

Spooked 1 – Fear of Man

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. My name is Chris Fluitt and I am afraid of heights.

What are you afraid of? Everyone is likely afraid of something and we are going to be talking about this fear in our new message series – Spooked.

What if there was a creature who feasted on your fear?

What if there was a creature that profited from your fear, anxiety, and worry? Can you think of a creature like this? Perhaps you can think of some of these creatures?

There is a lot of fiction that centers on the idea of a creature that feasts on fear...

I imagine most people would think of “Pennywise,” the scary clown from Stephen King’s novel “IT.” There are many others...

- Boggarts from Harry Potter.
- Mister Fear a Marvel comic character & Scarecrow a DC comic character.
- The tingler from the 1959 Vincent Price horror movie. Turns out the tingle you get down your spine when you are scared is actually a parasite that feed off your fear called “the tingler.”
- The fearmonger from “Doctor Who” & Redjac from the original “Star Trek.”

The list could go on a lot further... But what if I told you there are some creatures that don’t belong in the fiction section who feast on your fear?

There are these real life creatures that live in the deepest darkest place... Washington DC... Seriously politicians use fear as a way to get us to vote for them. As we are gearing up for this election season I challenge you to notice the fear tactics and how they will use your fear to their advantage.

People who are trying to sell you something often call on fear. A guy recently knocked on my door trying to sell me an alarm system... he basically told me that if I didn’t buy this alarm system I was going to see my family slaughtered in the night...

Anyone trying to influence your decision can capitalize on your fear.

And then there is the Devil. Satan does not belong in the fiction section. The Devil feasts on your fear. He uses fear to devour your faith, peace, trust, joy, hope, and love.

Spooked Title

This month, we are going to be looking at 4 fears that the Devil is already using to devour the best God has for our lives.

I want you to make sure you are hear for every week of this series. I want you to invite your friends and get them here. Here is a quick look at the upcoming weeks.

Next week, week 2, we will talk about the fear of the Supernatural. There are bad spirits and there are good spirits. If we aren't careful we can be afraid of everything that is supernatural and miss out on the good God has for us.

In week 3 we are going to be talking to you about the fear of the unknown. We can be so afraid of what we don't know that we forget to act on what we do know.

In week 4 we are going to be talking about the fear of God... but specifically we will be talking about the WRONG kind of fear. We often have wrong thoughts & ideas about God and these are some of the scariest thoughts & ideas you will ever have. The wrong thoughts about God will cause you to be petrified with fear.

Those are the next 3 weeks! Be here for each of them. Do not be AFRAID to invite your friends.

Today we are going to talk about the fear of men.

Fear of Men

You don't need a killer clown to be chasing after you in order for you to experience fear. We are often afraid at what others are thinking about us.

You don't need a Jurassic Park Tyrannosaurus Rex running after you in your rearview mirror in order for you to be afraid. We are often afraid at what others are saying about us.

You don't need a Freddy Krueger appearing in your dreams to steal your peace. We are often terrified of the thoughts that run through our own mind.

We experience fear when people give us the wrong look... Oh no... they hate me. I must be a loser.

We never step into new when we worry about the judgment of those around us. What will they think when they see me trying...?

We don't need a scary monster... we are plenty afraid of the people already in our life.

Hebrews 13:6 (NIV2011) I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Well it turns out that mortals can do a lot of things to you.

- They can punch you in the face.
- They can fire you.
- They can steal your money.
- They can burn down your house.
- They can harm your relationships.
- They can lie about you.
- They can be mean.

Seriously God? What can mere mortals do? Cain killed Able... Men killed prophets... Peter, Paul, John, Thomas and many of your other followers were attacked and even killed by mortals... Didn't you see what mortals did to Jesus on the cross?

What kind of God would call us to go before crazy, dangerous, hateful...? God why would you do this? Look at how God sends Jeremiah to go prophecy to a rebellious people.

Jeremiah 1:6 (NIV2011) "Alas, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young."

Call someone else God... I am too young... I am not experienced... I don't have the talent...

Jeremiah 1:7 (NIV2011) But the Lord said to me, "...You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you."

Oh no God, I just told you I can't and now you say I MUST.

Jeremiah 1:8 (NIV2011) Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.

Rescue? God you mean to tell me that I am being sent into a situation where I will need rescue?

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV2011) Fear of man will prove to be a snare...

God... here is an idea. Go find someone who is not afraid and send them...

God calls us into scary situations. God would have us say scary things to people who might not want to hear them. God sends us to stand before scary people.... And if this scares you, you are not alone.

Abraham was scared of men

Abraham was called of God. God literally chooses Abraham and says "I am going to make a covenant with you and through you the entire world will be blessed."

Abraham hears God speak and receives insane promises. He was promised blessing & miracles that were jaw- dropping...

Abraham the mighty man of faith was scared of people. How scared...? ha-ha... I am glad you asked.

Genesis 12:10-11 (NIV2011) Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a while because the famine was severe. As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, "I know what a beautiful woman you are.

Genesis 12:12-13 (NIV2011) When the Egyptians see you, they will say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but will let you live. Say you are my sister, so that I will be treated well for your sake and my life will be spared because of you."

Genesis 12:14-15 (NIV2011) When Abram came to Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was a very beautiful woman. And when Pharaoh's officials saw her, they praised her to Pharaoh, and she was taken into his palace.

Genesis 12:16 (NIV2011) He treated Abram well for her sake, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.

Abraham, the father of the faithful. Abraham the father of many nations. Abraham who rules and reigns with God because He has been given a covenant and promise. Abraham who experiences

miracles and even has a face to face encounter with God... Abraham who heard God's voice... He was scared of people.

He was afraid that people would want what he had... his beautiful wife... and that they would try to take what he had and kill him. So he brilliantly decides to lie and say "she is my sister." Now Sarah was actually his half-sister so it was not a complete lie... but it was an absolute deception to not say "This woman is my wife. She is with me."

So his brilliant plan leads Pharaoh to take Sarah, Abraham's wife, into his palace... Not a good sign. Pharaoh praises her beauty and then takes her into his palace... meanwhile Abraham is outside the palace. And Abraham doesn't say anything... He is in the process of lying to the Pharaoh and losing his wife. Abraham is too afraid to stand up and say "She is my wife."

Sometimes we are too spooked to speak up

Sometimes we are too afraid to speak up. This is mine. This is my calling. This is my purpose. This is what God has given me. This is what I want to do. This is what I refuse to do.

Abraham didn't speak up... He was afraid of people. If someone as called as Abraham can be afraid... maybe we might have this problem too.

Abraham was about to lose his wife, not because of her beauty, but because he was too afraid to fight for what was rightfully his. YET LEARN THIS CHILD OF GOD... When we are too afraid to speak, God will speak for us.

Genesis 12:17-19 (NIV2011) But the Lord inflicted serious diseases on Pharaoh and his household because of Abram's wife Sarai. So Pharaoh summoned Abram. "What have you done to me?" he said. "Why didn't you tell me she was your wife? Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' so that I took her to be my wife? Now then, here is your wife. Take her and go!"

Abraham was afraid of Pharaoh, but in the end Pharaoh was afraid of Abraham and His God. Pharaoh and his household nearly died of disease and he asks Abraham "What have you done to me?"

Abraham was afraid of the Pharaoh's power, but Pharaoh was afraid of the awesome power of Abraham's God. Abraham was afraid of what Pharaoh would do to him, but the story ends with Pharaoh asking "what have you done to me?"

God fights for us! Be NOT afraid!

Even when Abraham was in the wrong, God fought for him. Even when Abraham was spooked, God protected Him. God fights for you, even when you are wrong, even when you are spooked. BE NOT AFRAID!

I love how Pharaoh says “Here is your wife. Take her and go.” In the end Pharaoh was afraid of Abraham.

When the people around you figure out that God fights for you, they fear you. **Sometimes our enemies respect and honor God’s power more than we do.**

Many times we see this in scripture. When Israel was going into the Promised Land to claim the land God promised them... It says that Israel was afraid to go into the land. There were giants in the land and big bad armies... but we are also told that the nations within the Promised Land were afraid of the Israelites... because they had heard about the God of the Israelites. (Joshua 2:9)

Do not forget that God fights for you! Don’t fear men... what they can do think or say... God fights for you.

We need to get past fear...

So Abraham learned a valuable lesson that day when God almost killed Pharaoh on his behalf... Abraham’s life was never the same after that... He never was afraid of another person... EXCEPT THAT IS NOT TRUE.

Would you believe me if I told you Abraham does the exact same thing a few chapters later? Would you believe me if I told you his son Isaac did the same thing in his life? It is true.

Fear repeats itself... we must do more than get past fear...

In Genesis 20 Abraham pulls the exact same stunt on a king named Abimelek. Abraham says this is my sister... the king talks Sarah into his palace..., then God speaks to king Abimelek.

Genesis 20:3 (NIV2011) But God came to Abimelek in a dream one night and said to him, “You are as good as dead because of the woman you have taken; she is a married woman.”

The exact story plays out several times because an anointed, called, child of God feared people rather than respect the power of God and lay claim to what was rightfully theirs. This exact story plays out over and over in our life.

We seek to get past the fear... We seek to just get past the situation... But this doesn’t get you past the fear. The situation just keeps repeating itself.

Here is what we need to do... It is counter intuitive but hang with me.

We don't need to get past fear... We need to fear God

We need to stop fearing people and start fearing God.

Genesis 20:10 (NIV2011) And Abimelek asked Abraham, "What was your reason for doing this?"

Genesis 20:11 (NIV2011) Abraham replied, "I said to myself, 'There is surely no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.'

Abraham blames all of his actions on the lack of fear of God..., "Because there is no fear of God in this place..."

Abraham was probably right that they didn't fear and respect His God... but here is where Abraham messes up... It is where we mess up every time we get spooked.

We get SPOOKED when we fear something else more than God

Until we fear God more than anything... Until we decide we are going to follow God above anyone... Until we respect and honor God's power more than the power of men... we will repeat the same spooky pattern like Abraham.

Abraham, you don't have to save your life... God will.

Abraham, you don't have to think yourself out of the situation... God will.

Abraham you don't have to hide. Stand Abraham.

Abraham, you don't have to portray yourself as the brother of a beautiful woman... God has called you to be the husband.

Until we honor God's power above the power of people we repeat this same pattern over and over.

We have to change our fear focus.

Fear Focus

Fear is all about focus. Fear focuses on the wrong thing. You may have heard this definition of fear in Church before... Fear is faith in the wrong thing. It is true.

Earlier I read some verses out of focus... let's put them in focus...

If you read Hebrews 13:6 and only focused on what mortals could do, you would definitely be afraid... But let's look at this verse again.

Hebrews 13:6 (NIV2011) So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

As long as we focus on what mortals can do we will fear... But if we focus on THE LORD IS MY HELPER...

If we read Jeremiah and only focus on the worries and insecurities of Jeremiah we will remain afraid. But when we focus on what God says about us it changes everything.

Jeremiah 1:6 (NIV2011) "Alas, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am too young."

Jeremiah 1:7 (NIV2011) But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you."

Jeremiah 1:8 (NIV2011) Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.

Jeremiah 1:9 (NIV2011) Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I have put my words in your mouth."

Fear Focus

Where is your fear focus today?

Musician

Are you spooked? Have you been placing more fear on people than on God?

Are you just trying to get past fear today? Are you ready to fear God and defeat the fear of people?

- Have you been afraid of what others are thinking and saying?
- Are you afraid of what someone can do to you?
- Are you afraid to be the person God has called you to be?

As we come today I want to focus our fear towards God.

God I would be afraid if you ever left me.

God I would be afraid to walk away from your presence.

God I respect your power and would be afraid to not obey you.

God I receive your call on my life and would be afraid of rejecting it.

God it would be crazy to respect the power of people above the your power.

God I want your power in my life.

Come to this altar today in the Fear of the Lord who loves you. Leave behind the fear of people.