

The “I” (*egō*, *Grk: εγω*) of Romans 7:14-25;
An *Unregenerate* Person?*

(See other side for the alternate view.)

1. The strong connection of *egō* with “the flesh” (vv. 14, 18, & 25) suggests Paul is elaborating on the unregenerate condition mentioned in 7:5: being “in the flesh.”
2. *Egō* throughout this passage struggles “on his/her own” (cf. “I myself” in v. 25) without the aid of the Holy Spirit.
3. *Egō* is “under the power of sin” (v. 14b), a state from which every believer is released (6:2, 6, 11, 18-22)
4. As the unsuccessful struggle of vv. 15-20 shows, *egō* is a “prisoner of the law of sin” (v. 23). Yet Rom. 8:2 proclaims that believers have been set free from this same “law of sin (and death).”
5. While Paul makes clear that believers will continue to struggle with sin (cf., 6:12-13; 13:12-14; Gal. 5:17), what is depicted in 7:14-25 is not just a struggle with sin but a defeat by sin. This is a more negative view of the Christian life than can be accommodated within Paul’s theology.
6. The *egō* in these verses struggles with the need to obey the Mosaic law; yet Paul has already proclaimed the release of the believer from the dictates of the law (6:14; 7:4-6).

*From Douglas Moo, *The New International Commentary of the New Testament, The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids, MI., William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1996), pp. 445-447.

The “I” (*egō*, *Grk: εγω*) of Romans 7:14-25;
A *Regenerate* Person?*

(See other side for the alternate view.)

1. *Egō* must refer to Paul himself, and the shift from the past tenses of vv. 7-13 to the present tenses of vv. 14-25 can be explained only if Paul is describing in these latter verse his present experience as a Christian.
2. Only the regenerate truly “delight in God’s law” (v. 22), seek to obey it (vv. 15-20), and “serve” it (v. 25); the unregenerate do not “seek after God” (3:11) and cannot “submit to the law of God” (8:7).
3. Whereas the “mind” of people outside of Christ is universally presented by Paul as opposed to God and his will (cf. Rom. 1:28; Eph. 4:17; Col. 2:18; 1 Tim. 6:5; 2 Tim. 3:8; Tit. 1:15), the “mind” of *egō* in this text is a positive medium, by which *egō* “serves the law of God” (vv. 22, 25).
4. *Egō* must be a Christian because only a Christian possesses the “inner person”; cf. Paul’s only other two uses of the phrase in 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16.
5. The passage concludes *after* Paul’s mention of the deliverance wrought by God in Christ, with a reiteration of the divided state of the *egō* (vv. 24-25). This shows that the division and struggle of the *ego* that Paul depicts in these verses is that of the person already saved by God in Christ.

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