



Key Notes

I don't like roller-coasters. It's not the coasters themselves that scare me. It's that first huge drop, when your stomach goes into your throat and you fall face-first towards certain death. You probably have fears too. Fears are deep confrontations with our human frailty and mortality. We cherish life and fear the things that might steal it or take away its joys. We cherish relationships and fear losing love and friendship. Fears can also arise from self-doubt. When we are called to work outside our comfort zones and we're up against the unknown, we come face to face with the potential for failure and fear can paralyze the strongest of us.

Faith does not insulate us from fear. In Luke, Jesus asks the disciples to take him across the Sea of Galilee in a boat. Midway across, a violent storm blows up and the boat begins taking on water. The disciples, many of them seasoned sailors, panic. They call on Jesus to start bailing. Instead, he speaks a command and the storm dies away. The disciples are dumbfounded. Witnessing Jesus' authority over the weather frightens them even more than the thought of drowning.

As they reach the other side of the lake and beach the boat, a naked, cursing madman comes rushing towards them. If that isn't frightening enough, the man speaks to Jesus with the terrified voices of demons who beg Jesus not to destroy them. Jesus frees the man from his demons and his calmness and sanity return, which sends the townsfolk into a panic. A delegation approaches Jesus and begs him to leave their town.

Rarely today do we witness this raw power of God's intervening hand. Rarely do we find ourselves humbled by God's authority over spiritual powers and principalities. If we ever did get a glimpse of that sort of power, how would we react? Would we prefer the safety of the status quo? Would we ask Jesus to leave us to the peace and apparent tranquility of our suburban sanctuary? Are we ready to make room for the frightening drops and curves that go along with walking into the unknown and unpredictable as we follow in the footsteps of the risen Son of God? If we are – then He promises to grow in us the kind of faith that provides His inner power to walk on in spite of our fears as His-story unfolds in our lives.

So...get your ticket and climb aboard this ride. You might even dare to let go of the rail and put your hands in the air!

Pastor Mike