonious enough to invalidate the judgment of tradition," (*A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, 41). See M. Barth for a listing of the various positions in the debate over Pauline authorship of Ephesians, (*Ephesians 1-3* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), 28).

morality. This is seen in the Gen 3<sup>36</sup> account of the Fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

According to the Biblical account<sup>37</sup> in Gen 3, Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden. The Garden of Eden was a paradise. In paradise, Adam and Eve lived according to the heart of God as expressed in God's words, His command. The day came when Adam and Eve disobeyed God and were cast out of the Garden of Eden and experienced spiritual death and began to die physically. The event, the decision that is called original sin was not an ethical or moral decision. The decision to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of the Tree of Good and Evil was a holy decision.

The source of holiness is the will, the spiritual heart.<sup>38</sup> Thus, it can be seen that the choice of Adam and Eve, coming from their will, was a holy decision and not just an ethical or moral decision. A holy decision is one in which the choice is made to obey God or not. An ethical or moral decision may include choosing to conform to a society's standards. In choosing to eat from the Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil, they were not making the choice to live a life of sinful actions. They were not rejecting the God given purpose and boundaries of sex. Adam and Eve were not choosing to steal each other's belongings and property. The choice of Adam and Eve to eat from the Tree of The

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<sup>36</sup> Clearly Genesis is not included within the Pauline Corpus. However, it can be argued that Paul's understanding of Genesis influenced his understanding of the Gospel. He writes in Rom 5:12-21 that sin entered the world through one act of disobedience by Adam. Paul, in Rom 5 also compares and contrasts Christ's one act of righteousness with Adam's sin. Rom 5:12-21 is a clear reference to Gen 3. To include a discussion of Gen 3 in this study is to help understand Paul's perspective on sin and grace in Christ as he wrote in the book of Romans. To understand Paul's perspective of sin and grace in Christ is to understand Paul's teaching on the experience of salvation. It is when Paul's view of the experience of salvation is understood that this experience can be compared to the experience of the emphatic "I" of Rom 7.

<sup>37</sup> Whether one holds to the view that Gen 3 is an account of what happened or to the view that Gen 3 is a religious story that teaches a truth; the same fundamental truth is seen in both views. This truth is that Adam and Eve chose to disobey God with the intent of becoming like God. See further in this section for further clarification.

<sup>38</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 29.

Knowledge of Good and Evil was not a choice to lie to one another.

Adam and Eve chose “to be like God”. This statement, “To be like God”, must be understood as a desire to be God.<sup>39</sup> To be like God means that no longer is the person under the authority of, bound to obey, follow or even recognize, God as the True God. The choice of Adam and Eve to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a choice, whereby they replaced the True God with themselves. They knew good and evil, right and wrong. It was their knowing that was their ultimate authority. No longer was God their ultimate authority. The choice to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was a choice to overthrow God and to replace God with themselves. This choice was not simply an ethical or moral choice.<sup>40</sup> This choice was an ultimate choice or a “holy choice”.

The essence of sin, therefore, is not simply ethical or moral. The essence of sin is rebellion. Rebellion may express itself in unethical or immoral behavior, but it does not always do so. Finney expresses the same when he writes that sin consists in selfish ultimate intention.<sup>41</sup> A person can live a life of high ethical and moral standards and still be in rebellion to the authority by having a selfish ultimate intention or purpose for life. When God is not the purpose for one’s life, then, it matters not whether life is of a high and ethical quality or not. That life is a life lived in sin. The ultimate intention of a person is not God, but self or something else that has been chosen to replace God. The essence of sin, therefore, is not simply ethical or moral behavior, but a heart of rebellion and

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<sup>39</sup>  $\supset$  means “like”. This particle expresses identity. It also means “agreement in kind: in the same way as, of the same sort as” according to W. Holladay, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans, 1971) 149.

<sup>40</sup> See J. Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, 13-19 for his description of the difference between moral and holy lives.

<sup>41</sup> C. Finney, *Finney's Systematic Theology*, 119.



disobedience to God.<sup>42</sup> The essence of holiness is not simply ethical or moral behavior but a will that is the spiritual heart in conformity to God's heart of love. This is so because holiness is the exact opposite of sin. Since the essence of sin is a heart of rebellion from God, holiness is a heart of obedience and relation to God. Finney asserts that holiness must always consist in singleness of eye or intention. It must consist in a supreme disinterested choice, willing or intending the good of God and of the universe, for its own sake.<sup>43</sup> Holiness desires ultimately one thing. Holiness is where the ultimate desire of the person is to please God.<sup>44</sup> Both desire and holiness find their source in the heart. Thus, holiness, according to Finney, is the heart desiring God. The desire for God is seen also in the actions one does. Paul exhorts the Ephesians to lay aside the former self and to put on the new self (Eph 4:22-24).<sup>45</sup> The Ephesians were Christians.<sup>46</sup> They did desire God in Christ; yet, Paul exhorted them to lay aside the former self and its practices and put on the new self. Here is seen both desire and action.

The two experiences of justification and of sanctification, that is declared righteous and the process of becoming righteous are also seen in Eph 4:22-24. The Ephesians were righteous; they were new creatures in Christ,<sup>47</sup> this is the declared righteous aspect of sanctification. Yet, at the same time, Paul exhorted them to lay aside the former self and put on the new self. Here is clearly seen the process of sanctification.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 76, 77. Also A. Nygren, *Agape and Eros* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1953), 104.

<sup>45</sup> See footnote #35 above this chapter for the reasons for Pauline authorship of Ephesians.

<sup>46</sup> Paul calls them saints and faithful in Christ (Eph 1:1).

<sup>47</sup> See also 2 Cor 5:17 for righteousness being a new *creature/creation* in Christ.

<sup>48</sup> T. Aquinas, *Saint Paul's Epistle to The Ephesians* (trans. M. Lamb; Albany, New York: Magi Books, 1966), 186; H.H. Hobbs, *New Men in Christ*, 85; R.P. Martin, *Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon*

Wesley has written that the “essential part of Christian holiness is giving the heart wholly to God”.<sup>49</sup> Again the idea of holiness and heart are combined. Holiness is the heart being presented to God as a living sacrifice. To state this in experiential terms, holiness is becoming what God wants the heart<sup>50</sup> to be. Wesley adds: “Entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, is neither more nor less than pure love”.<sup>51</sup> By pure love he means love for God and for one’s fellow human being. Love for God and others results in actions.<sup>52</sup> Again Wesley confirms the statement that the heart that desires God will put that desire into action.

The new birth, the implanting of the life of God in the soul of human beings, is a holy life. This holy life is a life lived in conformity to God's heart and holiness. The new life, which is the expression of the new birth, is the Christian believer being made a partaker of the divine nature.<sup>53</sup> The Holy Spirit is the new life produced in the soul of the

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(Louisville: John Knox Press, 1991), 57. For a view that states the *putting on/putting off* that is part of the sanctification process is done in baptism see: M. MacDonald, *Colossians/Ephesians* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 305; L. Swain, *Ephesians* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1980), 87.

<sup>49</sup> J. Wesley, “Letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Bennis, of Limerick, Dated July 25, 1767,” Letter, *Works of John Wesley* (Franklin, TN; Providence House Publishers, 1995), no page number given.

<sup>50</sup> In this context, heart means the total person; see H. Nouwen, *The Way of The Heart*, 74.

<sup>51</sup> J. Wesley, “Letter to Mr. Walter Churchey, of Brecon, Dated December 23, 1773,” Letter, *Works of John Wesley 12* (CD-ROM; Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1995), 432. Wesley further explained perfection as love in his comments on 1 Thess 5:16. He wrote: “Rejoice evermore—in uninterrupted happiness in God. Pray without ceasing—which is the fruit of always rejoicing in the Lord. In everything gives thanks—which is the fruit of both the former. This is Christian perfection. Farther than this we cannot go; and we need not stop short of it,” (*Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament*).

<sup>52</sup> J. Wesley, “His comments of James 2:22”, *Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament, Vol. II* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1983), no page number given.

<sup>53</sup> 1 Pet 1:4. The letters of Peter are not in the Pauline Corpus. However, it is fitting to include Peter in this discussion as Paul, himself states that he went up to Jerusalem and stayed with him for 15 days (Gal 1:18). According to Paul, 14 years later, he went again up to Jerusalem and submitted to them the Gospel that he preached; the other apostles contributed nothing to Paul in his understanding of the Gospel (Gal 2:1-6). In addition, the common thread (see chapter 1 of this study, section on the justification of the methodology for further discussion on this) that runs through the New Testament writers is seen. See also M. Borg, *The Heart of Christianity* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995), 117, 121; D. Bloesch, *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 149; B. Graham, *The Holy Spirit* (Waco: Word Books, 1978), 85.

human being at the moment of the new birth.

The Holy Spirit is not just a power, a substance or an influence. The Holy Spirit is a person.<sup>54</sup>

The Holy Spirit, being a person is not divisible.<sup>55</sup> A substance can be divided into parts. A power can be diverted from its source. A person, however, is a whole.

When a person has received the person of the Holy Spirit, the entirety of the Holy

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<sup>54</sup> L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 87; L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 95, 96; B. Graham, *The Holy Spirit*, 17; J. Girzone, *Trinity* (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 103; J.O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion*, 113; N. Alexander, *Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*, 59; G. Wainwright, *Doxology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 87. In addition see the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Heidelberg Confession. See also the Nicene Creed which states that: "We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets." The emphasis in this is that the Holy Spirit "has spoken" through the prophets. A person speaks. While the discussion regarding the filioque clause in the Western Church's version of the Nicene Creed is beyond the scope of this study; the words of Buswell are appropriate. He writes: "In regards to the Nicene Creed, the Western Church added the words filioque and the son. This phrase was added to convey the idea that in the eternal procession, the son is equally with the Father a source of the procession of the Spirit. Thus the Son is not in any sense subordinate. The word "procession" or "proceedeth" is a hindrance rather than a help. It gives us a vehicle of understanding the relationship between the Spirit and the Father and the Son. The Scripture does not teach the procession of the Spirit as a mode of expression of his eternal relationship within the Trinity," (J.O. Buswell, *A Systematic Theology of The Christian Religion*, 119, 120). Although the Nicene Creed uses the term "proceedeth", this term does not teach or imply that the Spirit is not a person. J.O. Buswell's comments regarding the word "proceedeth" and its meaning for the eternal personhood of the Holy Spirit has much to merit. F.J. Sheed is of the opinion that the difference between the Eastern Church's version of the Nicene Creed and the Western Church's version is "more than verbal, but not a great deal," (*God the Human Condition, Vol.I* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 222). The separation of the Eastern Church and the Western Church, not simply based on the filioque clause, although in part based on this clause, is evidence enough that the difference between the two versions of the Nicene Creed is perhaps a great deal more than verbal. The personality of the Holy Spirit is taught in John 16:8 where he is said to reprove the world; The Holy Spirit teaches (John 14:26); He speaks (Gal 4:6); The Spirit leads (Gal 5:18). The Holy Spirit is called "God" (Acts 5: 3, 4). In addition the pronouns used of the Spirit imply His personality, see L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 89; R. Pache, *The Person and Work of The Holy Spirit* (trans. J.D. Emerson; Chicago: Moody Press, 1973), 11-19; J.I. Packer, "The Holy Spirit and His Work," in *Applying the Scriptures* (ed. K.S. Kantzer; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 51-76. Sheed says that the Spirit, like the Word is a person, not an "it", (*God and the Human Condition, Vol.I*, 221). V.-M. Karkainen calls the Spirit the "medium of communion of Jesus with the Father and the mediator of the participation of believers in Christ," (*The Doctrine of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 46).

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion concerning the Trinity, see St. Anselm, *St. Anselm Basic Writings* (trans. S.N. Deane; Chicago: Open Court, 1962), 158-189, esp. 166.

Spirit has been received.<sup>56</sup> When the entire Holy Spirit has been received, the nature of God has been received (2 Pet 1:4).<sup>57</sup> When the Holy Spirit of God has been received in the new birth, God's life is in the human being (Rom 8:10).<sup>58</sup> This does not mean that the human being becomes God. The human being only participates in the divine nature (2 Pet 1:4). Anderson affirms: “When you came into spiritual union with God through your new birth, you didn't add a new divine nature to your old sinful nature. You exchanged natures”.<sup>59</sup> He states further, that, in Christ, His divine nature constitutes your core essence.<sup>60</sup> Christ, thus, is the core essence of the Christian. This is another way of saying that Christ is the life of the Christian.

The Christian, the one who has been born-again, that is, who has received God's life, has God's life in him or her. As has been stated before, the new birth, which occurs at the same moment as justification, and is inseparable from it, is also the beginning of sanctification. The new birth, being the doorway to sanctification, is the beginning of a life long process of growth in Christ-likeness. This growth in Christ-likeness is a growth in transformation and being conformed to the image of Christ. Sanctification, being the growth in Christ-likeness, is not a process of gaining more of the Holy Spirit or more life from God. The new birth is the gift of the life of God, the Holy Spirit, to the believing sinner. When the Holy Spirit has been given, the entire Holy Spirit has been received. This is so, because the Holy Spirit, being a person, is not divisible. Therefore, when a

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<sup>56</sup> C. Cousar, *A Theology of The Cross: The Death of Jesus in the Pauline Letters* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 40.

<sup>57</sup> See footnote #53 above this chapter for a further discussion on the inclusion of Peter's letter.

<sup>58</sup> Literally Rom 8:10 states that the Spirit, in this case the Holy Spirit, is life in the one in whom Christ dwells; this is referring to a Christian believer, for only Christian believers have Christ, the Holy Spirit within them (Rom 8:11). See also H.D. Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 280; T. Epp, *Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 12.

<sup>59</sup> N. Anderson, *Victory Over The Darkness*, 75.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

believing sinner has been justified, and at the same moment has experienced the new birth, the entire life of God has been received and indwells in the believing sinner.

At the new birth, the believing sinner receives Christ, the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:17) Paul writing to the Church at Colossae<sup>61</sup> states that, “Christ who is your life, is seated in the heavens” (Col 3:3, 4). In this verse, the word for life is ζωή– which means life in its principle.<sup>62</sup>

In summary, ζωή is the opposite of death and sin. That which is opposite death and sin is true life and holiness. In looking at the understandings of ζωή, it can be understood that in the letter to the Church at Colossae where it is written that their life was hid in Christ, what is meant was that the essence of their life, the very life principle itself is hid in Christ. The reason for this is that life (ζωή) is Christ (Col 3:4).

It can also be understood from this that life (ζωή) is holy.<sup>63</sup> The reason for this is clear to see. Since life (ζωή) is Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ is holy, therefore, life (ζωή) is holy. It can also be stated that ζωή, because it is the life of Jesus, it therefore is holy. Because holiness is the quality of being holy, it is to be seen that holiness is simply the quality, the characteristic of Jesus Christ, who is the Second Person of the Trinity.

Thus, when Paul wrote to the Church at Colossae and said that their life (ζωή) is hid with God in Christ, Paul meant that the life principle, the very essence of their life, in fact, their very life itself was hid in Christ. It must also be seen that when Paul said that

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<sup>61</sup> The debate over whether Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians is an ongoing debate. Guthrie states the position for Pauline authorship. D. Guthrie writes “the strongest arguments for Pauline authorship are the indisputable nature of the external evidence and the inseparable connection of the Epistle with Philemon.” He goes on to add, “There is no shred of evidence that the Pauline authorship of the whole or any part of Colossians was ever disputed until the nineteenth century. It formed part of the Pauline Corpus as far back as can be traced, and evidence of such a character cannot lightly be swept aside” (*Introduction*, 554). See also M. Gorman *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 87ff for an opposing view.

<sup>62</sup> G.R. Berry, *A Dictionary of New Testament Greek Synonyms*, 36.

<sup>63</sup> See again Col. 3:4.

the believer's life (ζωή) was not only hid in Christ, but, in actuality was Christ, for Paul claims that when Christ appears, who is your life (ζωή) (Col 3:4), Paul was saying that the life (ζωή) of the Christian is holy.

The believer is both declared holy and is holy, in their heart. Paul writes that God declares the believer righteous (Rom 4). Righteousness is thus imputed to the believer. The believer is also righteous because of Christ's indwelling (1 Cor 1:30). The indwelling of Christ is righteousness imparted to the believer. Christ is righteous and when he indwells the Christian believer by means of the Holy Spirit, actual righteousness indwells, or it can be said is imparted, to the believer. However, the believer must still grow and express in all the areas of their life, what they already are in Christ. The theological discussion over imputation and impartation of righteousness can be solved when it is remembered, that justification by God's declaration of right is always accompanied by the new birth, the actual giving or imparting of God's life, God's holiness, God's righteousness to the believing sinner. When the Holy Spirit indwells the believer, since the Holy Spirit is God's Spirit and is holy and righteous, the Holy Spirit, then actually brings with Himself to the believing sinner, the actual righteousness and holiness of God. The believing sinner then is actually holy and righteous in their heart. So, it can be seen that God declares the believer righteous while at the same time making the believer, in their heart, that is in their will, holy.

The Christian declared righteous by God at justification and made righteous by God by the new birth is still a person that is not yet perfect in the sense of absolute

conformity to the standards of God's holiness and person.<sup>64</sup> Col 2:6 teaches that<sup>65</sup> Christians are righteous yet at the same time must become righteous. This verse states: “As you have received Christ, walk in Him”.

The verb, “received” in this verse is in the indicative mood. In this verse the verb “received”, being in the indicative mood, is stating, at least in the mind of the speaker/writer a fact of actuality. This is to say that Paul, the writer/speaker, thought, when he wrote this verse, that the Christians had indeed, in all actuality, received Christ.

The other verb in this verse “walk” is in the imperative mood. Paul writes and states, “As you have received Christ, ‘walk’ in Him”. Walk means to live, to conduct one's life, to live a certain way. The meaning of Paul is clear. The Christians in Colossae had received Christ. Paul was then appealing to their will, their spiritual heart, to “walk, to conduct oneself, to live their lives according to Christ”. In this verse can be seen that Christians receive Christ. At the new birth, Christians receive Christ in the Holy Spirit. The receiving of Christ is not enough, however. Christians are to then live their lives. Christians have received Christ. They then must live what they have received.

When a sinner believes in Christ, God also imparts the righteousness of Christ to the believing sinner. This is seen in the fact that Christ is righteousness and is imparted or is actually given to the believer at the new birth. Paul writes and states that Christ is righteousness to the believer (1 Cor 1:30).<sup>66</sup> Paul does not say that Christ will be

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<sup>64</sup> T. Epp, *Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 24, 75; 125.

<sup>65</sup> Again, Pauline authorship for Colossians is held and thus, can be included within this study.

<sup>66</sup> R.F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 112, 113; C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 60; M.R. DeHann, *Studies in First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), 27; K. Quast, *Reading The Corinthian Correspondence: An Introduction*, 37; R. Hays, *First Corinthians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997), 33; J. Murphy O’Conner, *First Corinthians* (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1979), 16;

righteousness to the believer. Paul writes and claims that Christ became (ἐγενήθη) righteousness to the believer. The righteousness of Christ becomes the righteousness of the believing sinner by imputation or by reckoning or crediting, as the NIV states it. God declares the believing sinner righteous at the moment of justification. Justification is the declaring by God that a believing sinner is righteous. At the moment of justification, the new birth occurs. Although separate in terms of theological discussion, justification and the new birth are simultaneous in experience. What this means is that when a person believes in Jesus Christ, that person is justified (Rom 5:1). At the very moment of justification, the new birth occurs. At the moment of the new birth, the Holy Spirit indwells the believing sinner, the “life” of God. The life (ζωή) of the believer is now the Holy Spirit (Gal 2:20; Col 3:3, 4) who is righteous. Christ, who is the Spirit (2 Cor 3:17) becomes the life of the believer (Col 3:3, 4), who is righteous. The believer’s life is actually righteous and not just declared righteous. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer is actual righteousness that is imparted to the believer by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit at the moment of the new birth. Jesus Christ is the righteousness of the believer (1 Cor 1:30; Phlp 1:21; Col 3:4).

The Christian believer, although righteous by imputation and by impartation, is not perfect. The Christian believer, at this present time, is living in the now but not yet fully of the eschatological age.<sup>67</sup> This means that Christian believer’s “present

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W. Barclay, *The Letters to The Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 25; E. Wcela, *Paul The Pastor; His Teaching in The First Letter to The Corinthians*, 30.

<sup>67</sup> C.F.H. Henry, *God, Revelation and Authority, Vol. IV* (Waco: Word Books, 1979), 503; J.R.W. Stott, *The Contemporary Christian* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 375-392.



sanctification is not yet final glorification”.<sup>68</sup> Christians are told that when Christ returns, they will then be like him (1 John 3:2, 3).<sup>69</sup> The point to be made is that Christians, in this present life, are not yet glorified and must wait in partially fixed and partially broken bodies (Rom 8:23).<sup>70</sup>

Ladd adds to the discussion of the now but not yet when he states that the Pauline statement that in Christ the old has passed away and the new is come as an eschatological statement.<sup>71</sup> By this he means that the coming of Christ was not simply the coming of an individual, but the coming, the in breaking of a new age or aeon.<sup>72</sup> A new age or aeon, it is true. But this new age is the kingdom of God.<sup>73</sup> Not only did Jesus preach and announce that the kingdom of God is near (Mark 1:15); Jesus Christ embodies the kingdom of God.<sup>74</sup> Tillich is of the opinion that the kingdom of God is the end of history.<sup>75</sup> The kingdom of God is not simply the end of history in terms of its finish, but the kingdom of God is also the aim of history.<sup>76</sup> For Tillich, the “past and the future meet in the present and both are included in the eternal now;”<sup>77</sup> or to say in the kingdom of God. This means that in the kingdom of God, the past and the future are present now. Thus, with Christ’s coming that is with the coming of the kingdom of God, there

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 498; Paul wrote that Christian believers are to “work out their salvation.” This is only possible because it is God who is in them creating the desire to be pleasing to Christ and giving the strength to grow in holiness or in working out their salvation (Phlp 2:12, 13).

<sup>69</sup> The reason John is quoted is that this study claims to be an experiment, see chapter 1 of this study; see also footnote #8 above of this chapter for a further clarification for the inclusion of John.

<sup>70</sup> L. Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 537; L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 209; G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 480; J.M. Boice, *Foundations of the Christian Faith*, 449.

<sup>71</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 480.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* See also J. Dunn, *The Theology Of Paul’s Letter To The Galatians*, 47.

<sup>73</sup> W.D. Davies, *Invitation to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 147.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* See also P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Three Volumes in One* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 395.

<sup>75</sup> P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 394.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 395.

appeared “in Him” the “new humanity”.<sup>78</sup> This new humanity, new “man”, is composed of Jews and Gentiles (Eph 2:15), who live under God’s rule which is God’s kingdom.<sup>79</sup> In addition, it is to be understood that this new humanity already exists in Christ.<sup>80</sup> While Christians are living in the now but the not yet, in Christ they are participants, members of the new humanity (2 Cor 5:17).<sup>81</sup> Thus, while they are living in the old age, in bodies not yet redeemed (Rom 8:23); they also belong to the new age or aeon.<sup>82</sup> While living in bodies not yet redeemed, Christian believers groan waiting for the redemption of their bodies. This groaning is the cry of imperfection and the struggle with sin (Rom 8:18-39).

The cry of imperfection is the cry found throughout Rom 7. While the emphatic “I” cries because of imperfection, which is the struggle with another law that is in its members, the emphatic “I” of Rom 7, at the same time desires to be holy, perfect and pleasing to God. The distance between the heart's cry of the emphatic “I”, which is to be holy and pleasing to God and the actual experiential experience of the emphatic “I”, causes the emphatic “I” to cry out in deep “soulish” agony, “O Wretched Man”. The emphatic “I” is righteous by imputation and Paul’s ζῶή is actually righteous, by the impartation of the Holy Spirit. However, experientially, the emphatic “I” is not perfect. This experiential condition of not being perfect causes the emphatic “I” much pain and

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<sup>78</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 480; J. Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, 112-114.

<sup>79</sup> W.D. Davies, *Invitation to the New Testament*, 162.

<sup>80</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 480.

<sup>81</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer holds that the new creation (new humanity) and the gradual transformation found in 2 Cor 3:18, while intimately related are not the same, (“Glory Reflected on the Face of Christ (2 Cor 3:7-4:6) and a Palestinian Jewish Motif,” *TS* 4 (1981): 630-644).

<sup>82</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 480; T. Epp agrees with this discussion but uses the terms: “standing” or “position” to describe what Christian believers are in Christ, or as T. Epp puts it: “How God sees us in Christ and that is a finished work, complete and without flaws,” (*Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 74); and the word “condition” as Christian believers are now in this world. T. Epp writes: “In our condition on the earth the fallen sin nature is still with us and wants to control our bodies as before,” (*Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 75).

agony. The emphatic “I”, however, is not defeated or downtrodden by their experiential condition, even though the experiential condition of the emphatic “I” is far from their righteousness in Christ and the desire of the life that is to please God in all things. The emphatic “I” knows that Christ is righteousness and that, as the Mystics say, God sees the person as his/her desire. The *Cloud of Unknowing* asserts that “it is not what you are nor what you have been that God sees with His all-merciful eyes, but what you desire to be”.<sup>83</sup> Finney adds to this statement with these words: “Moral character no more lies in emotions than in outward action. It does not lie in thought or attention. It does not lie in the specific volition that directed the attention; but in that intention, or design of the mind, that produced the volition, which directed the attention, which again produced the thought, which again produced the emotion.”<sup>84</sup> Finney is of the opinion that a person’s “whole character is and must be as his intention”.<sup>85</sup> He defines intention as: “the motive, or reason behind an act”.<sup>86</sup> Motive is understood as “the sense of desire”,<sup>87</sup> thus, motive/intention<sup>88</sup> is desire. Desire, according to Finney and the *Cloud of Unknowing*, is character, i.e., who a person is. Once again the connection between heart (desire) and holiness is seen.

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<sup>83</sup> Anonymous, *The Cloud of Unknowing* (ed. W. Johnston; New York: Image Books, 1973), 146.

<sup>84</sup> C. Finney, *Finney’s Systematic Theology*, 43.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 431.

<sup>87</sup> B. Cayne & D. Lechner, eds., *The New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: Lexicon Publications, 1989), 653.

<sup>88</sup> When C. Finney speaks of intention or desire in this way, he is referring to what he calls “ultimate intention”. By ultimate intention is meant: “the choice of any ultimate end implies that that is the thing, and the only thing, for which we live and act; that we aim at, and live for nothing else,” (*Finney’s Systematic Theology*, 34).

#### 4. Flesh

Ladd says that flesh has the connotation of living life solely on the human level. The human level, according to Ladd, excludes everything related to God.<sup>89</sup> From this, it can be seen that one meaning of flesh<sup>90</sup> is viewpoint, sphere that is opposed to God.<sup>91</sup> Because “flesh” means opposed to God; those who are in the flesh, cannot be in the Spirit and vice versa (Rom 8: 9, 10). Rom 8:9 affirms that those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells are not in the “flesh” but in the “spirit”. Those who are “not in the flesh but in the spirit” are not perfect. Rom 8:10, 11 goes on to state that if one is in the spirit, that is the Holy Spirit dwells within, he or she is not in the flesh. However, those who are not in the flesh do have a body that is made of flesh.

Paul writes that those in the Spirit live in bodies that are dead to sin (Rom 8:10). A body “dead to sin” cannot mean a body that is unresponsive to sin. Paul writes in Rom 8:12 exhorting those in the Spirit, those whose body “which is dead to sin” to not live according to the flesh. If bodies dead to sin means that the body is unresponsive to sin, Paul would not have to exhort the ones who are in the Spirit, those whose bodies which are dead to sin to not live according to the flesh.

Paul defines bodies dead to sin when he writes and states that he is σάρκινος (Rom 7:14). Trench writes that words with the termination in -ινος, designating as they

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<sup>89</sup> G.E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, 483; see also B. Graham, *The Holy Spirit* (Waco: Word Books, 1978), 90; K. Barth, *The Epistle To The Romans*, 284; T. Epp says that flesh is the “sinful element in man’s (people’s) nature,” *Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 128; J. Dunn is of the opinion that flesh, to Paul, was the “merely human appetites and desires,” (*The Theology of Paul’s Letter To The Galatians*, 108).

<sup>90</sup> For a fuller discussion of the term *flesh*, see chapter 3 of this study.

<sup>91</sup> L.S. Chafer, *Major Bible Themes*, 190; K. Barth, *The Epistle To The Romans*, 284; see also Rom 8:7.

most frequently do, the stuff of which anything is made.<sup>92</sup> The words with the termination in -ικος, in contrast, describe the “ruling principle”.<sup>93</sup> The σαρκικοί are those who allow the σάρξ, the flesh, a place that does not belong to it.<sup>94</sup> Trench goes on to say that σαρκικοί are those in whom the σάρξ, the flesh, is the ruling principle.<sup>95</sup> Paul is saying that he is made of flesh, i.e. has a body of flesh. He does not say, however, that his ruling principle is flesh.

This teaching is the same teaching found in Rom 7 regarding the emphatic “I”. Rom 7:21-25 states that within the body of the emphatic “I” are two laws<sup>96</sup> waging war against one another. These laws are located within the members of the body (Rom 7:23) and within the mind, νοῦς (Rom 7:23). There is a war waging between the body (flesh) of the emphatic “I” and between the mind/ spirit. The two opposing “forces” in this war are located in exactly the same aspects of the human being as described in Rom 8:10 and Rom 7. Thus leading to the conclusion that the emphatic “I” is a believer who, according to Col 2:6 must continue to grow and live in Christ.

In Col 3:1-10, Paul states, by means of the indicative mood, certain facts about the position of Christians in Christ. The verses which present the indicative mood, statement of actuality are: verse 1 (raised up with Christ); v. 3 (you died, the life of you has been hid in Christ in heaven; v. 9 (taken off old man/self); v. 10 (have put on the new man/self). By the indicative mood, Paul states that Christians have been raised with Christ, Christians are in heaven in Christ, Christians have put off the old man/self, and that

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<sup>92</sup> R. Trench, *Synonyms of The New Testament*, 272.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 274.

<sup>96</sup> The laws are “motivating powers”, T. Epp, *Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 21ff.

Christians have put on the new man/self. Paul's use of the indicative mood states that Paul doesn't *think* that these are facts of actuality. The use of the indicative mood states that Paul *considered* these as actual accomplished facts.

Within Col 3:1-10<sup>97</sup> are also found imperative verbs. Paul writes in verse 1: If you have been raised up with Christ (indicative), keep seeking the things above (imperative) and set your minds on the things above (imperative). The imperative mood is the mood of command or entreaty.<sup>98</sup> The imperative is also found in Col 3:9 where believers are exhorted to not lie to one another. In verse 12 the imperative is used to exhort believers to put on a heart of compassion that bears with each other and forgives one another. Believers are also exhorted to put on love (verse 14). There is also the exhortation in verse 15 to allow the peace of Christ to act as an umpire, judge or rule amongst them.

The indicative mood states a fact, while the imperative mood exhorts to do something. Paul writes and states certain things as a fact; by this he uses the indicative mood. He also wants the believers to do something; in these cases he uses the imperative mood. By the use of the indicative and the imperative can be seen the being righteous and the process of becoming righteous. Another way to state that is that in the use of the indicative and the imperative, it is seen that the believer is righteous, but must become in experience what he or she is in Christ.<sup>99</sup>

Christ is the life of the believer (Col 3:4). This means that the believer's life is holy.<sup>100</sup> It is also true that the believer, in his or her, essential life (ζωή) is characterized

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<sup>97</sup> Again, Pauline authorship is held.

<sup>98</sup> H.E. Dana & J. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of The Greek New Testament*, 174.

<sup>99</sup> H. Thieliicke, *The Evangelical Faith* (trans. G.W. Bromiley; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 122; also N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian*, 218-222.

<sup>100</sup> E. Best, *Second Corinthians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1987), 56.

by holiness. Holiness, as understood and defined by the word ἁγιασμός, is both a process of becoming holy and the result of being made holy.<sup>101</sup> As a Christian grows in sanctification, the Christian does not “gain” more of the Holy Spirit or of Christ. The Christian is holy because the life of the Christian is Christ and Christ, being the second person of the Trinity is holy. So when Christian believers grow in holiness, they express more and more in and through their lives the Christ who indwells them and is their life.

Believers are in Christ and are righteous. Yet, while being in Christ and righteous, believers must also use every effort to become in actual experience, what they are in Christ. Believers are righteous in Christ yet they also must become righteous in experience. This is exactly the experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. The emphatic “I” thanks God for the salvation that is in Christ Jesus (Rom 7:24, 25). The emphatic “I” writes that it is Christ who frees from the body of death, which is the body broken by sin and gives wholeness to the believer. This is a clear statement of faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, it can be seen that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 must be a believer. The reason for stating this is that only believers have faith in the power of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for salvation.

Christians are exhorted to avoid the fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul (Gal 5:16, 17).<sup>102</sup> If Christians were not exposed to or at times in contact with “fleshly lusts” the exhortation to avoid them would be empty and useless. The fact that Christians are exhorted to avoid these fleshly lusts means that Christians are exposed to them and

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<sup>101</sup> H.H. Hobbs, *New Men in Christ*, 85; R.P. Martin, *Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon*, 57.

<sup>102</sup> C.B. Cousar, *Galatians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1982), 138; T. Aquinas, *Saint Paul's Epistle to The Galatians*, (trans. F. R. Larcher; Albany, New York; Magi Books, 1966), 169; H.D. Betz, *Galatians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 279; W. Barclay, *The Letters to The Corinthians*, 94.

must do all they can to avoid them.<sup>103</sup>

This must mean that the fleshly lusts “have access to the soul”. By having access to the soul is meant that the fleshly lusts must be able to interact, interfere and to trouble the soul. Fleshly lusts, which have access to the soul, must also be lusts, which are “internal” influences. Internal influences are influences within the Christian. External influences are influences, which are not “within” the Christian but are at some “distance” from the soul. Thus, it can be seen that the fleshly lusts are lusts, which are “within” the Christian that is part of who the Christian is.<sup>104</sup>

To state that fleshly lusts are lusts within the Christian, as a part of the Christian's experience in this world, is confirmed by Gal 5:17.<sup>105</sup> Here, Paul writes that the flesh wages war against the spirit, in order that the Christian doesn't do what he or she desires to do. This means that, in the Christian are two “powers”, the flesh and the spirit. These two “powers” are at war with one another. The result of this war, at least at times, is that the Christian doesn't do what he or she truly desires to do.

This is the same experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. The emphatic “I” desires to do what is good (Rom 7:18). The emphatic “I” also has a war being waged within (Rom 7:23).

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<sup>103</sup> J. Murphy O'Conner, *First Corinthians*, 91, 92; R. Hays, *First Corinthians*, 158.

<sup>104</sup> M.R. DeHann, *Studies in First Corinthians*, 27; M.A. Getty, *First and Second Corinthians*, 46; C.B. Cousar, *Galatians*, 138; W. Barclay, *The Letters to The Corinthians*, 94. F. Matera takes the view that “spirit” and “flesh” in Gal 5:17 are describing two totally different ways of living. He states that the “Galatians must choose one or the other, they cannot choose both,” *Galatians*, (Collegeville, MN., The Liturgical Press, 1992), 200. While this is true, the context of Gal 5:17 states that the struggle of the Galatians is also internal and is not simply two different lifestyles that are unrelated to each other. The further context describes the struggle that is waging within the Galatians and not simply two roads at an intersection.

<sup>105</sup> T. Epp is of the opinion that Gal 5 “marks the turning point from doctrine to duty or privilege. It takes in all that has preceded by way of doctrine and focuses our attention on practical day-by-day living,” (*Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 114).



Paul calls the recipients of the Galatians' letter "brethren" (Gal 5:11). From this it is to be concluded that the context of Gal 5:17 is describing the situation of a Christian. Within this context is the phrase: "They are in conflict with one another, so that you do not do what you want." Here is a phrase describing the conflict within Christians. There is a war raging within them. The flesh and the spirit are in conflict with one another.<sup>106</sup>

The context of Gal 5:17 is the discussion of Christian Freedom (Gal 5:13). Christian freedom is not being circumcised (Gal 5:2). Christian freedom is faith working through love (Gal 5:6). It is loving one's neighbor (Gal 5:14). Christian freedom is not giving an opportunity to the flesh (Gal 5:13). Here flesh does not mean the "stuff" of what the human body is made of, but must mean the psychological factor in man that serves as a willing instrument of sin and is subject to sin.<sup>107</sup> Christian freedom is walking in the spirit (Gal 5:16). Christian freedom is also fighting the war within (Gal 5:17).<sup>108</sup>

Gal 5:17 which describes the war within the Christian must be seen in light of Gal 5:13, which states that Christian freedom is not giving the flesh an opportunity. Within the Christian is a struggle between the flesh and the spirit.<sup>109</sup> This struggle can also be seen as the attempt to not give the flesh an opportunity.<sup>110</sup> These verses are describing

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<sup>106</sup> See the section of flesh in this chapter and the further discussion of flesh in chapter 3.

<sup>107</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 323.

<sup>108</sup> M. Gorman, *Apostle of The Crucified Lord*, 219.

<sup>109</sup> H. Thieliicke states it this way: "As a justified person I am always becoming. I have to learn how justification relates to all aspects of my life. There may still be unredeemed areas in me. Many of my members are still numb and bloodless," (*The Evangelical Faith*, 122). Also, C. Osiek, *Galatians* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1980), 69; In addition, H.D. Betz states that the "theory in Gal 5:17 must be taken for what it says: the human body is a battlefield in which the powers of the flesh and the spirit fight against each other, so that the human will is disabled from carrying out its intentions. This is true of Christian experience, since only there we can assume the Spirit is present," (*Galatians*, 280).

<sup>110</sup> T. Aquinas, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, 168; W. Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1976), 46; C. Osiek, *Galatians*, 68.

Christians, as only Christians can experience freedom.<sup>111</sup>

Russell presents an opposing viewpoint when he states that the flesh/spirit discussion within Galatians does not “represent an internal duality within the Christian, but represent an external contrast between two conflicting eras or modes of existence with corresponding mindsets.”<sup>112</sup> He states further that flesh/spirit “identify the competing historical manifestations of the true people of God.”<sup>113</sup> In answer to Russell, the context of Gal 5 makes it difficult to agree with Russell. The context of Gal 5 states that flesh/spirit are not “two external contrasts between two conflicting eras or modes” but two “powers” within the Christian believer. Christian believers are not to turn their freedom into an opportunity to the flesh (Gal 5:13). This opportunity is described by Paul as a “biting and devouring of one another” (Gal 5:15). In addition, if Christian believers “walk by the Spirit, they will not carry out the desires of the flesh” (Gal 5:16).

If flesh/spirit are two external modes of existence, as Russell states; how can Christian believers be in both modes at the same time? Paul writes that if one walks by the spirit, he/she will not carry out the desires of the flesh. Now, it would appear that if flesh/spirit were two different modes of existence with two different mindsets, as Russell states, then each mode of existence would have its own mindset. If a person is in one mode of existence, that person would have the specific mindset of that particular mode of existence. A person could not be in one mode of existence and have the mindset of the other mode of existence. This is according to Russell who has written that the discussion

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<sup>111</sup> B. Graham, *The Holy Spirit*, 87; M. Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, 1114. D. Guthrie and J.S. Motyer, eds., *The New Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 1102.

<sup>112</sup> W.B. Russell, *The Flesh/Spirit Conflict in Galatians* (New York: University Press of America, Inc., 1997), 2.

<sup>113</sup> W.B. Russell, *The Flesh/Spirit Conflict in Galatians*, 32.

concerning flesh/spirit in Galatians is not “internal” but “external”.<sup>114</sup> Thus, it is to be seen that modes of existence with their own corresponding mindsets are not overlapping, but two separate and distinct.<sup>115</sup> Paul writes, however, that Christian believers (one mode of existence, to use Russell’s terms) are faced with the “decision” of following either the flesh or the spirit (Gal 5:17). According to Russell’s own definition, this appears to be impossible.

Within the Christian, there is a conflict, a war. This conflict, this war, is between the flesh and the spirit/soul. This conflict, this war, at times results in the Christian not doing what he or she truly wants to do. The person, who has this conflict within, is a Christian believer. The reason for this statement is that this person truly desires to do the will of God as found within the law. Moule confirms this when he writes, “it is no experience of a half-renewed life to take delight with the law of God. It is utterly unlawful for a half-regenerate soul to describe itself so beset by sin that it is not “I” but sin that dwelleth within me.”<sup>116</sup>

The teaching of Rom 7 concerning the emphatic “I” is that the emphatic “I” also has a struggle with sin. What is important to notice is the phrase “so that you do not do what you want.” This phrase is found in Rom 7 at verses 15, 18, 19, 20, and 21-23. These verses state that there is a conflict within the emphatic “I”. This conflict is expressed and seen in the emphatic “I” not doing what he or she wants to do. The emphatic “I” wants to do the good that is to please God, yet, finds within a conflict, a war that at times prevents the emphatic “I” from accomplishing its desire of doing the good. It can be seen in the

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<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>116</sup> C.G. Moule, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, 190.

comparison of Gal 5:17 and Rom 7 that the teaching is the same.<sup>117</sup>

## 5. The Imperfect Christian

Christians have been declared righteous by God at justification and have been made righteous, i.e. sanctified by God, in their heart, in the essence of their life, at the new birth. The sanctification of the Christian is seen in the heart's desire to obey God. Sanctified Christians are still not perfect human beings, however. The reason for this is the human person is a complex and inter-connected being. The human being is more than will, more than heart. The human being has other faculties, other aspects of their person. These other faculties also play a part in the believing sinner's choices, actions and behavior.<sup>118</sup>

The believing sinner can be said to be holy and not holy at the same time. This is seen in 2 Cor 4:7. Paul writes that Christians have the treasure of the Gospel of Christ in earthen vessels. There is the gift given by God to the believer, this is the treasure in the earthen vessels. Adam Clarke has this to say concerning 2 Cor 4:7. He writes: "Our

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<sup>117</sup> H.D. Betz, has a very interesting question in regards to the comparison of Gal. 5:17 and Rom 7. He asks, "If Gal 5:17 applies to the Christian and Rom 7:15-24 apply to the pre-Christian, what is the difference?" (*Galatians*, 279). He goes on to say that "in Rom 7-8 we find an even more developed and complex reworking of the elements which occur also in Gal 5" (280). Betz says that the "elements" which occur in Gal 5:17 and Rom 7 are the same. Although Betz clarifies what he means when he states that "Gal 5:17 is not simply an abbreviated and simplified form of what is in Rom 7" (280). If, as Betz states, the elements in Gal 5:17 and Rom 7 are the same elements, the conclusion to be drawn is that the experiences are the same. In addition, C. Osiek states that the "companion piece to Gal 5:16-25 is Rom 7:4-8:8," (*Galatians*, 68); Also, T. Epp writes that the "teaching in Gal 5 and Rom 7 is concerned with believers," (*Flesh and Spirit in Conflict*, 126); Also J. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul's Letter To The Galatians*, 110.

<sup>118</sup> B. Longenecker, "Until Christ is formed in You: Suprahuman Forces and Moral Character in Galatians," *CBQ* 1 (1999), 92-108. In addition, see Chapter 3; section *Desire of the Emphatic "I"* of this study for a more detailed discussion concerning the various faculties that affect a Christian believer's behavior.

bodies are in a recoverable form: they are frail, and easily marred; the light and salvation of God in the soul of man is a heavenly treasure in a very mean casket.”<sup>119</sup> Victor Paul Furnish disagrees with this position. He is of the opinion that Paul in 2 Cor 4:7 is using the image of an earthen pot to refer to “the mortal existence of himself and his apostolic associates.”<sup>120</sup> Furnish states that “Paul’s intention is certainly not to contrast our mortal flesh with our immortal soul.”<sup>121</sup> He is of this opinion because he claims that the “‘word’ soul is not used in this part of the letter.”<sup>122</sup> Furnish is correct in his statement that the “‘word’ soul is not used in this part of 2 Corinthians. However, the point that both Furnish and Clarke do make in common, although not in agreement with each other, is that within frail, broken bodies, God has placed a treasure. The vessel that holds the treasure is of a different “kind” than the treasure itself. There is that which is holy within that which is not holy. Julian of Norwich agrees with this when she writes: “As far as our essential nature goes, we are perfect, but in our physical nature, we fail.”<sup>123</sup> Best would agree with Clarke’s position, Julian of Norwich’s position and Furnish’s position. Best is of the opinion that what Paul had in mind “may have been his ministry or the light which shone in his heart when he became a Christian or the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. In fact, these three cannot be clearly marked off from one another.”<sup>124</sup> 2 Cor 4:7 is a description of the imperfect Christian; one who is righteous and yet at the same time

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<sup>119</sup> A. Clarke, *Clarke’s Commentary, Vol. 11: Romans to The Revelation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 330; also W. Barclay, *The Letters to The Corinthians* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 1956), 198; K. Quast, *Reading the Corinthian Correspondence* (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 122.

<sup>120</sup> V.P. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), 278; J. Lambrecht, *2 Corinthians*, 71; F. Fallon, *2 Corinthians* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1980), 38.

<sup>121</sup> V.P. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 279.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* (ed. H. Backhouse; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996), 118.

<sup>124</sup> E. Best, *Second Corinthians* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1987), 40.

not perfect, perfect in the sense of sinless perfection. The being righteous and not yet, tells very clearly that Christian believers are in the process<sup>125</sup> of being transformed into the image of Christ, that is from glory to glory (2 Cor 3:18).<sup>126</sup>

The description above, given by Julian of Norwich is of a Christian. Julian's description also describes the emphatic "I" of Rom 7. The emphatic "I" desires to please God but finds within it another force or power that is antagonistic to the desire it has to please God. This internal battle is stated in Rom 7:23. This must be seen as an experience of a Christian. The reason for stating this is that the very same internal struggle between the desire to please God and the "pull" to turn away from God is stated in Gal 5:17 – which states that the flesh (σάρξ) desires against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. This verse can be understood in that the flesh (σάρξ) remains in the believer. The flesh, the brokenness, fallen-ness and residue of both original sin and personal sin, remains within the believer. If the flesh did not remain within the believer, then this verse could not be speaking of a believer.

The evidence that the person described in Gal 5:17<sup>127</sup> is a believer<sup>128</sup> is that the person is exhorted to walk, live by means of the Spirit (Gal 5:16). It can be stated that only a believer is able to walk, live by means of the Spirit. This is because only Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them (Rom 8:9-11). The believer who walks by the Spirit will not fulfill the desire of the flesh (Gal 5:16). Here it is evident that the believer, the one who has the Spirit, is also faced with the desires of the flesh. There is simply no

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<sup>125</sup> J. Fitzmyer, "Glory Reflected on the Face of Christ (2 Cor 3:7-4:6) and a Palestinian Jewish Motif," 632.

<sup>126</sup> E. Best, *Second Corinthians*, 52; F. Fallon, *2 Corinthians*, 34; J. Lambrecht, *2 Corinthians*, 55, 56.

<sup>127</sup> J. Dunn says that Gal 5:17 is "one of the most striking verses Paul ever wrote," (*The Theology of Paul's Letter To The Galatians*, 109).

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

reason to exhort a believer to do something, i.e. walk by the Spirit, so that the believer will not do something else, fulfill the desires of the flesh, if the fulfilling of the desires of the flesh were not a possibility for the believer. The flesh is the result of damage done both by original sin and personal sin. Gal 5:17 exhorts the believer to not fulfill the desires of the flesh. Thus, if believers are exhorted to not fulfill the desires of the flesh, this must mean that believers have the flesh remaining within them.<sup>129</sup>

The person in Gal 5:16-26 also has the possibility of being led by the Spirit of God (Gal 5:18). It is only the believer who is led, or follows the leading of the Spirit of God. Paul writes and says, “For the ones who are led by the Spirit of God, these ones are the Children of God” (Rom 8:14). Thus, it can be seen that the person described in Gal 5:16-26 who is being led by the Spirit of God must be a believer. The reason for this is that the ones who are being led by the Spirit, these ones are the Children of God, that is are believers.

The believer, as is seen in Gal 5:16-26, has the flesh remaining within him or her. This does not mean, however, that the believer is in the flesh. There is a difference between being in the flesh and the flesh remaining within the believer. As has already been stated, the flesh, which remains within the believer, is the residue, the damage done by original sin and personal sin. The fact of the flesh remaining within a believer is different than being in the flesh. Being in the flesh means that the person who is in the flesh has the flesh as the dominant and controlling principle in their life. Being in the flesh means that the person is living for the flesh. The flesh is the “god” of the person

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<sup>129</sup> W. Wiersbe, *Be Free* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1984), 129; Also J. Dunn writes that, Paul in Gal 5:17, describes the Christian experience of “constantly being pulled in opposite directions,” He furthers states that “this condition of being pulled in opposite directions will last for believers so long as they continue in the flesh,” (*The Theology of Paul’s Letter To The Galatians*, 109).

who is in the flesh.

A Christian has the flesh remaining within him or her. A Christian, however, cannot be and is not in the flesh (Rom 8:9). The person who has the Spirit of God within them, that is a Christian believer, is not in the flesh, although the flesh remains within him or her. The fact of the Spirit's indwelling a believer proves that the believer is not in the flesh. The believer desires to be led by the Spirit of God and not the flesh. The believer desires to obey God and not the flesh. The presence of the Spirit of God within a person proves that that person is not in the flesh, but in the Spirit (Rom 8:9).

Christians, not in the flesh, but having the flesh within them, have an inner struggle, an inner warfare going on within. Gal 5:17 states that the flesh and the Spirit desire against each other, so that the believer does not do what he or she desires (θέλω). Here it can be seen that within a Christian is the desire (θέλω) to act, to do, and to live, to walk by the Spirit, so that the Christian is pleasing to God. Yet, at the same time, within the believer, who desires to please God, is another force, or power, that desires against the desire to please God. These two desires cause an inner warfare and inner struggle to occur within the Christian. Dunn says that the Christian believer is caught on both sides of this inner struggle.<sup>130</sup> By this he means that the flesh wars against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh, so that the Christian believer is unable to do what he/she desires to. Dunn goes further when he puts forth the opinion that Christian believers shouldn't be surprised at what desires arise within them in this struggle.<sup>131</sup>

While having this common desire to please God, both the Christian described in Gal 5:17 and the emphatic "I" find within them another force or power that is antagonistic

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<sup>130</sup> J. Dunn, *The Theology Of Paul's Letter To The Galatians*, 109.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.



toward the desire within them to please God. This antagonistic force within the believer in Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 causes the believer in Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” to, at times not do what they desire, but to do what they do not desire. Gal 5:17 clearly state that the warfare within the Christian causes the Christian to not do what they desire. Rom 7:15, 19, 23 are very clear in stating that the warfare within the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 causes the emphatic “I” to not do what it desires, but, at times to do what it does not desire (θέλω).

## 6. Concluding Statement

The new life in Christ within the Pauline Corpus is a description of what God does in the life of a person who believes in Jesus Christ (Rom 5:1). Paul states that a person in Christ is a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). However, as a new creation, Paul describes the believing Christian as one in whom a war occurs (Gal 5:17). This war is between the Spirit and the flesh. It has already been stated and noticed that the description of Gal 5:17 is of a believer. The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 must also be a believer because this person shares the same inner experience as the believer described in Gal 5:17.<sup>132</sup> Both the Christian described in Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 desire (θέλω) to please God. Both the Christian of Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 have an inner warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. This warfare rages within each of them. Because the Christian of Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 both desire (θέλω) to please God, and because

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<sup>132</sup> C. Osiek, *Galatians*, 68.

both the Christian of Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 both have an inner warfare between the flesh and the desire to do what is good, that is to please God and to walk after the Spirit, the common experience of the Christian of Gal 5:17 and the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 leads to the conclusion that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is a believer.

The emphatic “I” is not perfect, nor does Paul make the claim for absolute perfection for himself or for other believers. In Phlp 3:12-21, Paul, writing to the Church at Philippi, states that he has not yet been made perfect. The word for perfect is: τελειόω – which means: “complete, bring to an end, finish accomplish, bring to its goal or to accomplishment in the sense of overcoming or supplanting of an imperfect state of things by one that is free from objection, completion, perfection, make perfect.”<sup>133</sup> Paul clearly means that he has not yet been made perfect. However, in v. 15 he states: “All of us who are perfect.” The word “perfect” here is translated by “mature”, according to the NIV. The word used in v. 15 for perfect or mature is: τέλειος.

It can be seen in this passage that Paul, not claiming to be perfect, yet, claims to be mature or perfect. He is not playing word games. He is simply stating that he has not reached absolute perfection, while reaching a state of maturity in the Christian life. The state of maturity or perfection mentioned by Paul is expressed by the Christian living in “lowly bodies” (Phlp 3:21). These “lowly bodies” are the bodies that are still damaged and twisted by sin. Mature Christians live in bodies that still bear the marks of culture, formation, decisions made and decisions not made. Mature Christians still live in bodies that still bear the damage done by original sin and personal sin. Mature Christians still live in bodies that have the flesh within. These “lowly bodies” cause the mature or perfect

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<sup>133</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 809, 810.

Christian to be at war with oneself. To be at war with one self is the experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. This can be seen where the emphatic “I” states “I have the desire to do what is good, but I can’t carry it out” (Rom 7:18) and that what they do is not what they want to do (Rom 7:19). The inner warfare is most clearly stated in Rom 7:23 where the emphatic “I” writes that there is a law in the members of his/her body which is waging war against the law in his/her mind. The conclusion to be drawn here is that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is a mature believer, going on to perfection.

David is called “a man after God’s heart.” Luke quotes Paul in his sermon in Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:22).<sup>134</sup> This is the same description of David before he became King over Israel. The same is stated in 1 Sam 13:14. David is called, a man after the heart of God by Samuel when he told Saul that God was taking the kingdom from Saul and giving it to David. David, before he became king and after he had died, was called a man after God’s heart. It is only necessary to briefly look at the life of David to know that David was not a perfect man. He committed adultery with Bathsheba; had Uriah, Bathsheba’s husband killed, played favorites with his children, which then caused his children to turn on each other and even to turn on David himself.

Psalm 40 is called a Psalm of David.<sup>135</sup> In this Psalm, the Psalmist, thought by some to be David himself writes, that, “my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot

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<sup>134</sup> Certainly, Acts is not in the Pauline Corpus, however, to use modern terms, Acts can be seen as a secondary source for understanding Paul. Paul himself writing (although there are questions of how much Paul himself actually wrote or how much he dictated and was written down by others) would be the primary source. Luke quoting Paul would be a secondary source.

<sup>135</sup> Reasons to include David are found in the previous footnote. Another reason is to trace Paul’s understanding of David so as to understand Paul’s perspective on the human experience in salvation. Paul puts forth David as an example of salvation. Paul putting forth David as an example of salvation is seen in the quote by Luke where Paul is supposed to have said that David is one who does the will of God (Acts 13:22). The person who does the will of God is a person who is in right relation with God, i.e. a Christian (compare this with Rom 3:10-18).

see” (Ps 40:12). David commits adultery, murder and in modern terminology, is a failure as a parent, yet is called a man after God’s own heart. Based on the perspective that David wrote Psalm 40, David confesses that his iniquities have overtaken him, until he cannot see, yet, he is still called a man after God’s own heart.

It can be seen in the life of David, a man who, desiring the heart of God, is also encompassed in a body that is not perfect. The desire of David is seen in the phrase, “A man after God’s own heart.” David truly desired to obey God and to please Him in all things. Yet, there was David himself, living in a body that has been twisted by sin, with mental impressions, thoughts, culture, ways of acting, ways of thinking, attempting to do something perfectly, yet, accomplishing it imperfectly, who has the desire to please God, summarized in the phrase, “a man after God’s own heart.”

A man/person after God’s own heart is exactly the experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7.<sup>136</sup>

The emphatic “I” states that they desire to do what is good (Rom 7:18). The emphatic “I” delights in God’s law (Rom 7:22). The emphatic “I” believes in and is thankful for Jesus Christ, the one who will deliver him/her from the body of death (Rom 7:24, 25). Thus, it can be seen that the experience of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 coincides with the experience of David, a man after God’s own heart.

Paul writes in 2 Cor 5:1-10, “Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, because

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<sup>136</sup> The basis for this statement is the previous discussion on the now but not yet of the kingdom of God, the new humanity, Gal 5:17, 2 Cor 4:7, 2 Cor 3:18; David (a man after God’s own heart, although not a NT person, was an example of a righteous man that is found within the pages of the OT). For further clarification on this statement, see the remaining chapters of this study.

when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling.” In these verses Paul is writing about living in our mortal human bodies, yet, longing to be freed from this mortal, human bodies. He writes that we “groan”, while still in our mortal bodies. The word for groan is στενάζω - which means: to groan or sigh as the result of deep concern or stress.<sup>137</sup> In this understanding of στενάζω a sense of discomfort, disagreement and desire for something different. Arndt and Gingrich confirm this idea in their definition of στενάζω. They define στενάζω as: sigh, groan because of an undesirable circumstance.<sup>138</sup> The undesirable circumstance that Paul writes about in these verses is the fact that believers are living in imperfect bodies, or to use an earlier description, lowly bodies. These imperfect bodies affect Christians. The desire of the believer is to be clothed with their heavenly dwelling, that is to mean that the desire of the believer is to be made perfect, holy.

The teaching of 2 Cor 5:1-10 is that, even for the most perfect Christian, they are still in imperfect bodies. The believer desires to be clothed with their heavenly dwelling, that is, they desire to be holy. However, while desiring to be holy, the believer is affected by the imperfect body in which he or she lives. This circumstance, that is to desire to be holy, to be perfect, yet groaning and desiring to be holy, will continue as long as the believer lives in their present, mortal bodies.

The experience of desiring to be holy, yet groaning because of the affect that one's imperfect body has upon Christians as described in the Scriptures listed in this chapter is

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<sup>137</sup> J.P. Louw & E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Based on Semantic Domains*, 305.

<sup>138</sup> W. Arndt & W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament*, 767.

the same experience that the emphatic “I” has. The emphatic “I” of Rom 7 shares the same experience that Christian believers, i.e. regenerate, have. This has been seen by comparing the experience of the emphatic “I” as found in Rom 7 with the experience as described elsewhere by Paul. The comparing of the experiences of the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 and the experience of the regenerate, as recorded in other parts of the Pauline Corpus, leads to the conclusion that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is a mature spiritual Christian believer.

From the previous discussions certain understandings can be drawn: (1). Christian believers are righteous in Christ, (2). This righteousness, although complete in Christ, is not yet fully experienced or has yet to fully penetrate throughout the whole Christian believer, (3). This not yet fully experienced righteousness is experienced in a human body that within this body, a great struggle with the flesh and sin is occurring. Found within this struggle within a not yet redeemed human body, the Christian believer yearns and cries out for redemption (Rom 8:23). This crying out and yearning, which is the experience of Christian believers, is a similar cry and yearning experienced by the emphatic “I” of Rom 7. Because the cry and yearning of Christian believers (in the case of David of the righteous in the Old Testament) is similar to the cry and yearning of the emphatic “I”; the similarities of the cries and experiences leads to the conclusion that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 shares a similar experience as David, the man after God’s own heart.

In summary, the Christian believer is a new creation in Christ, yet, at the same time, this new creation in Christ still struggles with remaining sin and / or the brokenness of sin. This is the same experience that Paul describes in Rom 7 regarding the emphatic

“I”. Thus, the conclusion to be seen is that the emphatic “I” of Rom 7 is a new creation in Christ.