

## THE AUDIENCE OF OTHERS v. THE AUDIENCE OF ONE

January 3, 2016 1 Samuel 15:1-35 by Bob Branch  
Staying Free, Part 13 (last one!)

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*“The spirit of beguilement is an insidious thing!”*

**beguile:** to take away something from another by trickery

**insidious:** to use stealth in order to deceive or entrap

**BIG IDEA:** The fear of man baits us to give up God’s riches without knowing we are doing it. The Spirit of Grace brings freedom from what others think of us, as we concern ourselves wholly with God’s view of us and the world around us.

### 1 Samuel 15:1-35

<sup>20</sup> “But I did obey the LORD,” Saul said. “I went on the mission the LORD assigned me.”

<sup>24</sup> Saul said to Samuel, “I have sinned. I violated the LORD’s command and your instructions. **I was afraid of the men and so I gave in to them.** <sup>25</sup> Now I beg you, forgive my sin and come back with me, so that I may worship the LORD.”

<sup>30</sup> Saul replied, “I have sinned. But please honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel; come back with me, so that I may worship the LORD your God.”

### 1 Samuel 15:1–31

Here, at the end of the story, **Saul’s motive becomes clear.**

- He is so afraid of what others think of him that he is willing to disobey God to stay in their good graces!
- He actually doesn’t see that he is disobeying God’s clear instructions. He’s bought his own self-deceived/beguiled storyline.
- It is a costly self-deception—it costs him his kingship. **He sells off the riches God has blessed him with for the approval of people.**

**NET: He cares more about the opinions of others, than he does of God’s. He’s playing for the wrong audience!**

- We can be so afraid (concerned) of what other people may think of us, that we actually will disobey God rather than rock the boat with them!
- Prioritizing others over God invites a kind of self-imposed blindness where we actually think we are obeying God when we are not! We are beguiled!
- When we play for the audience of others, rather than the audience of ONE, we slowly sell off God’s riches for others approval and applause.
- What I’m saying is that people pleasing is a joy-stealer.
- Fear of man compromises our conscience, and blurs the line between God/evil, right/wrong.

### WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

- **Assess** how far you’ve slid into people pleasing.
- **Look up**... look up to the One whose opinion of you is completely true and secure. Agree with him!
- **Repent**... turn from the fear of people, living for their applause, the fear of rejection, & people pleasing. Call it sin. Turn from it TO GOD.
- **Ask God for help** to see it for what it is, what it has cost you, and hate it as he does.
- Thru the power of the Spirit, **steer your life out of fear.**
- **Encourage** those around you to live fear-free!

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” **Joshua 1:9**