



Daily Verse and Comment

Hebrews 8:6

(6) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

New King James Version

Many hold the mistaken belief that the New Covenant transforms living by [faith](#) and glorifying [God](#) into a far easier task than under the Old Covenant. “Easier” is an erroneous descriptor. Even though a convert is forgiven of past sins and receives wonderful gifts from God, including the Holy Spirit, the New Covenant also requires him or her to become a living sacrifice. Sacrificing one's life in humble submission to God is not easy, as the New Testament attests. [Jesus](#) lists some requirements in [Luke 14:25-27](#):

Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

Almost all who call themselves Christian today hold the opinion that, through the New Covenant, God has made salvation much easier to obtain. The central pillar in their belief seems to be that since Jesus kept the laws perfectly, and since He paid for the forgiveness of our sins through His sacrifice, when one accepts Him as Savior, the convert's obligation to meet the New Covenant's demands is somehow magically reduced or even eliminated. People carelessly say, “Jesus did it all for me.”

In plain language, a high percentage of professing Christians accept as true that God's law is essentially done away. They believe that Jesus kept it for us. While that idea contains truth, it has been twisted into a misleading

concept: that we need not be as concerned about keeping it as those who lived under the Old Covenant. Nothing could be further from the truth! Why? Our willing, devoted, and careful participation in keeping His law is absolutely necessary to be created in God's image!

The reality is that the New Covenant establishes what we might call graduate-level requirements of keeping God's law. However, God compensates for our weaknesses by providing the spiritual tools to reach those levels. Jesus *did* keep the commandments for our benefit, in that God is mercifully willing to accept His righteous life and death to pay our debt to Him for our sins because we do not have sufficient righteousness to pay the cost to have the death penalty removed.

But something is missing in people's misunderstanding of this reality, so their trust in it is also skewed. What is missing is what radio broadcaster Paul Harvey called “the rest of the story”: the truth that godly character is not imposed but built, created, with the willing and dedicated assistance of the person being transformed. The world's flawed conclusion dismisses the fact that God's creation of each person into His image is only *just beginning* at the individual's forgiveness and [baptism](#) into the church and the Family of God.

Anyone thinking of baptism should consider—if we have little need to be concerned about sin—why Jesus is so solemn and stern in His admonition in [Luke 14:25-27](#) about His disciples following such high standards. Not being discussed at this point is that, despite Christ's wonderful gift in sacrificing Himself to pay our indebtedness to God, the reality is that the wages of [sin](#), death, remain because the existence of the laws continues.

What we find is that God not only forgives us, but in our calling He also gives us the spiritual tools to fight and win the spiritual battles we engage in to keep sin from re-enslaving us. The fight against sin continues. God provides the tools for us to go on to perfection ([Hebrews 6:1-2](#)) if we will believe in them and use them.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Why Hebrews Was Written \(Part One\)](#)

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