



INTRODUCTION

How many of you in this room like this time of year? Don't get me wrong, I love fall, but I'm talking more about that last day of October time of year. How many of you like to be scared? Haunted houses, hayrack rides, scary movies, "ghost" stories, the whole bit?

Listen, I HATE being scared. (or LOVE)

[Leader Note: tell a quick and funny story about an experience you had at a haunted hayride or haunted house.]

TENSION

That's a funny story, but as I was reflecting on the upcoming holiday, I got to thinking about fear. So, the title of today's message is "Spooked." Turn to the person next to you and say, "Get spooked." Turn to the person on the other side of you and say, "Nah!" Some of us like to be scared and others not so much, but either way, I believe there are some fears that we can all relate to. And they might not be the fears you are thinking about. They are more than spiders or small spaces or clowns. I think there are three fears that I believe God wants to talk to us about today. Here they are:

- Fear of man
- Fear of failure, and
- Fear of death

Can you relate with me? I think every single one of us cares what other people think about us. We fear being rejected, being alone, being judged, being left out, being bullied, being unpopular or disliked, being criticized, and just in general, not fitting in or being normal. We are always comparing ourselves to others to see how we measure up to some invisible standard. We have a fear of man; a fear of other peoples' opinions of us.

Second, we all fear failure. And if you don't now, you probably will at some point. It may or may not be related to doing well in school, in sports or activities, in our romantic relationships or friendships or with our family, at our job, or even our futures. We don't want to mess it up. We think if we do, there will either be consequences inflicted upon us, like messing up our

future prospects, or being heart-broken, not having what we need. Many times, we don't want to fail because our value has been tied up in the thing we don't want to mess up.

Lastly, I think if we are honest with ourselves, some of us fear death and physical pain. Many of us have experienced loss in our lives already and the grief is heavy. Some of you might wonder about what happens when you die. And there may even be some of you that might also have a deep-seated fear that you are not safe and so you can't be alone in your house or walki down the street without looking over your shoulder.

All of these fears contribute to some of the very real anxiety that you may experience on a continual basis. Even if you don't think you struggle with any of these fears right now, although I hope you are the in the 0% that don't, just go around the sun once more and you may find these things have crept into your life. Either way, we all need to hear these truths today, including me. So, let's open up God's Word together and see what He has to say to us about these spooky things we experience. Somebody say, "Spooked!"

BIBLE

First, lets look at our fear of man.

Hebrews 13:6 (NLT) says, *"so we can say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?"*

Galatians 1:10 (NLT) says, *"Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant."*

Colossians 3:23 (NLT) says, *"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."*

How many of you have seen the show "The Voice?" We are on season what, 17 now? I love it. When you become a contestant on The Voice, you have 30 seconds to get one of the four judges to like you enough to hit their button and turn their chair around for you. And these singers give it all they've got. They spend hours picking just the right song, they rehearse and rehearse and rehearse. They buy a new outfit. And their moment