



The Grace to Change

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FOCUS

We can change anything in our lives by the grace of God. It's not hard, and it doesn't require will power because God gives us the ability to change through His Holy Spirit.

FUN

If you could only eat one fruit for the rest of your life, what would it be?

REVIEW

Key Scriptures:

Romans 7:14–8:11; Galatians 5:16–23

How to Find the Power to Change Anything in Our Lives

- Understand the corrupt and incorrigible nature of our flesh.
 - Before we can change, we must realize we cannot change on our own. Every time we want to do the right thing, our flesh is there to sabotage us.
- Understand the purpose of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
 - The Holy Spirit gives us the power to overcome our flesh and do the things God wants us to do. We weren't designed to live without the power of the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to give us the grace and power to live godly lives.

The ability to change is not through our will power but through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- Goodness is the Holy Spirit giving you the right desires. Self-control is what you decide to do and not do. We can ask the Holy Spirit to provide us with righteous desires and the ability to do godly things.

GROUP DYNAMICS IDEA

Plan a night out with your group to see the Gateway Summer Musicals production of *Annie*. Purchase your tickets at gatewaysummermusicals.com.

DISCUSS

1. What is Paul sharing in Romans 7:14–24? What question does he ask in verse 24?
2. Paul's honesty is a great model for us. How would you finish the following sentence? "I struggle with trying to change _____."
3. Read Romans 8:1–11. What is the answer to Paul's question from Romans 7:24? Who is mentioned multiple times in this passage?
4. What are the two behaviors Galatians 5:16 contrasts? In verses 17–21, which behavior's traits are listed? Which behavior is represented in verses 22–23?
5. Discuss what it looks like to "walk in the Spirit."
6. What part does will power play in our ability to change? How has depending on will power let you down?
7. From Galatians 5:22–23, Pastor Jimmy pulled out two fruits of the Spirit: goodness and self-control. Which one did he call the "canner," and which one did he label the "wanter"? What is the difference between the two?
8. Share testimonies of how the Holy Spirit has helped you change something in your life.

TAKE HOME

As we conclude, remember the following:

- The Lord will help us if we ask Him for help. To change, we have to stop trying on our own and admit we need His help.
- We can overcome the law of sin in our flesh by depending upon the Holy Spirit moment by moment.
- We can't change without God.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the gift of Your Holy Spirit. I admit that I tried to change and failed, and I need You. Give me righteous desires and the ability to change. In Jesus' name, Amen.

NEW LEADER TIP

As we prepare for the fall semester of groups, spend some time with the Lord to gain focus for what He wants to do in and through your group. Be prepared to make adjustments and allow the Holy Spirit to be your guide.