

## Bible Study – Hebrews chapter 3:1-6 Jesus greater than Moses

In our last study, we see how Christ is the perfect High Priest and Saviour, as well as being superior to angelic beings. The characteristics of mercy and faithfulness are introduced to the readers, both being present and perfected in Jesus Christ.

In today's study, we will explore faithfulness in both Moses and in Jesus Christ, how it looks in their lives, and how it can be reflected in our own lives.

### Read Hebrews 3:1-6

The writer now expounds on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. He compares the faithfulness of Moses, who was considered the greatest man in Israel's history, to the faithfulness of Jesus, and makes the case as to why Jesus is superior to even Moses.

**Q.** What is the broadest definition of an apostle? What is the broadest meaning of the high priest? In the passage, what does the term "our confession" mean?

- **Apostle** – meaning delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders, credible and authoritative witness
  - The Apostles (as chosen by Jesus) are a subset and more specific type of messengers, given the authority to perform miracles to validate their calling.
- **High Priest** – One God anointed to represent human beings to himself (cf. 2:17-18). A mediator between two groups. One who is holy and set apart. Also, the one that has direct access to God, as compared to those who are 'regular' priests
  - Leaders note – Think of the High Priest as the leader of the regular priests and bears more responsibility and privilege than those in his charge.
- **"Our Confession"** – Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ – for which we take a public stand in water baptism
- **Leader's Note** – The point of this question is to set everyone on the same page regarding these terms so there will be the same understanding going forward. Don't spend too much time on this question, but rather be brief and move along, spending no more than 10 minutes going through this.

**Q.** What are some of Moses' accomplishments and characteristics that make him a great man in Israel's history (cf. Acts 7:36; Numbers 12:6-8)? When the writer talks about "God's house", what does it represent in the context of Moses? In Jesus Christ?

- Moses had the following accomplishments:
  - The one chosen by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and to the Promised Land as God promised to their forefather, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
  - Successfully challenges Pharaoh in releasing the Israelites
  - Parts the Red Sea
  - Leads the Israelites successfully to the Promised Land and continues to lead them during the wandering when they disobey God when he asks them to enter the first time
  - Gives the Law to the Israelites
  - Speaks directly to God (Numbers 12:6-8)
- Moses is also deemed faithful in the house that God gave him (Numbers 12:7)
  - When we see Moses' faithfulness, he was faithful until his death, never giving up on taking care of Israel

- Matthew 17:1-12 – Transfiguration – explain why Christ is superior – but also how great Moses was
- “God’s House”, in the context of Moses, is the nation of Israel
- “God’s House”, in the context of Jesus Christ, includes the nation of Israel and all the nations as chosen by Him to be part of his family.
  - Moses has a smaller subset of the “full” family of God
- **Leader’s Note** – Again, this is also another level-setting question, to understand why Moses was deemed great in the eyes of the Jewish people. Once that understanding is established, then knowing that Jesus is even greater, should give the reader even more appreciation of who Jesus is.

**Q.** The writer comments that a builder of a house has more honour than the house itself. In the chart, match the architect with their buildings:

	<b>Architect</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Buildings</b>
A.	Frank Gehry	C.	JFK Terminal, St. Louis’ Gateway Arch
B.	Frank Lloyd Wright	E.	Montauk Building (Chicago), Flatiron Building (NYC)
C.	Eero Saarinen	D.	The Shard in London, The Whitney Museum (NYC), the Menil Collection (Texas)
D.	Renzo Piano	A.	Guggenheim Museum branch in Bilbao Spain, Disney Hall, Dancing House (Prague)
E.	Daniel Burnham	B.	Falling Water, The Robbie House, the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo

- This is meant to be a fun question to answer
- This is also meant to show that the architect is celebrated and their creations are admired.

**Q.** What does faithfulness look like to you? Give examples. How was Moses faithful to God’s house (cf. Hebrews 11:?) How is Jesus faithful to God’s house? How is Moses’ faithfulness different from that of Jesus? When looking at these two examples, does it match with your definition and understanding of what faithfulness is? How is Moses example of faithfulness an encouragement to us to be faithful (Matthew 25:14-30)?

- **Leader’s Note** – This question of faithfulness is for people to answer as to what it looks like to them. There isn’t a wrong answer, but rather it is meant to flush out how people see what faithfulness looks like to them and how they can identify if others around them have this ‘faithfulness’.
- Moses was faithful to God’s house by:
  - Leading them out of Egypt and to the Promise Land (cf. Exodus 3:10)
  - Delivering the Law that God him to the Israelites (cf. Exodus 32)
  - Enforcing the Law and its consequences if they were ever broken
  - Pleading before God, asking for mercy on the Israelite people when they have sinned (cf. Exodus 32:11-14)
- Jesus is faithful to God’s house by:
  - By being obedient to God’s calling while on earth, to the point of death (cf. Philippians 2:5-8)
  - He is able to sustain all those whom he calls into his family (cf. Romans 8:38-39)
  - Jesus was sent to earth by the Heavenly Father with God’s authoritative message, which he faithfully delivered (as an Apostle – cf. John 17:1-5)
  - All those that are given to Him, he will not lose (cf. John 6:37, 39)

- The faithfulness of Moses is acted out as that of a servant. He faithfully obeys what God tells him to do. He does not determine on his own how the people of Israel are to act.
- The faithfulness of Jesus is that of a King-Priest, one that rules and reigns over all things. He is the Possessor (Owner) of all things, not one who makes preparation for things, as Moses did.
- See chart to show the superiority of Christ over Moses:

<b>THE PROOFS OF CHRIST'S SUPERIORITY OVER MOSES</b>	
Moses was <i>an</i> apostle.	Christ was <i>the</i> Apostle (v. 1).
Moses was the <i>member</i> of a house (family).	Christ was the <i>builder</i> of a house (v. 3).
Moses was connected with <i>one</i> house.	Christ built <i>all things</i> (v. 4).
Moses was a <i>man</i> .	Christ was <i>God</i> (v. 4).
Moses was a <i>servant</i> in a house.	Christ was a <i>Son</i> over a house (v. 5).
Moses was a <i>testimony</i> of things to be <i>spoken later</i> .	Christ was the <i>substance and fulfillment</i> of what Moses <i>witnessed to</i> (v. 5).
Moses served in <i>God's</i> house.	Christ was Son over <i>His own</i> house (v. 6).

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- Moses is equated to that of angels, in that they were servants and ministers to God's chosen people.
- Moses service also serves as model of what was to come in Jesus Christ, who would bring about a new Covenant and the Church.
- How does the example of Moses teach us (using the parable of the talents)?
  - "This is the one thing required of us, to be faithful. And well, were it for us if we laid more stress on faithfulness, and thought less of gifts and talents, or of success and results. For while it belongs to God to appoint unto each of us severally our position, to distribute gifts according to His wisdom and good pleasure, and to reward us with results and harvests, hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold, it belongs to us to be faithful to God wherever He has placed us, and in the gift and task which His love assigns". – Adolf Saphir
  - With whatever we are given, we are to be faithful in that task and assignment, not looking right or left, but to see it to completion despite the roadblocks and impediments that may come.
  - When Moses was called to lead the people out of Israel, he obeyed, even though he had some initial hesitation. (cf. Exodus 3-4)
- **Leader's Note** – Faithfulness is enduring and unwavering regardless of circumstances as true faithfulness perseveres. God has given us the ability to persevere to the end (cf. Philippians 1:6)

**Q.** In the latter half of verse 6, the writer encourages his audience to persevere in their faith. Why do you think it is important for us to remain faithful to our calling? How does God's calling for Christians to be faithful in our daily walk a comfort for us?

- The New Testament is full of warnings about false teachers and exhortations to Christians to persevere faithfully in faith since it is possible for genuine believers not to persevere to the end.
  - Colossians 1:21-23 – Calls for perseverance in order to be presented holy and blameless
    - So all Christians should be in agreement that those who are ultimately saved are those who do persevere and continue to believe in the Gospel
  - 1 Timothy 4:16 – A call to Timothy to watch his life and doctrine and to persevere in them, because if he does, he will save both himself and his hearers
- Another important facet is to persevere in the faith, meaning we know where we place our trust and hope, which is the work of Jesus Christ (cf. 3:6b)
  - This is what the writer is encouraging his readers/listeners, to not waver in where they put their trust and hope, to maintain their faith in the work of Jesus.
- It is important that we persevere to the end so that we are not disqualified at the end (cf. Romans 9:24-27)
- Believers will be holy, blameless, and above reproach if they continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel (cf. Colossians 1:23)
- The comfort and reassurance that we have in our faith is Christ's faithfulness to see his work completed to the end
  - Philippians 1:6 – The good work that God started he will see to the end
- There is comfort that God would keep those who are faithful, by the Holy Spirit, allowing them to persevere under extreme trials (e.g. persecution) and to keep them strong to the end. (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:8)
- Our assurance of salvation does not depend on our faithfulness, but God's faithfulness to His promise to glorify all those whom He has justified (cf. Romans 8:30)
- The result of perseverance, in living the Christian life, are great rewards for our soul, such as peace of mind, a clear conscience, and a witness to the world (cf. Psalm 19:11)

The writer shows how Jesus is superior to Moses, the greatest man in Jewish history. Moses' great faithfulness and accomplishments to the nation of Israel is why he is held in such high regard. The writer is not diminishing Moses' accomplishments, but rather elevating them. This only makes the faithfulness of Jesus so much more amazing.

The writer is also encouraging his readers to persevere in their faith of Jesus Christ because he is superior to that of Moses and Judaism. This is also a charge to believers today; that faith in Christ is worth persevering in no matter the circumstance you are in today. Knowing that Jesus is faithful in all his promises should give us hope and comfort that our faith in him is justified, which gives us life.