

Romans 7:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not;
but what I hate, that do I.

Analysis

For that which I do I allow not—Ou ginōskō (οὐ γινώσκω, "I do not know/understand/approve") expresses moral confusion and self-frustration. The regenerate will desires God's law but experiences contradiction between intent and performance. **For what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.** —Thelō (θέλω, "I will/desire") versus misō (μισῶ, "I hate") shows internal civil war.

This describes the regenerate experience: genuine desire for holiness coupled with failure to achieve it. The unregenerate don't "hate" what they practice (Romans 1:32); they approve sin. Hating one's sin while struggling against it characterizes Christian experience, not unconverted life. This isn't excuse-making but honest acknowledgment that sanctification involves real battle against remaining corruption, not instantaneous perfection. Paul anticipates chapter 8's solution: Spirit-empowered victory.

Historical Context

Paul's vulnerable self-disclosure would encourage struggling believers in Rome. Perfectionistic expectations produce either pride (false claims of sinlessness) or despair (giving up). Paul charts a middle path: genuine progress in sanctification accompanied by ongoing conflict with indwelling sin until glorification.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's description of internal conflict validate your experience of desiring holiness while falling short?
2. What's the difference between the 'hatred of sin' Paul describes and the worldly regret of getting caught or facing consequences?
3. How might perfectionist expectations (instant victory) be undermining your perseverance in sanctification's real war?

Interlinear Text

ὁ	γὰρ	κατεργάζομαι	οὐ	γινώσκω·	οὐ	γὰρ	ὁ
that which	For	I do	not	I allow	not	For	that which
G3739	G1063	G2716	G3756	G1097	G3756	G1063	G3739
θέλω	τοῦτο	πράσσω	ἀλλ'	ὁ	μισῶ	τοῦτο	ποιῶ
I would	that	do I	but	that which	I hate	that	do I
G2309	G5124	G4238	G235	G3739	G3404	G5124	G4160

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 5:17 (Parallel theme): For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Nahum 1:7 (Parallel theme): The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (Parallel theme): For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

James 3:2 (Parallel theme): For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

Romans 12:9 (Parallel theme): Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Jude 1:23 (Parallel theme): And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Psalms 19:12 (Parallel theme): Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

Romans 14:22 (Parallel theme): Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

2 Timothy 2:19 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

Hebrews 1:9 (Parallel theme): Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.