**FIX YOUR THOUGHTS ON JESUS**

January 24, 2016

Hebrews 3:1-6

Key Verse 3:1 “Therefore, holy brothers and sisters,who share in the heavenly calling,fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledgeas our apostle and high priest.”

Last week we learned that Jesus became fully human and died on the cross but God crowned him with glory and honor and put everything under his feet. But he does not enter his glory by himself. Our great salvation is that, united to Jesus, we will rule over all creation, even over angels. Jesus is the great forerunner of our salvation. What we see in Christ today will someday be our destiny. In light of this great glory, the author encourages Hebrew believers to fix their thoughts on Jesus. At that time, because of the persecution, their faith was very weak and they tended to hold on to the rituals of Judaism, and some were thinking about going back to Judaism. The author says, “Fix your thoughts on Christ, not on the pain and futility and frustration and sickness and death of this age. Christ has conquered death and all the sin and pain that leads to death. In Christ Jesus all things will one day be put under my feet, and I will rule with him in glory forever and ever.” Believe that and say that—in the face of every pain and sorrow and every frustration in life. Because it is true. Jesus has made it true.

In every text in the book of Hebrews, the theme is always the absolute supremacy of Christ. Today the author explains that Jesus is greater than Moses. Now we have already seen that Jesus is better than the prophets. We already have seen that Jesus is better than the angels. And now we shall see that Jesus is better than the one who brought the first covenant, Moses, the greatest of all.

In order to understand this passage, we need to find out what the Jews thought about Moses. If Jesus is better than Moses, we must know a little bit about who Moses was. Why is so important to prove Jesus better than Moses? The answer is because the Jews so highly esteemed Moses. He was esteemed above any other Jew who ever lived. He had a place that was utterly and absolutely unique in the mind of a Jew. He was the man to whom God spoke face to face. He was a man who saw the glory of God. He was the one who led Israel out of Egypt. He was God’s man. But beyond that, the greatest thing in the mind of a Jew was the law. And Moses was the one who gave the law. And Moses and the law were synonymous. The Old Testament commandments and rituals were the Jews’ top priority.

And some Jews even believed that Moses was greater than angels. And it is true that to the prophets God spoke in visions, but to Moses, He spoke face to face. He spoke to him in a burning bush. He spoke to him out of heaven. He spoke to him on Mt. Sinai and wrote the commandments with the finger of fire. God spoke directly to Moses and transferred his glory to him. And Moses stood far above any other man who ever lived in the mind of the Jewish people.

As great as Moses was, the Holy Spirit in this passage calls on us to fix our thoughts on Jesus who is far greater than Moses. And that is the consideration right here for his Jewish readers. Do you think Moses is great? Consider Jesus. Now in order for the Holy Spirit to present evidence to support the superiority, the supremacy, and the sufficiency of Christ, he selects a threefold presentation. He says that Jesus is superior in his office, superior in his work, and superior in his person. Superior in his office because he is the apostle and high priest; superior in his work because he is the builder of the house; superior in his person because he is the Son.

**First**, the Holy Spirit says Jesus is superior to Moses in his office. Look at verse 1. “Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest.” What does it mean to fix our thoughts on Jesus? Here the words “fix your thoughts on” are also translated “consider attentively.” It is to give our minds exclusively to think about who Jesus is and what he has done. In other words, it is to meditate on Jesus’ person and work. Consider Jesus, whether you are a Christian or not. I would like you to consider Jesus. And certainly this is the meaning of all our preaching and all of our teaching.

Timothy was having problems. He was young. He was getting an ulcer. Paul said, “take a little wine for your stomach’s sake.” People were criticizing him and he got discouraged. And he was really hurt. In 2 Timothy 2:8, Paul encouraged him, “Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead.” Paul doesn’t say do this, do that. He just says “Remember Jesus Christ.” Gaze on Him. Learn of Him. Hebrews 12:1-2 also says, “Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

In a race, you need to keep your eyes on the finish line. Likewise, if you are going to run the Christian race, you have to look at Jesus. When you are running in the race as a believer, get your eyes off your feet. Get your eyes off yourself. Otherwise, you are going to run into wall after wall after wall. So many Christians run with their head down. It is no wonder they run into everything. And so what is the Holy Spirit saying? Consider Jesus. He is all you need. Just look at him. Let everything else drop. Just focus on him. He is everything. The author gives Jesus his two titles and this is where we are going to see his office. He calls him the apostle and high priest.

First of all, he calls him the apostle. This is the first way that Jesus is better than Moses for Jesus was both apostle and high priest, Moses was not. At best, Moses was an apostle. Who was the high priest? Aaron, his brother. So in this sense, Jesus is superior in his office for he is both, Moses was only one. He is sent from God. Apostle means sent from God. In the Greek, it would refer to an ambassador. And Jesus is the supreme ambassador of God sent to earth. Now what are the characteristics of an apostle or an ambassador? First of all, he has all the right and all the power and all the authority of the king in the country who sends him and so did Jesus. He came clothed with the power of God. He came with all of God’s grace, all of God’s love, all of God’s mercy, all of God’s justice, and all of God’s power.

Secondly, an ambassador has to speak with the voice of the one who sent him. And so Jesus came and said, “For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken.” (John 12:49) So Jesus was the perfect sent one from God. He came with all of God’s power and with God’s voice he spoke. But beyond that, He was also the high priest of our profession. We will elaborate on the high priest concept in later chapters. In short, the word priest in the Latin is the word Pontifex, which broken into two words means bridge builder. And Jesus was the one who built the bridge from God to man. He was the one who connected God and man. And so Jesus is not only the sent one from God, with all God’s power and speaking with God’s voice, but he is the one who takes man and God and brings them together. He is the bridge builder. And he is also the bridge.

**Second**, Jesus is superior in his works (2-4). Look at verse 3. “Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.”

Moses was faithful, but he is only a member of the whole spiritual household which Jesus himself built. Jesus created Israel, Jesus created the church. In order to do that, he would have to be God. That is verse 4. “For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.” Here God’s house refers to the family of God. Ephesians 2:19 says, “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.” You are a part of God’s house. 1 Peter 2:5 says, “you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Somebody shared Christ with you. Somebody introduced you to Jesus. They are responsible in a human sense for part of the house, but who really created the house? God did. Here the point is that Moses is just part of the house. Jesus made the house.

**Third**, the superiority of his person. In verses 5-6 we see that Moses is by person a servant. Jesus is by person a Son. There is a lot of difference between a servant and a son. John 8:35 says, “Now a servant has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.” In other words, there are certain ranking for the son. Servants come and go, sons are sons for life. Now Moses was a servant in somebody else’s house. Jesus is a Son over his own house. We see that in his person Jesus is greater than Moses. A servant compared to a Son. A servant is in somebody else’s house. A son lives in his own house. Look at verse 5. “Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house.” As a servant, he conducted himself as a servant. He was a faithful, obedient, ministering, caring servant and he was a good steward of God. In Exodus chapter 40, eight times it refers to Moses’ obedience to all that God commanded him. In Exodus chapters 35 to 40, 22 times it refers to Moses’ faithfulness to obey all that God commanded him.

As exalted as Moses was, Jesus was more exalted. And do you notice that the author never compares Jesus with the failures of Moses? Moses had his shortcomings, he got angry, struck the rock to get water without the Lord’s command. Even though Moses had given his whole life to the Lord and led the people to the Promised Land, he never got to go into the Promised Land because of his disobedience. Jesus doesn’t need to be compared to anybody’s failures. He can be compared with anybody’s successes and still come out infinitely greater. So he is always compared with the best of men to show his greatness. Were he to be compared with the worst of men, that would prove nothing.

Look at verse 6b. “And we are his house, if indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory.” We need to hold firmly to the hope of the great glory and fix our thoughts on Jesus. Why is it important to know that Jesus is greater than Moses? Moses represents the law, certain morality and belief system we are accustomed to. While we accept God’s free grace, complete in Christ, we kind of hang on to an artificial kind of legalism and certain belief system, rather than live the positive Christ-controlled, spirit energized life.

Why would anybody want to hang on to the earthly ritual and belief system when they have the heavenly reality? Because we are so comfortable and we do not want to change. Because they give false pride that they are righteous before God by doing those things. Believers are sharers in the righteousness nature of Christ in his heavenly calling, because they live in a heavenly kind of existence. Therefore they ought to address themselves to that heavenly existence, not to an earthly. We need to grow in Christ’s character.

Some of us grew up in Confucius ideology. It dominates our thinking and custom. It is very hard to change. Some fathers demand absolute obedience from their children, and it creates many barriers and conflicts. Their relationship is broken. Many fathers hang on Confucius ideology because they are afraid of losing control of their family. They should learn Jesus’ shepherd heart.

In Confucius ideology, husbands are taught not to go into kitchen and do housework. So they don’t do any housework. They should learn Jesus’ servantship who washed his disciples’ feet, and serve their wives. In early Korean church, it happened that a master and his servant would go to a same church. The servant was elected to be an elder. The master was humiliated. But when he fixed his thoughts on Jesus who endured humiliation and shame on the cross, he could serve his servant in the church.

Canadians have been indoctrinated by autonomous morality. It is the theory that each person imposes the moral law on himself. It is opposed to heteronomous morality, which holds that the moral law is imposed from outside of man by another, and ultimately by God, which makes the moral law theonomous. Developed into a system by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), autonomous morality in effect deifies each person’s free will. In the Kantian understanding of freedom, liberty means not only freedom of choice but freedom of independence, on the assumption that one cannot retain free will and still be under the command of another’s law. To save freedom, Kant demanded autonomy, but by demanding autonomy he destroyed all real obligation and therefore all real law. Indoctrinated by autonomous morality, Canadians hate submission, they are very individualistic, and they don’t like to follow orders. This hinders the gospel work. They should fix their thoughts on Jesus and learn from Jesus. Hebrews 5:7 says, “During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.”

So if you are still holding on some ideology or customs which hinder you to grow in Jesus, break out from that. Do not hang on old things. Fix your thoughts on Jesus. Jesus is everything.