

(In preparation for gathered worship next week, November 2, 2008)

Mark 4:35 – 5:43

The life of a Christian represents an ongoing transition from fear to faith. Do you agree?

It is a transition which forms the centerpiece of Jesus' teaching in Mark, especially in the passage before us this week.

Read the verses carefully, note how Jesus encourages faith in his listeners, and ask yourself where you fall on the continuum of fear and faith.

- 1) In the windstorm (4:35-41), what prompted the disciples to fear? See verse 38. Does the same thing prompt fear in you?

- 2) Nothing can be more frightening than the demoniac of Gerasene. Notice how tormented he was (5:1-5). Yet this horrific individual did not frighten Jesus. Why not?

- 3) Why did the people 'beg Jesus to depart from their region'? (verse 17) Or to put it another way, why, having demonstrated his power over evil, didn't they implore him to remain among them?

- 4) In verse 34 Jesus says: 'Daughter, your faith has made you well.' What does it mean to be well? How does faith make one well?

- 5) The crowning verse of the passage is verse 36: 'Do not fear, only believe.' Perhaps the most strategic word in the verse is 'only'. What does it mean *only* to believe? Have you come to the point of *only* believing? Explain. How do you get to that point? What would your life be like if you *only* believed?