

CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO MOSES

HEBREWS 03:01–06

Introduction

Jesus Christ is superior to all men. No matter who the person is, Jesus Christ is superior to him. Moses is considered by the Jews and by many others to be one of the greatest men who has ever lived. He was the great emancipator of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery and the great leader who gave birth to the Jewish people as a nation. But as great as these feats were, he was above all else the great law-giver, not only to Israel, but to the world. People and nations who have sought freedom have based their legal system upon the ten commandments and other laws given by Moses. However as great as Moses was, there is still One who is superior to him. There is a Person to whom all mankind should look and base their lives and governments upon: that Person is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is superior to all men, no matter how great they and their contributions to society and the world have been. No person comes close to being as great as Jesus Christ is nor to making the contributions to the world that Jesus Christ has.

- I. Fix your thoughts on Jesus (v. 1).
- II. He was faithful to God, even as Moses was faithful (v. 2).
- III. He is the builder of the house; Moses was only a resident of the house (v. 3-4).
- IV. He is the Son over God's house; Moses was only a servant in God's house (v. 5).
- V. He is building His house, but entrance into His house is conditional (v. 6).

I. *Hebrews 03:01 Believers' Focus: Jesus Christ*

Fix your thoughts on Jesus. The phrase “fix your thoughts on” (*katanoeo*) means to focus your thoughts and mind, attention and eyes on Jesus Christ. It means to concentrate; to seek to grasp; to pay attention, to be attentive in order to learn about Jesus Christ. Note: this exhortation is written to believers.

1. Believers should fix their thoughts on Jesus Christ because of who they are.
 - => Believers are holy brothers. The word “holy” (*hagioi*) means to be set apart or separated to Christ. It means that we have turned away from the unclean things of the world and from the religions of the world and have turned to Christ. We are holy, set apart to be a brother to Christ. Therefore, we should be following and focusing our attention upon Christ.
 - => Believers are partakers of the heavenly calling. We have been called by Christ to live with God in heaven. We are not to live for this earth; we are to live for heaven. Therefore, our thoughts are to be fixed upon heaven, especially upon Christ who is our glorious Saviour and who has made it possible for us to live in heaven.
 2. Believers should fix their thoughts on Jesus Christ because of who Christ is.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the *Apostle* of our confession. The word apostle means a person who is sent forth as an ambassador: sent forth by a king or a country on a special mission
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with a special message. And note: the person is always sent forth with the full authority and power of the king and country which he represents. This is Jesus Christ. Note the word *profession* or *confession*: we confess that Jesus Christ is the Supreme Apostle of our faith and lives. We confess that He is the One whom God sent from heaven to earth...

- as the supreme representative of God, the One who shows us exactly what God is like.
- as the supreme messenger of God, the One who tells us the truth about God, ourselves and the world.
- with all the authority and power of God, the One who has control over all the world and over all the trials and circumstances of our lives.

b. Jesus Christ is the High Priest of our confession (see *Jesus Christ, High Priest*, Heb. 3:1).

HEBREWS 03:01 JESUS, APOSTLE AND HIGH PRIEST

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

Hebrews 03:01

Jesus Christ is the supreme apostle of God. Under the old covenant of the law, (the Old Testament), Moses held the office of an apostle, the office of God's ambassador to the people. Aaron held the office of high priest, man's representative before God. But under the new covenant of grace (the New Testament), Jesus holds both offices.

=> Jesus is the Apostle, the messenger and ambassador of God. He possesses all the authority and power of God's kingdom and He represents God's kingdom perfectly.

=> Jesus is also the High Priest of God. But His position as High Priest is greater than any other person who has ever served as high priest. Why? Because He is Perfect Man and Perfect God. He perfectly represents man to God and God to man. (See *Jesus Christ, High Priest*, Heb. 3:1.) □

HEBREWS 03:01 JESUS CHRIST, HIGH PRIEST

Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

Hebrews 03:01

Jesus Christ is the great High Priest who stands between God and man. He bears the name of God before man, and He carries the names of men before God. In relation to Christ this means two things.

=> Christ must know man and He must know God.

=> Christ must also be able to represent God before man and man before God.

Scripture leaves no question whatsoever about Christ fulfilling these requirements. Christ is the great High Priest (Heb. 3:1; 5:10; 7:26; 9:22). William Barclay points out that the word for priest in the Latin describes it clearly. It is pontifex which means *bridge-builder* (*The Letter to the Hebrews*, p. 25). Jesus Christ is the *bridge-builder* between God and man, the Supreme High Priest who can represent God to men and men to God. The glorious message of the gospel is that men can know God and be brought before God. It is all possible because Jesus Christ stands with God and man as the Supreme High Priest.

Rom 8:33-34 *Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

Heb 2:17 *For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.*

Heb 4:14-15 *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin.*

Heb 5:5 *So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”*

Heb 6:20 *Where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

Heb 7:25-26 *Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest meets our need — one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.*

Heb 8:1 *The point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.*

1 John 2:1-2 *My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence — Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. □*

II. *Hebrews 03:02 Faithfulness of Moses and Jesus Christ*

Jesus Christ was faithful to God even as Moses was faithful. God appointed Moses as the first great leader over the *house of God*. In the eyes of the Jews Moses has always been looked upon as one of the greatest leaders ever produced by the world.

- => Moses was the great *freedom leader* who led the Jews out of slavery from Egypt.
- => Moses was the great *law-giver* to whom God gave the ten commandments and the other laws that have governed Israel — the laws that have been used by so many nations and peoples in their call to freedom and as the foundation of their legal systems.
- => Moses was the great *nation builder* who structured the Jews into a nation.
- => Moses was the great *friend of God* in the eyes of the Jews. They said that he was the man to whom God had spoken face to face when God gave him the law. Therefore, Moses was considered different from all other prophets in that they had seen God only in visions or dreams.

The point is this: Moses had been appointed by God to do some great things, and he had been faithful to his call and duty. God had even stressed the strength of Moses' faithfulness:

Num 12:6-8 He said, "Listen to my words: "When a prophet of the Lord is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams. But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"

In the eyes of the Jews no one was as great as Moses. Moses was superior to all other men, for he had been used so greatly by God and had been so faithful to God.

But note: there is another person who has also been appointed by God and who has been faithful to God: the Lord Jesus Christ.

- => He was faithful as the *Apostle of God*: the One who represented and spoke of God; the One who revealed and showed us exactly what God is like and how we can become acceptable to God. Jesus Christ was faithful in proclaiming God's message of salvation to the world.
- => He was faithful as the High Priest of God, the One who became the propitiation for our sins; the One who represents God to us and represents us to God; the One who stands between God and us.

Moses was faithful, and he stands as one of the most faithful men who has ever lived. But Jesus Christ was far more faithful. He stands as the very embodiment of faithfulness. He was perfectly faithful to God's appointment.

- => He stands as the perfect and supreme Apostle or Ambassador of God.
- => He stands as the perfect and supreme High Priest or Mediator of God.

2 Th 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

2 Tim 2:13 If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.

Heb 2:17 For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

Heb 10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first-born from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood.

III. Hebrews 03:03–04 Jesus Christ, the Creator

Jesus Christ is the builder of the house; Moses was only a resident of the house. What is the house built by Christ?

=> the house of the world or universe (v. 4).

=> the house of God's people or believers (v. 6).

Every house has to have a builder. A house does not appear out of nowhere. The same is true of the universe and of believers. The universe did not appear out of nowhere nor did believers. The foundation of the universe and of believers was laid by someone. By whom? Note verse four:

For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. (v. 4)

God built the house of the universe and the house of believers. But note the point: verse three declares that Jesus Christ built the house. Jesus Christ is being declared to be God — to be God the Son — to be as much God as God the Father — to possess the very nature of God, the power, knowledge and wisdom to plan and create the world. This is exactly what the writer of Hebrews declared in Chapter one.

Heb 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Heb 1:10-12 He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end."

Remember: Moses is counted as the greatest man who ever lived - the greatest leader and greatest religionist. The point is this: Jesus Christ is greater; He is far superior, counted worthy of far more glory than Moses. Why? Because Moses was only a man — only a resident in the universe — only one believer in the house of God. A faithful believer, yes!

Nevertheless only one believer in God's house. But not Jesus Christ. He made the house. He laid the foundation of the universe and of the house of God's people.

Thought 1. The point is clear. No matter who the person is — a great national leader, a great founder, a great attorney, a great liberator, a great leader of people, a great religionist — Moses is considered by Scripture to be greater. But there is One who is even greater than Moses — the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christ is far greater than all other men, no matter who they are. They are only residents of the universe, but Christ Jesus is the Lord and builder of the universe.

John 1:3 *Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

1 Cor 8:6 *Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.*

Eph 3:9 *And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

Col 1:16 *For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.*

IV. Hebrews 03:05–06 Jesus Christ and Moses

Jesus Christ is the Son over God's house; Moses was only a servant in God's house. This point spells it out as clearly as can be. Moses was faithful to God. God had called Moses to be His servant, to proclaim those things which were to come sometime in the future. What were those things? The things concerning Christ, the great promises of God concerning heaven and God's care for man. God used Moses to predict and show in symbols and types what the Saviour of the world would be like and what He would do when He came into the world. When God gave Moses the messages to deliver to the world, Moses had a difficult task, for he did not always understand the message nor the symbol. And God did not explain, for it was not yet time for man to grasp the full meaning. Nevertheless, Moses was faithful in delivering the message, and for that he is to be highly esteemed. However, Moses is still only a servant *in the house of God*. He is a very special servant — one of the greatest servants who has ever lived — but he is still only a servant. But not Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and as the Son of God He is placed *over* God's house. William Barclay states it well:

“Now Moses was only part of God's universe. He was a created man and he worked in a created universe. He was part of the house, involved in the house. But Jesus is the creator of the house, and the creator of the house is bound to stand above the house itself. Moses did not create the law; he only mediated it. Moses

did not create the house; he only served in it. Moses did not speak of himself; all that he ever said was only a pointer to the greater things that Jesus Christ would some day say. Moses, in short, was the servant; but Jesus was the Son. Moses knew a little about God; Jesus was God. Therein lies the greatness of Jesus and the secret of His unique superiority” (The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 25)

John 3:16-17 *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

John 8:29 *“The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.”*

Rom 1:4 *And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Eph 1:6-7 *To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.*

Col 1:13-14 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Heb 5:5 *So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”*

V. Hebrews 03:06 Jesus Christ and Salvation

Jesus Christ is building His house, but entrance into His house is conditional. How do we become a member of God’s house? Note exactly what this verse says: “We |must| hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast.” The picture is that of a ship holding its course for port despite the storms and turbulences of life, and note: the ship holds fast, holds on. If it did not, then it would never reach port. What is it that we must hold fast, hold on?

⇒ Our confidence in the hope of salvation. We must strongly believe — believe to the point of utter confidence that the promise of heaven and of eternal life is true. We must hold on to our glorious hope of salvation — hold fast with utter confidence.

⇒ Our joy in the hope of salvation. The glorious hope of living forever and all the other promises of God are so wonderful that joy should always fill our hearts. We should walk in the joy of the Lord regardless of circumstances.

Thought 1. Remember the opening exhortation: fix your thoughts on Jesus Christ. Too many sit under preachers and teachers...

- half asleep
- with wandering minds
- working through problems
- looking at others

This is tragic, for Jesus Christ is greater than Moses, who was one of the greatest men who ever lived. Jesus Christ is deserving of our attention. He is worthy of the focus of our lives. In fact, unless we hold fast to the hope of His salvation, we can never enter God's house. Fixing our thoughts on Him and holding on to His salvation is the only way to ever be admitted into God's house.

Mat 10:22 *“All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.”*

Gal 6:9 *Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.*

2 Tim 3:14 *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it.*

1 Pet 1:13 *Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

2 Pet 3:17 *Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.*

Rev 3:11 *I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown. ■*