

Jesus Christ as Lord of All

God has made Jesus Christ Lord of all things, to rule over all creation on God's behalf.

The NT speaks of Jesus Christ's lordship as being initiated or affirmed, in him being pronounced Lord of all upon his post-resurrection exaltation to God's right hand. However, note that some verses suggest that in some sense at least he was Lord of all things prior to this, speaking of his prior power or authority over all things.

God has made Jesus Christ Lord of all

You know the message he [God] sent to the people of Israel, proclaiming the Good News of peace through *Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all*. [ACTS 10:36](#) GNT

As a result [of Jesus being obedient and dying] *God exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow – in heaven and on earth and under the earth – ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father*. [PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11](#) NET

Note that vv. 10-11 above speak of all people in the future acknowledging Jesus Christ's status as Lord, which itself is a current reality.

God has given Jesus Christ power over all things

Jesus knew that the Father had given him power over everything and that he had come from God and was going back to God. [JOHN 13:3](#) NCV™

In the end, all Jesus Christ's enemies will be made his footstool – totally conquered

But when this priest [Christ] had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³where *he is now waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet*. [HEBREWS 10:12-13](#) NET

Pray for persecuted Christians

CHAPTER 14

The New Order

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I. Jesus Christ and the Law's Diminished Role

In order to be righteous before God, the Israelites had to continually follow the law God had given through Moses, keeping all of its commands – something which they proved incapable of doing. But through Jesus Christ's life and death, God has provided a new way of righteousness, for all people – leading to salvation. As a result of this, the role of the law has been profoundly changed.

Righteousness by Faith and Grace

The Mosaic Law cannot bring perfection

The law of Moses could not make anything perfect. [HEBREWS 7:19A](#) NCV™

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

For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his [God's] sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

[ROMANS 3:20-22A](#) ESV

God's way now for us to be made righteous before him is through having faith in Jesus Christ. This primarily involves believing Jesus Christ to be (with what he has accomplished) the means of righteousness – and accordingly trusting in him for one's own righteousness.

In conjunction with this, faith in Jesus Christ encompasses believing what the Bible says about: who he is; his death and resurrection; and the outcomes of his mission. This is discussed further in *I. Getting Right with God*, p. 176.

We are justified and made righteous by God's grace, through Jesus Christ – not by law

But they [people] are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. [ROMANS 3:24](#) NET

The Kingdom of God

NT teaching on the kingdom of God (or of heaven) follows on from OT teaching on God's reign (cf. *7. God's Sovereignty*, p. 55). It indicates that Christ's coming inaugurated a more far-reaching, spiritual dimension of God's reign. Its domain is in the hearts and minds of those who submit to God. This kingdom also has both a present and future dimension – existing now, but only being fully consummated at the end of the age. Then God's authority will be fully imposed in all spheres of existence – once and for all.

The kingdom of God came in Jesus Christ's mission

Now after John was imprisoned, Jesus went into Galilee and proclaimed the gospel of God. ¹⁵*He said, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the gospel!"* [MARK 1:14-15](#) NET

With Jesus' mission, the time had come for the kingdom of God to "come near" (NRSV).

The kingdom of God is spiritual in its nature

[JESUS:] *"The Kingdom of God does not come in such a way as to be seen. ²¹No one will say, 'Look, here it is!' or, 'There it is!'; because the Kingdom of God is within you."* [LUKE 17:20B-21](#) GNT

The final clause of v. 21 probably means that God's kingdom is within the hearts of its people (cf. CEV text note), indicative of its spiritual nature.

The kingdom of God is dynamic

He [Jesus] also said, *"The kingdom of God is like someone who spreads seed on the ground. ²⁷He goes to sleep and gets up, night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸By itself the soil produces a crop, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹And when the grain is ripe, he sends in the sickle because the harvest has come."* [MARK 4:26-29](#) NET

The growth of God's kingdom illustrates its dynamism and power. "By itself" (v. 28) indicates that the growth of the kingdom is not brought about simply by human effort. Rather it is in a way that is in fact beyond human comprehension (v. 27b).

teach his countryman or each one to teach his brother saying, 'Know the Lord,' since they will all know me, from the least to the greatest. ¹²*"For I will be merciful toward their evil deeds, and their sins I will remember no longer."* [HEBREWS 8:10-12](#) NET

Under the new covenant God's laws have become internal principles (v. 10), not just commands from an external source. Moreover, God's people know him and their sins are truly forgiven (v. 11-12). Bear in mind that the reference to "the house of Israel" (v. 10) is applicable to the new people of God, inclusive of Gentiles.

Jesus Christ as High Priest

Jesus Christ is the high priest of God's people – representing them before God in the superior heavenly sanctuary

[THE WRITER, TO BELIEVERS:] *We have such a high priest, one who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, ²a minister in the sanctuary and the true tabernacle that the Lord, not man, set up.* [HEBREWS 8:1B-2](#) NET

In the replacement of God's old covenant with Israel by God's new covenant with all who are now his people, the priesthood of the old covenant has been replaced by Christ's superior priesthood.

Jesus Christ sacrificed for sin once and for all

But when *this priest had offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³where he is now waiting until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.* ¹⁴*For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are made holy.* [HEBREWS 10:12-14](#) NET

Jesus Christ intercedes for God's people

[JOHN, TO BELIEVERS:] I am writing this to you, my children, so that you will not sin; but *if anyone does sin, we have someone who pleads with the Father on our behalf—Jesus Christ, the righteous one.* [1 JOHN 2:1](#) GNT

In his ongoing priestly ministry for God's people, Christ continues to intercede before God for them, speaking to God on their behalf.

[PAUL:] *I do not set aside God's grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing!* [GALATIANS 2:21](#) NET

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.

We are saved by God's grace rather than by works

For *by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹it is not from works, so that no one can boast.* [EPHESIANS 2:8-9](#) NET

Here "works" refers to things done in attempting to work for or earn righteousness and salvation – particularly in trying to fulfill the law.

Release from the Law through Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ fully realized what the law had worked towards

For *the law possesses a shadow of the good things to come but not the reality itself, and is therefore completely unable, by the same sacrifices offered continually, year after year, to perfect those who come to worship. ... ¹⁰By his will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* [HEBREWS 10:1, 10](#) NET

The Mosaic Law had primarily worked toward the removal of sin and making God's people holy. But its work really only foreshadowed "the reality" (v. 1) that would be realized through Jesus Christ. For the law's sacrifices for sin were not sufficient to comprehensively deal with sin and make people perfect (v. 1). But with the sacrifice of himself, Jesus Christ fulfilled what the law with its sin offerings in effect pointed towards, by consummately removing sins (cf. v. 12) and making God's people holy (v. 10).

Through Christ believers have been released from the law

Thus *the law had become our guardian until Christ, so that we could be declared righteous by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.* [GALATIANS 3:24-25](#) NET

The law was only ever to be the authority over God's people until Jesus Christ came, when faith would supersede it as the way for God's people to be righteous.

With Jesus Christ's once and for all sacrifice, there is no longer any need to sacrifice for sin

Christ, however, offered one sacrifice for sins, an offering that is effective for ever, and then he sat down at the right-hand side of God. ... ¹⁷And then *he* [God] says, *"I will not remember their sins and evil deeds any longer."* ¹⁸So when these have been forgiven, an offering to take away sins is no longer needed. [HEBREWS 10:12, 17-18](#) GNT

Instead of being under the law, believers are under grace

[PAUL, TO BELIEVERS:] For sin will have no mastery over you, because *you are not under law but under grace.* [ROMANS 6:14](#) NET

Believers are not under the law but "under grace". By grace righteousness and salvation are not only gained, as discussed earlier, but are also maintained. For in his grace God enables believers to live godly lives and continues to provide for forgiveness when they do sin. Accordingly, believers are to rely on God's grace both in striving to please God and for forgiveness.

The Relevance of the Law

The main purpose of the law is to make people aware of sin

For no one is declared righteous before him by the works of the law, for *through the law comes the knowledge of sin.* [ROMANS 3:20](#) NET

The law's spiritual and moral commands are still to be obeyed

[JESUS:] I tell you the truth, *until heaven and earth pass away not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter will pass [away] from the law until everything takes place.* ¹⁹So anyone who breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever obeys them and teaches others to do so will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. [MATTHEW 5:18-19](#) NET

The spiritual and moral commands of the law basically are the commands pertaining to the believer's spiritual relationship with God and their relationships with people. Most likely here Jesus had these commands at least primarily in view, with a number of them being the subject of his subsequent teaching (cf. vv. 21-48).

II. Key Elements of the New Order

Through Christ's mission God enhanced his relationship with his people and the world. Two defining aspects of this new order are God's new covenant with his own people and the kingdom of God.

As well as having instituted these two things in his mission, Jesus Christ continues to play a key role in both of them. Jesus Christ's role as high priest is arguably the central aspect of God's new covenant with his people. Jesus Christ's reign as Lord of all things involves reigning over the kingdom of God. Additionally, his reign extends to reigning over all things that are as yet to be subjugated to God's kingdom, which awaits consummation.

God's New Covenant

The first covenant (with its priesthood and law) was inadequate and superseded by the new covenant – through Christ

But now Jesus has obtained a superior ministry [to the priests' ministry], *since the covenant that he mediates is also better* [than the first covenant] *and is enacted on better promises.* ⁷*For if that first covenant had been faultless, no one would have looked for a second one. ...* ¹³*When he* [God] *speaks of a new covenant, he makes the first obsolete. Now what is growing obsolete and aging is about to disappear.* [HEBREWS 8:6-7, 13](#) NET

The covenant which God made with Israel proved inadequate as Israel could not keep the covenant (by obeying its law) and consequently could not be righteous before God. But God has abolished the old covenant and introduced a superior new covenant – through Jesus Christ and his mission.

Under the new covenant, God's people: have God's laws in them; know him; and are forgiven

"For this is the covenant that I will establish with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and I will inscribe them on their hearts. And I will be their God and they will be my people. ¹¹*And there will be no need at all for each one to*