

# Romans 7:15-20

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/rom/rom-7/romans-715-20/>

*The sin nature in each person influences what we do and the choices we make. In these verses, Paul is telling us that even if we want to do what we know is good, the sin inside of us can cause us to do those things we don't want to. Making mistakes is an inevitable part of being a human because we all have a sin nature.*

Paul wants to follow the law, but his sin nature causes him to disobey it, *what [he] is doing [he] does not understand*. There are two forces inside us at war with each other, the sin nature and the redeemed nature, our old nature and our new nature. But we get to choose which nature to animate. The inner desire to do what the law says shows us that Paul is not the one who is sinning but that it is his sin nature that is acting in disobedience to the law. He is *not practicing what [he] would like to do, but [he is] doing the very thing [he] hates*. Even so, Paul is still responsible for the actions of his flesh (6:12-14) as he is the one who made the choice to allow the sin nature to act. He still does *the very thing [he] does not want to do, [he] agrees with the Law, confessing that the Law is good*. Though we are made up of different aspects, in this case a sin nature, a new nature and a will, we are still one person. And although he has war inside him fought by his sin nature and his new nature, Paul is still Paul. Which is why this agonizes him so much. We can all identify. If the Apostle Paul, who suffered for the gospel, had this issue, we can expect to have it as well.

This point further demonstrates why we cannot follow the law, and why “more rules” will never “fix” anyone. Paul wants to follow the law but the *sin which dwells in him* wants the exact opposite. He makes it clear that it isn't he (Paul) who sins but it is his sin nature that he decides to empower to disobey the law. *Nothing good dwells in [him], that is in [his] flesh; for the willing is present in [him], but the doing of the good is not*. Paul wants to do good but does not. *The good that [he] wants, [he] does not do, but [he] practices the very evil [he] does not want*. Paul is still ultimately responsible for what actions he takes. He decides which nature to follow. In this passage, he is describing the conflict between what his new nature wants (to please God by following the law) and what his sin nature leads him to do (disobey the law).

## Biblical Text

**<sup>15</sup> For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. <sup>17</sup> So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. <sup>19</sup> For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. <sup>20</sup> But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.**