

Bible Study Guide: Hebrews 3:1–6

“Christ Over the House of God”

Introduction: The Witness of Polycarp

- Story: Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, at age 86 was told to curse Christ and live. He replied:
“For eighty-six years I have served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who saved me?”
- Polycarp faced death without fear because he knew Christ had already conquered death. His confession of Jesus as *King* gave him courage.

Discussion Question:

- What do you think gave Polycarp such confidence to endure suffering?

The Foundation (Hebrews 2:14–15)

“Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.”

- Christ entered death willingly and destroyed its power.
- **Key point:** When the fear of death is gone, the slavery of sin is gone too (cf. Romans 6:9).
- Polycarp could face Rome’s fire because Christ had already destroyed death.

Reflection:

- What fears still enslave people today? How does Christ’s resurrection set us free?

Hebrews 3:1 — Our Identity

“Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession.”

- **“Therefore”** — links back to Christ’s victory over death.

- **“Holy brothers”** — family language: we are members of God’s household (Ephesians 2:19).
- **“Heavenly calling”** — our vocation is from above (Philippians 3:14).
- **Command:** “*Consider Jesus*” = keep your gaze steady (Hebrews 12:2).

The Battle of the Mind: Logismoi

- The Fathers describe **logismoi** as intrusive thoughts planted by the enemy to break our focus.
- Revelation 12:10 — Satan is the “accuser.”
- Example lies: “You are worthless. You are abandoned. You are your failures.”

Application:

- Identity shapes behavior. Unless you know who Christ is, you won’t know who you are.
- Example: Jesus told Peter, “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church” (Matthew 16:15–18).

Discussion Questions:

1. How do false thoughts (logismoi) distract you from considering Jesus?
2. What Scriptures help you answer the accuser’s lies (e.g., Romans 8:1; John 1:12)?

Hebrews 3:1 (continued) — Christ Our Defender

- Jesus is both **Apostle** (sent from God to us) and **High Priest** (represents us to God).
- Our confession (ὁμολογία) is not private but shared together as the Church (1 Timothy 6:12).

Reflection:

- How does knowing Jesus mediates both ways (from God to us, and us to God) give you confidence?

Hebrews 3:2–5 — Christ Greater than Moses

“[Jesus] was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house...”

- Moses was faithful **as a servant** in the house.
- Christ is faithful **as the Son** — the builder of the house itself.
- The “house” = the people of God across time (Ephesians 2:21–22).

Patristic Note: Augustine: “Moses was faithful as a servant, bearing witness to Christ; but Christ is Lord, for He is the builder of the house.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think the writer of Hebrews compares Jesus to Moses?
2. How does remembering that Christ is the *builder* shape how we view church leaders today?

Hebrews 3:6 — Holding Fast

“But Christ is faithful over God’s house as a son. And we are his house, if indeed we hold fast our confidence and our boasting in our hope.”

- Christ: faithful Son over the house.
- Us: God’s house, His temple (1 Corinthians 3:16).
- Condition: *if we hold fast* (Colossians 1:23; Matthew 24:13).
- **Application:** Endurance is necessary — faith is proved by perseverance.

Patristic Note: Origen: “We are the house of Christ if we cling firmly to the confidence of our hope, not only at the beginning but to the end of our life.”

Reflection:

- What does it mean in practice to “hold fast” to our confidence in Christ?

The Scars of Obedience

- Even Christ bore scars after resurrection (John 20:27).

- Scars are not marks of defeat but of belonging (Galatians 6:17).
- Our wounds become testimonies of obedience and evidence of sonship.

Discussion Question:

- Can you think of a “scar” in your life — a hardship or trial — that now serves as a testimony of Christ’s faithfulness?

Summary of Hebrews 3:1–6

1. **Christ destroyed death** (Hebrews 2:14–15; Romans 6:9).
2. **Our identity:** we are God’s household, called from above (Hebrews 3:1).
3. **Our focus:** fix your eyes on Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest (Hebrews 3:1, 12:2).
4. **Christ > Moses:** faithful Son and builder of the house (Hebrews 3:2–5).
5. **Our perseverance:** we are His house if we hold fast to hope (Hebrews 3:6).
6. **Our scars:** marks of obedience and belonging (Hebrews 2:10; Galatians 6:17).

Closing Prayer Prompt

- Thank Christ for destroying death and freeing you from fear.
- Ask Him to guard your mind from false thoughts.
- Pray for endurance to hold fast to your confession until the end.