*approval of the law of God* is affirmed (not  
the mere designing to do His will, verses 15,  
16, 19, 20, which I will treat by and by),  
it is not barely “*I*,” but, to avoid confusion, in ver. 22 the Apostle adds **after  
the inward man**, and in ver. 25 subjoins  
**myself**; in both cases shewing that (see  
notes below) he speaks of the *complex man*,  
himself made up of an *inward*, and an  
*outward* man, of *the mind* and *the flesh*.  
Are we then justified in assuming, that up  
to ver. 22 the carnal-unregenerate self is  
spoken of, but after that the complex self?  
Such a supposition would not be consistent  
with the assertion of the *desire* from ver.  
15 onwards: *no such will existing in the  
carnal unregenerate man*. I believe the  
true account will be nearly as follows:—from ver. 7–13 incl. is *historical*, and the “*I*” *there* is the *historical self*, under the  
working of conviction of sin, and shewing  
the work of the law; in other words, *the  
carnal self in the transition state*, under  
the first motions towards God generated  
by the law, which the law could never have  
perfected. Then at ver. 14, St. Paul, according to a habit very common to him,  
Keeps hold of the carnal self, and still  
having it in view, *transfers himself into his  
present position*,—altering the past tense  
into the present, still however meaning  
by “*I*” (in ver. 14), “*my flesh*.’ But,  
having passed into the present tense, he  
immediately mingles with this mere action  
of the law upon the natural conscience, the  
motions of the will towards God which are  
in conflict with the motions toward sin in  
the members. And hence arises an apparent verbal confusion, because the “*I*,” for example, in Ver. 17, of whom it is said, “*it is no longer I that perform it*,” being the  
entire personality, the *complex self*, is of  
far wider extent than the “*I*,” of whom it  
is said, “*in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth  
not any good*.” But the latter “*I*,” in this part of the chapter, is shewn to be (verses 17, 20) no longer properly “*I*,”  
but “*sin that dwelleth in me*,’—and so it  
*passes altogether out of sight* after ver.  
20, and *its place is taken by the actual  
then existing complex self* of Paul compounded of the regenerate spiritual man,  
sympathizing with God’s law, serving God’s  
law, in conflict with the still remaining  
though decadent carnal man, whose essence  
it is to serve the law of sin, to bring captive to the law of sin. This state of conflict and division against one’s self would  
infallibly bring about utter ruin, and might.  
well lead to despair (ver. 24), but for the  
rescue which God’s grace has provided by  
Jesus Christ our Lord. And this rescue  
has been such, that I, the “*I myself*” of  
ver. 25, the *real self*, the nobler and better  
part of the man, serve, with the *mind* (see  
there), the law of God: whereas it is only  
with the flesh, according to which (viii. 4) *I do not walk*, but overcome and mortify  
it, that I serve (am still subject to) the law  
of sin. Then this subjection of the flesh to  
the law of sin, to the *bondage of corruption*, is fully set out, in its *nature*,—*consequences to the carnal*,—and *uses to the  
spiritual*,—in ch. viii.—Any thing like a  
summary of the exposition of this passage  
would be quite beyond my limits. It may  
suffice here to say, that most of the ancients  
supposed “*I*” throughout the passage to  
represent *mankind*, or *the Jews generally*,  
and the whole to be taken chronologically,  
to ver. 9, as *before* the law, after ver. 9 as  
*under* the law. This was once Augustine’s  
view, but he afterwards changed it, and  
adopted in the main that advocated above.

**7.**] See note, ch. vi. 1.

**Is the law** (not ‘*conscience*,’ but in our case, the  
revealed law of God, which awoke the conscience to action) **sin**?—not ‘*the cause of sin*,’ which in one sense the Apostle would  
not have denied,—but *sin*, abstract for  
concrete, *sinful*, or, as Bengel expresses  
it, *the sinful cause of sin*. The question  
itself refers back to ver. 5, where the  
Apostle had spoken of “*the stirrings of sins  
which were through the law*.” It is asked,  
*not by an objector*, but by the Apostle  
himself, in anticipation of an objection.

**Nevertheless**] i.e. **but what I mean  
is**....,–**I say not that, but**....

**I had not known**] The literal rendering of  
the original sentence is, **I was living in a  
state of ignorance of sin, were it not**....  
Then *what* is the **sin** here spoken of? Is  
it sin in *act*, or sin in *principle*,—the  
principle of sin? Not *sin in act*, so that  
*I had not known sin* should mean, ‘*I had  
not entered into contact with sin*,’ i.e.  
‘*had not sinned:’* for then the law would  
have truly and actually been the cause of  
sin: nor, *sin in act*, so that the meaning  
were, ‘*I had not known the nature of a  
sinful act?”* for this would not agree with  
the subordination of the one particular sin  
specified below : the *coveting itself* being