



Message: **Do I Do or Do I Don't** | July 5, 2026 | Speaker: **Pastor Eddie Eddy**

Romans 7:15-25 ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.^[a] For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature^[b] a slave to the law of sin.

L: The word of God for the people of God. P: **Thanks be to God.**

Do I Do or Do I Don't ?

Isn't Paul fun to read. He is the tongue twister author of the New Testament. Peter piper picked a peck, or she sells seashells down by the seashore.

This passage sounds like Paul's version of "Who's on first"...only his sounds like "do I do or do I don't". Sometimes we just have to slow down and take Paul apart...piece by piece. He even started this passage out with the words: I don't really understand myself."

So, that's what I want to do that this morning for a few minutes. Let's see if we can understand what Paul is saying and make some sense of this passage.

To do that...I want to share some other stories.

I am sure many of you have heard the Cherokee Legend of the 2 wolves. There are a couple versions of this story...I don't know if we have all heard the second one. They are pretty similar...yet... there is just a bit different. It's almost the same style of writing that Paul does in our Passage this morning.

Each section of the text says basically the same thing...just in a little different way.

So, let me share with you one version of the Cherokee legend. It goes...

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people.

He said, "My son, the battle is between "two wolves" inside us all.

One wolf is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other wolf is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grand son thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins the battle grandfather?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

Now let's hear the second version Two Wolves: Same outcome, just interpreted to fit a different circumstance. Listen to this one:

An old Grandfather said to his grandson, who came to him with anger at a friend who had done him an injustice, "Let me tell you a story. I too, at times, have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do.

But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison and wishing your enemy would die. I have struggled with these feelings many times."

He continued, "It is as if there are two wolves inside me.

One is good and does no harm. He lives in harmony with all around him, and does not take offense when no offense was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way.

But the other wolf, ah! He is full of anger. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is helpless anger, for his anger will change nothing.

Sometimes, it is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit."

The boy looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which one wins, Grandfather?"

The Grandfather smiled and quietly said, "The one I feed."

This is the dilemma that Paul is struggling with in this scripture. The battle of the two wolves inside him.

1) I don't get it. (14-16)

15 I don't really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do what I hate. 16 But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good.(the good Wolf) 17 So I am not the one doing wrong; it is sin(the bad wolf) living in me that does it.

Paul wrestles with the contrast between God's law, which is holy, and flesh, which is unholy. Some scholars believe that Paul might have been referring to his pre-Christian life...where he sees himself as a 'unspiritual' and 'sold as a slave to sin'. But when we read a little deeper...we see that Paul is talking in present tense. That shows that he's speaking of his current, converted, saved by faith life.

And I'm glad this is here. It shows us that...struggling with our sins... doesn't mean we are lost...or that we haven't reached the point of assurance in our journey. What it shows is that we are mature enough in our faith to make informed decisions about which wolf inside us we should be nourishing.

If Paul, being the strong Christian that he was, could have these struggles and still be used by God...then that should sure give us hope. I believe we can all identify with Paul's struggle...because we've all been there. We've all dealt with this spiritual tug of war. And we've all been frustrated with ourselves for giving in and doing the things we don't want to do. Do I do or do I don't?

Do I feed the wolf of anger...or do I feed the wolf of love, and peace, and kindness? I know for me...I want to set a full bowl of food out there for the good wolf. As hard as I try to be kind and gentle and loving...humble, compassionate and all the other traits of the good wolf...I somehow manage to leave a trail of kibble along the path that feeds the evil angry wolf.

And it's so easy to do. Just watch the news, listen to the radio or look at the social media. The evil wolf is ravenous and so many people are feeding it. Seems like every conversation I have ends in a discussion about something dividing our society in one way or another. And in every conversation...I see the evil wolf growing stronger and stronger.

When I told the two different wolf stories, I said that they had the same outcome but were told in just a little different way. The difference that I noticed was in the moral of these two legends. The first ended with, "The one you feed" The second ended with, "the one I feed".

SHORT PAUSE

Paul ends this passage with some strong words.

Oh, what a miserable person I am!

Each time I read these words, I find it hard to believe that a person as confident and as committed as Paul was...is declaring himself unworthy to serve. I have to believe that he is finding some joy in the fact that he has been given the insight to see the battle of the two wolves. How bad off would we be if we were unable to recognize our shortcomings and then...turn away from our sin?

Listen to Paul's response:

"Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? 25 Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Folks...Thank God that he will save us from feeding only the evil wolf. We have the choice this morning to feed the Good wolf. Jesus has provided a meal for us that saves us from the sin in our flesh and feeds the Spirit of good in us. Today you have the opportunity to say, "I will feed the good Wolf."

To God be the glory, Amen

So...there is a meal set before us. As we are preparing to come to this table together, I want you to notice something important about Paul's struggle.

Paul never says he finally figured it out. He never says, "I defeated the bad wolf once and for all." He never says, "I became so holy that all temptation has disappeared from me."

Instead, he cries out, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?"

And then he answers his own question.

"Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Friends, that is the Gospel.

The Christian life is not the story of people who never struggle. It is the story of people who know where to take their struggle. It is the story of sinners who know where to find grace. It is the story of people who recognize that there are still two wolves battling within them, yet they continue returning to the One who has claimed the victory.

That's why we come to this table.

We don't come because we've had a perfect week. We don't come because we've finally stopped feeding the wrong wolf. We don't come because we've earned a seat here.

We come because Jesus invites us. We come because we recognize our need for His mercy. We come because the same Savior who died for our sins also nourishes our souls.

At this table, Christ does not offer us condemnation. He offers us grace. He does not shame us for the battles we are fighting. He strengthens us for the battles that still lie ahead.

He reminds us that while sin remains a reality in this life, it is no longer our master.

Today, as we receive the bread and the cup, we are reminded that God has already provided the meal that feeds the Spirit within us. Here we find forgiveness. Here we find strength. Here we find hope. Here we remember that our salvation rests not in our ability to overcome sin...but in Christ's victory over sin on our behalf.

So if today you recognize your need for grace...If today you find yourself weary from the struggle...If today you can honestly say with Paul, "I do not do the good I want to do..."Then come.

Come to the table of Jesus Christ. Come not because you are strong, but because He is. Come not because you are worthy, but because He is gracious. Come and receive the gift that feeds the good wolf and reminds us once again that our hope has never been in ourselves.

Our hope is, and always will be, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night...