

Life Changing Words

We often use the phrase "life-changing experience" pretty loosely. I often tell people that the first time I tried a Chick-fil-A peppermint milkshake was life-changing (and to be fair, it does mean I end up buying more milkshakes around the holidays than I do during the normal part of the year). Still, the peppermint milkshake hasn't really changed things about my life. However, there are some things that we would consider to be life-changing. Marriage, having children, the loss of loved ones, and, for me, an uncle who was hockey obsessed who introduced me to the sport. There are these moments that change who we are and the course our life is going to take.

Stop and discuss: *What are some things in your life that you feel have changed your life?*

Open up your Bibles to Mark 5. Mark 5 is the passage where Jesus heals a man with a demon. Check out Mark 5:1-10.

"[1] They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. [2] And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. [3] He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, [4] for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. [5] Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. [6] And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. [7] And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." [8] For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" [9] And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." [10] And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country."

This individual, who claims the name Legion, does not have a good life. He is being tortured by the demons living inside of him. People avoided Legion, and how can we blame them? He was someone who was strong and caused chaos. This maniac approached Jesus and pronounced Him the Son of God.

I encourage you to read Mark 5:11-17. In this moment, Jesus is going to cast the demons out of Legion and send them into a herd of pigs. The people are shocked at the power that Jesus displayed. Jesus changed the life of an individual.

Here's the question I must ask myself... how has Jesus changed my life? I may not have had a rampaging demon that was possessing me, but I certainly had a lot of bad things in my life. I certainly had a lot in my life that I was not proud of. When you look at the moment you came in contact with the blood of Jesus, how did your life change?

Discuss this question: *What are ways that Jesus should change my life?*

Legion was ready to go with Jesus. Look at what it says in Mark 5:18. "] As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him."

Jesus had just changed this man's life, and Legion was ready to do anything for Jesus. Instead of having him follow Him closely, Jesus gives Legion a different task.

Mark 5:19–20

"[19] And he did not permit him but said to him, "Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." [20] And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled."

When the life of the Legion was changed by Jesus, Jesus looked at him and said, "Go show people how My Word changed you." What a challenge. Do I do that today? Do I allow myself to show people how the words of Jesus have changed me?

Discuss: *What are ways I can show people that Jesus has changed my life?*

End by saying a prayer asking God to give us guidance as we strive to live a life that displays Jesus.