

These two principles -- the principle of innate righteousness and the principle of innate sin -- are constantly struggling within us. Which is stronger? Which will gain the victory?

In Romans 7:21-8:2 Paul gives us a remarkable insight into the internal workings of these two principles -- a kind of spiritual psychology. Nowhere else in Scripture do we find such a deep insight into the heart of a believer and the internal spiritual conflict he or she is experiencing.

The six uses of NOMOS and the correlated heart diagram serve to elucidate this insight.

SIX USES OF NOMOS IN ROMANS 7:21-8:2

In this passage there are two distinct meanings of the Greek word NOMOS (law):

- (1) A rule or norm or standard intended to regulate conduct, established by some authority, and carrying with it certain sanctions
- (2) A principle of uniform, consistent, dependable operation of physical or mental or spiritual relationships or actions

In Romans 7:21-8:2 there are six different distinct uses of NOMOS, employing either one or the other of the two meanings given above. These six uses are as follows:

1. The objective Law of God, the moral Law of God, especially as summarized in the Ten Commandments and the two Great Laws of Christ

7:22 -- "For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man"
7:25b -- "So then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God"
2. A subjective principle of complex motivation, in which I find both good and evil present in all my motives

7:21 -- "I find a principle, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me"
3. A subjective principle of righteousness, inwrought in regeneration; the "Righteousness Principle"

7:23b -- "warring against the principle of my mind"
4. A subjective principle to sin, the Sin Principle inherent in my faculties; the principle which once bound me, under Law, to death

7:23c -- "and bringing me into captivity to the principle of sin which is in my members"
7:25c -- "but with the flesh the principle of sin"
8:2b -- "hath made me free from the principle of sin and death"