



I reckon it's a very important question.

Because if there isn't any spiritual power in this thing that we're on about, then why would you bother to sign up like *Ivrea* (and her Mum and Dad) have today?

If there isn't something that really makes life different it can be an awful drag; it can be very, very hard!

Jesus makes this point with His disciples – that we need power – just as he did. That's why He asks the Father to send us His Spirit – and then tells the disciples to wait (in the first instance) until He comes.

The tragedy of human history is that we cannot live as God intended – in other words as human beings! – without being plugged into Him – as it were – without being in relationship with Him! When we are....

the “ballpark” is a *new* ballpark – in fact it's a *whole new ball game*!

That's what the man from the Gerasenes found – it changed his life !!

Let me try and illustrate:

The was a bushman who for a living cut selective timbers for clients – blackwoods, myrtles, huon pines (puts it in Tassie doesn't it?!). For years he simply used his axe and bow-saw. But he was aging – got tired a little faster than before – you know the signs! – and so he decided to buy a new saw. So to the Bunning's store he went. The sales attendant convinced him to buy a chain saw, claiming it would be so much easier and would open up whole new possibilities for him.

The man took it, delighted, and returned to the bush. He came back in two weeks to Bunnings, very upset with the sales attendant. He told him, “This chain saw doesn't work as you promised. I haven't been able to cut half the timber you told I would. It was all lies.”

The attendant asked the man for the chainsaw and proceeded to check it

out. “It looks alright to me,” he observed. He took hold of the starter cord, gave it a sharp pull, and the device coughed into life.

The bushman who had purchased it and brought it back in complaint cried out, “What’s that noise !?”

It might take a couple of seconds....!!

That’s right, he had been out in the bush using the chainsaw as if it were a conventional hand saw. He’d *never* turned it on! He’d never empowered the thing! He hadn’t been using it the way it was designed to be!

You can look at life and all it offers and demands

You can even look at Jesus with His brilliant models for human ethics and relationships.....

But if you try and live life, even a Christian life, without God in it, then you might as well be in the bush using your chainsaw that you’ve never turned on!!

It’s just as silly

It’s just as frustrating, and

It’s just as powerless!

Are you connected? Is there a spiritual dimension to your life?

People, the world is dying to see this difference. Do they see it in your life and mine?

They saw it in the man from the Gerasenes. His life had *impact!*

That impact was not automatic though. It didn’t simply “happen” because he met Jesus and was impacted accordingly.

It happened because he *made a decision and One decision can bring change.*

What decision was that? His decision to live his life / in the way that Jesus wanted.

Remember? Jesus request to him – *extraordinarily* – was *not* to follow Him, but to stay and “tell his story.” And he did!

And that decision brought enormous change! 4000 people change!

“Here’s the deal,” as Alan Demond would say, “the Christian life is not supposed to be hard (I don’t mean that there won’t be struggles – there will!) but it’s meant to be *power assisted!*”

How then do we practically engage with God

- come to know His power in our lives?

To receive God’s power we need to *believe* the promise;

we need to *ask* for it;

and we need to *receive* it.

### **Believe it**

It’s an amazing thing – God didn’t simply give us life and then vacate to leave us to try and live it! He gave Himself so that we know and experience His presence and so, by His grace, *live* the life He’s given us; to be for each of us an abiding companion That’s an incredible claim!

To believe that God wants to pour Himself into our lives is an amazing promise!

If we open the door – He’ll come in (Rev. 3:20). Do you believe that?

Do you believe that it’s God passion to see you live life – in all its abundance (John 10:10) – empowered by His presence in your life?

### **Ask for it**

If you believe it then, second, you should ask for it

Ask for the enabling presence of God– His person – in your lives

- We need to ask Him to come into our lives
- We need to ask Him to put His Spirit into our lives
- We need to ask Him to work through our lives.

If God is not in your life it is not because God went on a vacation

It’s because you haven’t asked Him into your life.

It’s never God who moves– its *always us!*

And if He is *in* your life, how much of your life have you given Him?

Believe it and Ask for it!

Ask for God to give you more than the ethics of Jesus,

Ask Him to give you the life and person of Jesus!

Believe me, it will bring you great joy

Believe it, Ask for it, and thirdly

**Receive it** (John 1:12)

Accept and receive God's precious gift.

Give your heart and life to Him

As we're obedient to Him (doing what He advises), His life is filled in us

And our life is *fulfilled* accordingly

Believe it: He wants you to know His life and His love

Ask for it: He wants to give you new life and remember His promise?

“whoever asks, receives!” Which leads to

Receive it: He wants to fill your life

The story is told of an American Traveller in the 19<sup>th</sup> century who visited the Amazon. He was amazed! On return to his home town he was given a hero's welcome and invited to a civic occasion to speak about his adventure. He tried to convey to the people something of what he had seen, smelt and heard; of the amazing birds, fish and animals that he had encountered. But to no real avail. Finally in exasperation he said, “Look you need to make the journey yourself. You need to go and see for yourself!” He took several large sheets of paper and drew maps, detailed maps, showing the places he had seen and clearly marking out the directions so that anybody could get there.

The city fathers were thrilled to have the maps. They framed them and hung them on the walls of City Hall. People came and admired them, seeing the detail, the instruction, saying “These are amazing. These are the maps to the Amazon – amazing things in the Amazon.” Finally people who had spent time studying the maps wrote books about the maps, they even gave lectures on the maps! BUT nobody followed the maps and went to the Amazon!!

God has given us the most amazing map to His most profound presence in our lives. We can talk about it; we can have sermons on it; we can study it in small groups – but folks if we don’t go?!

Folks it’s not about information, as such, it’s an invitation – to take a journey; to experience God and His power in our lives.

One decision can bring about amazing change,

One small step can start an incredible journey.

Why not make that decision; why not take that step?