

SUPERIOR

February 4 & 5: Superior Man

Series Overview

Our faith is rooted in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Like the rays of the sun, Jesus Christ is the radiance of God's glory. But the book of *Hebrews* tells us that Jesus was no mere man, that He is not just another prophet or the face of another religion—He is the Son of God! And it's through Him alone that we've been given a superior message, a superior promise, a superior faith, a superior everything. During this series we will be learning how to see Him more clearly, love Him more deeply and serve Him more passionately.



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Sermon Highlights

The writer of *Hebrews* says, "Listen carefully or we may drift." It's the picture of a boat that has been carelessly tied to the pier and, during the night, the boat drifts away from shore. It's very easy to *hear* the message of Christ and then drift away, slowly but surely.

Philippians 2:12 says, *Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear.*

We cannot work our way into heaven. That's what grace is about. But even though we are saved from sin, we have to "work" at our salvation. In *Hebrews 1*, we learned that Jesus is superior to angels, which raises a question, "How could Jesus be superior to the angels when He was in a human body?" So in Chapter 2, we learn why Jesus was the Superior Man and is the only hope of salvation that we have.

1. Jesus dignified humanity.

When Jesus left heaven, He brought dignity to us. *Hebrews 2:6-7*, ⁶...*What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? ⁷You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor. (NLT)*

When Jesus took on flesh, He raised the status of humanity. *Hebrews 2:9*, *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.*

2. Jesus identified with humanity.

At the time *Hebrews* was written, a heresy called Docetism was infiltrating the early church. The Docetists taught that Jesus was not really flesh and blood at all. They believed that He only appeared to be real. But *Hebrews 2:10* confronts that heresy: *God, for whom and through whom everything was made, chose to bring many children into glory. And it was only right that he should make Jesus, through his suffering, a perfect leader, fit to bring them into their salvation. (NLT)*

Jesus was the Superior Man, but He was not Superman. Superman could catch a bullet with his teeth. But Jesus was vulnerable. He became the Author and Leader of our salvation *through suffering*. This is so important because that means He is truly one of us. He chooses to be our brother! *Hebrews 2:11*, *So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters. (NLT)*

3. Jesus justified humanity.

Hebrews 2:14, *...God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death. (NLT)*

The sting of death was destroyed when Jesus died as a human. The power of death was destroyed when Jesus rose from the dead, because He is God! But it took a Superior Man to die on a cross, and it took Jesus as God to conquer the grave. *Hebrews 2:15*, *Only in this way could he set free all who have lived their lives as slaves to the fear of dying. (NLT)*

- He preached as a *human to humans*. *Hebrews 2:3*
- He *died* for our sins. *Hebrews 2:9*
- He serves as our High Priest. *Hebrews 2:17*

Life Lessons:

- Keep *repenting*. *Hebrews 2:2-3, Romans 5:1-2, Hebrews 2:11*
Justification is a *position*. (In Christ)
Sanctification is a *condition*.
- Keep *growing*. *2 Peter 3:18*
- Keep *encouraging*. *Hebrews 2:12, Hebrews 10:25*

Hebrews 2:1, *So we must listen very carefully to the truth we have heard, or we may drift away from it. (NLT)* We've all had times when we've drifted or ignored this message, but now is the time to pay attention. Today is the day of your salvation!



Take it to the source ... Bible Study

Introductory question: If you were creating an improved Superman character, what new superpower would you give him? Why?

Read *Hebrews 2:6-7, Genesis 1:27, Psalm 139:13-14, Psalm 8:1-9* and *Hebrews 2:9*.

1. What do you think it means to be “made in the image of God”? What are some godly characteristics that every person has?
2. How could these verses in *Psalms* change the way you view yourself? How should it impact the way you treat others you encounter each day?
3. Have you ever thought of what it meant for Jesus to leave His heavenly glory to become a humble human? What is your reaction to the reality that humility is the way to glory?
4. If we are united with Christ, not only are we joined to Him in His death but we will also be joined with Him in His glory and honor. How might that affect your life now? How could that change the way you view your own decisions and actions now?

Read *Hebrews 2:10-11* and *Ephesians 2:17-22*.

1. The idea of a suffering hero goes against our cultural ideals and expectations. What are some reasons suffering played such a key role in Christ’s life?
2. We often think of Jesus as a Savior, but we don’t usually look at Him as our brother. What new dimensions might that bring to your relationship with Him? How could that indicate a new sense of closeness and similarity?
3. There was never a time when Jesus wasn’t perfect, but His suffering was part of His perfectly fulfilling the Father’s plan. Have you ever had a time when suffering helped to positively develop your character? How do you view the benefits of that difficult time now?

Read *Hebrews 2:14-15, 2:1-3, 10:25* and *2 Peter 3:18*.

1. Would you say that you have a fear of death? How does Jesus’ identification with us in His death mean that we no longer have to be controlled by a fear of death? How might that affect the way you view all aspects of life?
2. All of us have a tendency to drift in our spiritual lives. How can the truths of Christ’s identification with us humans keep you focused on your life with Him? What are some practical things you can do to remind yourself of all that Jesus did as the Author of your salvation?
3. How does your small group encourage each other in their spiritual growth? What are some new things you can do to help each other grow and develop in your spiritual lives?



Take it home ... Practical Applications

Take some time to consider what it means to have Jesus Christ as a brother. Ask God to help you understand how closely He has identified with us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Consider practical spiritual exercises you can develop to keep from drifting in your spiritual life. Look for opportunities to encourage others to stay in a condition of spiritual growth and gratitude before God. Be open to receive encouragement from others for your own life!

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All Bible references are from the NIV unless otherwise stated.

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