

## CHANGED

In an intriguing episode in Genesis 32, Jacob wrestles with God. What is most fascinating about this encounter is that Jacob walks away with a permanent limp. Oh, what a story that must have been around the dinner table! We know that the Hebrew people continued to remember that story because it even affected their dietary practices. Significant change had occurred in one event.

Repeatedly throughout scripture, we see people come in contact with the Lord. A common trend is CHANGE. When people encounter God openly, his power and presence stick with them so they are never the same again. From timid Moses to boisterous Peter, the trend is consistent. CHANGE!

I can only imagine the stories that must have been told by the individuals who experienced Jesus. I would have loved to hear their accounts first-hand.

Bartimaeus (Mark 10)

The Leper (Matthew 8)

Legion (Luke 8)

The Woman at the Well (John 4)

Mary Magdalene (Mark 16)

I am just getting started. The list could go on and on.

Each of these individuals were radically transformed because of the power and presence of God. Not only in their physical bodies but deeply within their souls. Their lives were never the same. You could say they "walked with a limp." A noticeable distinction from what they once were was now apparent.

In the earliest days after Pentecost, great opposition arose against the preaching of the Gospel. When they confronted the apostles in the temple, the religious leaders recognized something different about them.

### **Acts 4:13**

*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.*

Something was different about these guys, and that difference was attributed to one thing: they had been changed in the presence of Jesus.

The same should be true of us today. Paul said that those who obediently yield themselves to Christ and are baptized experience a change in their life. Not only do they bear the blessed promise of salvation, but they are raised up to WALK in a changed and new way.

### **Romans 6:4**

*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*

What does the world see in us? When they look at our lives, can they tell we have been with Jesus? As one songwriter has questioned, have we allowed the Lord to "wrestle us and win?" Are you changed today?

Shalom,  
Ryan