

14. The New Order

Through what Jesus Christ accomplished, God has established a new order in his relationship with the world. This chapter outlines the key aspects of this new order.

Righteousness by Faith and Grace

We are not made right by obeying the law – but by faith in Christ

For no one is put right in God's sight by doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to make people know that they have sinned. ...²²God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ. ROMANS 3:20, 22A GNT

We are unable to be made right with God through obeying the law, as we are not capable of obeying it all the time. But now because of what Jesus Christ has accomplished, we can be made right with God by faith in Christ and what he has done.

We are made right by God's grace – not by law

[PAUL:] *I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then the Messiah died for nothing.* GALATIANS 2:21 ISV

God's grace is his free and undeserved favor to people. By God's grace we are granted righteousness through Jesus Christ's death for us – as opposed to earning righteousness through obeying the law. Otherwise Christ's death would have been pointless.

A New Covenant

The first covenant was inadequate and superseded by the superior new covenant – through Christ

But now, Jesus has been given priestly work which is superior to theirs [the priests' ministry], just as *the covenant which he arranged between God and his people is a better one, because it is based on promises of better things.*⁷*If there had been nothing wrong with the*

*first covenant, there would have been no need for a second one. ...*¹³*By speaking of a new covenant, God has made the first one old; and anything that becomes old and worn out will soon disappear.*
HEBREWS 8:6–7, 13 GNT

The covenant which God made with Israel, based on the law, proved inadequate as Israel could not keep the covenant laws and so be righteous before God. So God introduced a superior new covenant – through Jesus Christ. Under this covenant, God's people have not only been released from the old covenant's law, God's laws in fact become internal principles for them (cf. Hebrews 8:10).

Jesus Christ is now the high priest of God's people, interceding for them before God in heaven

[THE WRITER, TO BELIEVERS:] *We have a high priest who sits on the right side of God's throne in heaven.* HEBREWS 8:2 NCV™

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] *Christ died and was raised to life, and now he is at God's right side, speaking to him for us.* ROMANS 8:34B CEV

Other Key Aspects

The kingdom of God came in Jesus Christ's mission

He [Jesus] said, "The right time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Change your hearts and lives and believe the Good News!"
MARK 1:15 NCV™

In Jesus' mission a more far-reaching, spiritual dimension of God's reign was established. It exists primarily in the hearts and minds of God's people. At the end of the age God's kingdom and authority will be imposed over all things.

God has made Jesus Christ Lord of all

*Then God gave Christ the highest place and honored his name above all others.*¹⁰*So at the name of Jesus everyone will bow down, those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.*¹¹*And to the glory of God the Father everyone will openly agree, "Jesus Christ is Lord!"*
PHILIPPIANS 2:9–11 CEV