

EVER WONDER WHY?—5  
WHY CAN'T I STOP?



Why Can't I Change?

You're focusing on the poison of religion and forgetting the power of grace.

Religion is our attempt to earn God's approval by following all the rules.

*For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.* Titus 2:11 NIV

**charis:** the unmerited goodwill and favor of God

The grace that saves you is also the grace that sustains you.

*For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. <sup>12</sup>It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age ...* Titus 2:11-12 NIV

How Does God's Grace Change Us?

The focus of religion is outward.

*"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. <sup>26</sup>Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean."* Matthew 23:25-26 NIV

The power of grace is inward.

*I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.* Ephesians 3:16 NLT

- Religion says, "Try harder."
- Grace says, "Trust more."

*But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." <sup>10</sup>... For when I am weak, then I am strong.* 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 NIV

Asking for help is never a sign of weakness. It's a sign of wisdom.

**You're trying to meet a need or relieve a hurt with something besides God's grace.**

... *But where sin increased, grace increased all the more* ... Romans 5:20 NIV

### **TALK IT OVER**

What is your thought process like when you're trying to break a bad habit? How could you focus less on the outward and more on the inward power of grace?

Read **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**. God's strength is made perfect in our weakness. Where might you need to rely on God's power more than yours?

You are only as strong as you are honest. Talk about a habit in your life that you'd like to change. How can your LifeGroup support you?