

The Final Test - Giving Up My Rights

by Hans Peter Royer

The final test is a test of faith, where we examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith and if Christ Jesus is in us, and it requires us to give up our rights and surrender to God.

Duration: 41:02

Scripture: Romans 14:7

Topics: "Surrendering Rights", "Faith And Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages listeners to reach for the stars and not settle for a mediocre life. He shares a personal story about Major Thomas, who told him that surrendering one's life to Christ can lead to unimaginable blessings. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus himself gave up all his rights and became one of the lowest among us. He uses the analogy of a rope to illustrate how people often struggle to fully trust in their faith, even when they believe in its power. The speaker also discusses how possessions can become extensions of ourselves and warns against placing too much value on material things. He references a verse in Deuteronomy that challenges the idea of earning every dollar and reminds listeners that they are responsible for their own actions. The sermon concludes with a reminder that Christians should not expect safety, security, or a long life, but rather trust in God's plan for their lives.

Transcript

Good to be with you. As I understand, this is the last hour as far as the Kazakh is concerned. And this evening then we start with the Kaepernick Days.

So since some people will be leaving us after this morning, I'd like to have, I call it the final lecture for this session, for this few days. And I'm going to have a test. We usually have a test at the end of a Bible school week or a Bible school year that the students need to do, and we're going to do the same thing this morning.

However, it's a little different because it's a test that only you yourself can correct, but it's a real test. And it's probably the most important test that each one of us will encounter in our whole life. And actually, the test is given in 2 Corinthians 13.

If you have a Bible, you can turn there, of course. If you don't, don't worry, I'll just read it to you by Charles. You actually should hear that, that would help you.

But the final test, 2 Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 5. 2 Corinthians 13 and verse 5. The Apostle Paul is writing out the test, the examination. He says, examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.

Now, what is the test? What is the test all about? Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test. That's the test. The test of faith.

Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you? Unless, of course, you fail the test. Now, we've heard a lot about this weekend about Christ in us and us in Christ. The Lordship of Christ, drawing closer to Christ.

Now, some of us may sit here and say, well, this all sounds good and it all sounds right and it probably is. But I'm not sure, where do I stand? Have I failed the test or do I stand the test? Is this truth just a truth that is out there or has it become real in my life? It says, the peace of God shall rule your life. Does he rule my life? Well, this final test this morning will help you and me to find out whether we failed the test or not.

The Apostle Paul says, when Christ is your life, you have died. You have been crucified with Christ, no longer live. Now, a dead man does not need to die anymore.

A dead man, by the way, has no rights for himself. If you're dead, you don't claim any rights. A dead man is only aware of the one who raised him from the dead.

And so, this morning, I want to give you a test to find out where you stand. And by doing, I want to do it with certain types of rights that we Christians hold on to. And if we do, we know one thing, we have failed the test.

We will have an overhead in order to help you, but I will spell it out, of course, for the tape as well as for those who cannot see the overhead very well. I'm afraid that many, many Christians are holding on to certain types of right. And we want to, I want to amplify them a little bit.

The first one that I want to point out is that many Christians think they have a right for self-governance. In other words, we say, I have a right to run my own life. I have a right to determine my own testimony.

I have a right to reach my personal goals. Let me ask you a question. Who gave you that right? Nobody.

You may have taken it. Nobody gave it to you. Another right that we claim to have is a right to relationships.

We also believe that we have a right for relationships. I have a right to have good friends. I have a right to have a wife.

I have a right for sexual fulfillment. I have a right to be liked by my peers and by my friends. Really? Can I ask you a question? Who gave you the right to have a wife, to have a loving husband? You may have a great privilege, yes.

I have a great privilege to have a lovely wife. But if God is taking her away today, God has not violated any right. It's only a privilege.

It is not a right. We also believe that we do have a right for possessions. We believe we have a right for a 100 square meter apartment, for a car or a house.

And you see very often, yesterday we went out on a boat on the sea and there were those incredible houses, you know, with huge boats in front of them. You see, very often our possession is nothing else but the extension of ourselves. Germans and Austrians are very bad with their cars.

You see, if a German, if his wife falls down and breaks a leg, that's not bad. But if you scratch his car, he kills you. You know why? Because you scratched himself.

Because the car is only the extension of himself. This is why some women, when you go into their house and you drop a few crumbs on the floor, they get mad. Because you dropped crumbs on them.

It's the extension of themselves. And then you hear that, I have worked for this. I have paid every single dollar.

Really? I have news for you. In Deuteronomy, don't turn there, it's in Deuteronomy chapter 8, there's an interesting little verse. I often quote this to people who say, I have earned every dollar.

You know what God says, Deuteronomy 8 verse 17, you may say to yourself, God says, my power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me. But remember, the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth. If God would not have given you two hands, you wouldn't produce anything.

And we claim to be self-made men. What a nonsense. We cannot even control the air we breathe.

If God switches off the air, we're all dead. And we claim to be self-made men. What a nonsense.

What an arrogance. But we believe we have a right for possessions. Well, my question is, who gave you that right? Nobody did.

You may have a great privilege to have a house. That's great. Be thankful.

You may have a great privilege to have a nice car. That's great. But if you lose the car today, God has not violated any rights.

Another thing that Christians claim to have a right for is physical health. We believe we have, when we are Christians, we have a right to be energetic, beautiful, and dynamic every single day of our life. Really? Who gave you that right? I haven't read it anywhere.

The so-called health-wealth-prosperity movement. I don't know any other movements that... I don't know where they get this from. They don't read my Bible.

You know, Christians that say, when you're Christian, you must always be healthy, wealthy, and energetic, and prosperous. There is a book that says, Jesus wants you well. Really? I have a right to have healthy children.

Really? Who gave you that right? You may have a great privilege to have healthy children. You can be thankful to God for that. But if one of your children is sick, God has not violated any rights.

If you hold on to one of those rights, I know one thing about you. You're not free. Christians also believe that they have a right for mental and emotional health.

And in counseling, this is the same thing again and again and again, where you hear, my upbringing hindered me from developing my gifts, my abilities. The reason why I am the way I am is because I have been misused, whatever, from parents, from friends, from brothers, sisters, peers, my boss. And what I am today is only a result of those people, and I can blame them.

I have a right to blame them. Well, we certainly are a product of our past. That's no question about it.

But you can determine the future as you allow Christ to be your Lord. But so often you hear, I was not loved. I was mistreated.

I was misused. That's why I have a complex. Why did God let this happen in my life? And the result is, I'm bitter.

I'm angry. I'm full of self-pity. You know why? Because God violated a right, because I have a right for mental and emotional health.

Really? Who gave you that right? You may have a great privilege. Yes, you may have a great privilege to be mentally, physically, emotionally healthy. Thank God for that.

But brothers, sisters, if we are not, God has not violated any rights. You see, we can say, my friend has a photographic memory. That's unfair.

I don't. I have one too, just never developed. We also claim that we have a right for time.

I have a right to have my time. And if you violate that, I get angry. I have a right to go to bed when I decide and get up when I decide.

I have a right for my own personal time. Really? Who gave you that right? It's amazing how many rights we claim and how easily we get angry when anybody violates them. We also believe we have a right for comfort and convenience.

I have a right to have the right room temperature and to feel comfortable in some offices. Our offices, the secretaries, one opens the window, the other one closes it. And each one violates the right of the other one, because I have a right to have the right room temperature.

I have the right to get my shower. Some came up here probably. They weren't very happy.

No shower in my room. Well, I have a right. Well, really? I wonder.

I have a right to feel comfortable in worship time. And if I don't feel comfortable, I change the church, because we have a right for these things. I just wonder who gave us those rights.

You see, friends, these are all rights that we claim, but nobody ever gave them to us. And if you claim one of those rights, you are not free. We also believe we have a right for recognition.

That's a big one, especially among Christians. We believe we have a right to be recognized, and then you hear those, nobody even thanked me. I worked so hard, they didn't thank me.

My name was not mentioned in the bulletin, because I have a right to be recognized. And you violate that right, therefore I have a right to be angry. And with some Christians, even the trees are supposed to clap in their hands when I did something well.

I have a right to be respected. Really? I wonder who gave you that right. We also believe that we have a right for understanding, especially among Christians.

It's terrible. You see, Christians believe they have a right to be understood without communicating their problem. I wonder how many people go home from this conference saying, you know what, they have not understood me.

I have one question, have you communicated what your problem is? My neighbor of mine, they have a sick girl, she's 22 years old, cancer, she cannot walk anymore. I visit her every now and then. And when I visited her a few months ago, her grandmother, she said, you know Hans-Peter, we needed you so desperately and you never came.

I said, what's the green thing over there? That's a telephone. She said, you know how it works. She said, yes.

I said, do you know my number? Yes. She said, actually you can call me. But you see, I'm supposed to smell when she has a problem, and she does not communicate it.

But she was angry because I violated her right to be understood without communicating her problem. And this is the typical, no one understands me, no one listens to me, no one likes me, no one sees how hurting I am. You know where this comes from? Because we believe we have a right to be understood.

And if anybody violates that right, I have a right to be angry. I have one question, who gave you the right to be understood? You may have a great, great privilege having people around you who understand you. Thank God for that.

But if you don't, God has not violated any rights. We also believe we have a right for justice. We think we have a right to be always treated just and fair.

We believe we have a right to be treated properly. I want to tell you one thing, if you believe you have a right to be treated properly, you will live a frustrated life for the rest of your life, because there will be everyday things that you encounter which are not fair and which are not just. But relax, nobody violated any rights if you don't get justice.

We always encounter things that are not fair and we will be confronted with people that do not treat us properly, but that's okay. We also believe we have a right for safety and security, especially in our western world. We think we have a right to always be secure, to be sheltered.

And if I walk through town, it's probably the worst place in North America, this is where I came from. You walk through a town, you trip over a brick while you sue the city council because I left a brick there. It's not your fault, it's the city council's fault.

I was a ski instructor in the States many years ago in Vermont, Stratton Mountain, and I arrived there the first week, I didn't know the area, and I skied down a slope. I had my ski crew with me and it was a little too steep probably, but I didn't know the area very well. And one lady, she fell a few times, but I picked her up and I made a good effort.

And she really enjoyed the week because by the end of the week she gave me a book where she wrote in the first book that it was the best week in her life and she enjoyed it and it was great lessons and so on. A

couple of months later after I left the States again, I got a phone call from this company that said a lady is suing them because she had me as their ski instructor and she fell a few times because I've taken her down a slope which is too steep and ever since she has a headache. So she sued the thing for a million dollars, whatever it was, I can't remember.

So I should come over for the court case. But you see, this is such a perverted justice. It's incredible.

It's incredible. I teach our students when they come to Upward Bound, what we do in Upward Bound they cannot do in America anymore. Nobody would even dare doing that.

We can still do it. But I teach them how to climb. We make a good effort for a whole week that they learn how to move in the mountains.

And after that week I tell them, if you fall off a cliff and you're dead, that's your problem. We taught you how to do it. You have eyes, you have feet, you're healthy.

And if you don't look where you step, I can't look for 60 people. It's impossible. I cannot take each one of your hand.

You are responsible for your own actions. But we believe we have a right for justice. Also Christians believe we have a, sorry, for safety and security.

And the last point, we also believe that we have a right for life itself. We believe we have a right to have a wife who becomes 80 years old, as old as I will be. We believe we have a right to see the wedding of our children.

And if somebody dies in the age of 30, you know what we call it? We call it an untimely death. I want to tell you something this morning. I do not believe in untimely death.

Every death is timely. There may be death, of course, out of stupidity or whatever. But I do not believe in untimely death.

And if the Lord calls me home today, if the Lord calls my wife home today, the Lord has not violated any rights. If I have my wife a little longer, that's a great privilege. And I hope and I pray for that.

But if I don't, I have no reason to blame God. Now, what is the biblical view on our rights as Christians? And this is very important to learn and to really get into our system, because our society, our thinking has perverted our thinking. The first thing, when you study your Bible, is all our rights have been bought out.

Romans chapter 14. There are many verses. I'll just give you a few examples in order that you know what I'm talking about.

Romans chapter 14, verse 7 and 8. Let me just read that to you. Romans 14, verse 7. It says, For none of us lives to himself alone, and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord.

If we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. It says in 2 Corinthians 5.15, Paul says there, 2 Corinthians and chapter 5 and verse 15, he says, And he died.

Why did Jesus die? Why? That those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again. Why did Jesus die? So that you do not live any longer for yourself. You

have been bought at a price.

All your rights you lost at Calvary. They have been bought out. Secondly, our rights have not only been bought out, all our rights are abundant in discipleship.

Matthew chapter 10, the Lord Jesus speaks about our rights there. Matthew chapter 10 and verse 37. Matthew 10, 37.

Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. Anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Whoever finds his life, he will lose it. Whoever loses his life for my sake, he will find it. And he says it even stronger in Luke chapter 14, Luke chapter 14 and verse 25.

It says there large crowds were traveling with Jesus and turning to them he said, Now this is hard, but that's what the Lord Jesus said. I didn't say that. I would never say that.

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father or mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be my disciple, period. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. By the way, when Jesus says, hate, if you do not hate your father and mother, what does that mean? You see, we always must read verses like this in the context of scripture.

Otherwise, you can make your own theology. Scripture tells us to love our father and mother, of course. What does Jesus mean then? You know what he means is our love for Christ, for God, must be so great that our love for our parents seems like hate in comparison.

That's what Jesus is saying. He says, if you love anything more than me, you cannot be my disciple. If you hold on to any rights that you have, whether it's your wife, your health, whether it's your success or your possessions, you cannot be my disciple.

And the third thing, all your rights, and this until now, you may think this does not sound good. This sounds very hard. This sounds very, very sacrificed.

This is impossible. It actually is. But the third point, all our rights, once we yield them to God, will bring forth blessing.

Now, let me show you what I mean by it. In Genesis 22, don't turn there, it's a well-known story where Abraham is offering his son Isaac on the Mount Moriah, Jerusalem. Now, if one man in all man history had a right to have one son, it was Abraham.

Because God promised to Abraham, your descendants will be as numerous as the sand on the seashore, as the stars in the sky. He had one son. And now God is coming and says, you know what, Abraham, I want you to sacrifice your one son.

And Abraham did. Now, what was the consequence? You know what the consequence was? Remember, when we yield our rights, God returns them in blessing. He received back his own son, but not only that, you know what, you and I today, we are children of Abraham.

God blessed Abraham quite a lot. He had millions of children because he yielded his right to God. Another person that yielded his right to God was Paul.

In Philippians chapter 3, Paul makes a list of all his rights that he has. Philippians 3, it says in verse 4, Paul says, though I myself, I have reason for confidence. I have confidence, I have rights to claim.

If anyone else thinks that he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more. If you believe you have any rights, I have more. Verse 5, now he's listing his rights.

Circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, in regards to law, a Pharisee, as for zeal, persecuting the church, as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. I have many rights. But now listen what Paul says.

But whatever was to my profit, I now consider a loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ.

You know what Paul says? All my rights, they're just rubbish. I give them all up for one reason, that I may gain Christ. And I love Peter.

And Peter in Matthew chapter 19, Peter is very blunt. You know, he said to Jesus, Jesus, we have given up everything, what do we get for it? I like that. And you know what Jesus says to Peter? Peter, anyone who left his job, his house, his family, whatever, for my sake, he will receive a hundredfold an eternal life.

I must say this verse is not quite true. I did give up a number of things in my life, but I must say I received it thousandfold. God is never a debtor to anyone.

Once you yield your rights to God, he can return them with blessing. Now as a last step for this morning, how can you, how must I this morning, biblically deal with our rights? Now this is very personal, and I'd like to go through three points now that the Lord Jesus himself has given us. And then I want to give each one of you maybe 10, 15 minutes, just in quietness to come before God.

Be very honest and sort it out. The first thing that the Bible teaches us to do is to identify the rights that I have violated. Now I have only given you a list of 12 points.

You could further this list until 100 points probably. But I have given you concrete points so that you know what I mean. Now the first point to identify the rights that you violated, I call this the inner turbulence.

Because you know what, if you do that, this is not enjoyable. The initial experience with God very often is incredibly painful. Because when you come before God and you need to admit, actually Lord, I must admit, I held on to the right to sexual fulfillment.

I thought I have a right for money. I thought I have a right for success. And I got grumpy and angry when I didn't get what I'm supposed to get.

When you stand like this before God, you do not look very impressive. By the way, this is the big difference between confessing sin and admitting mistakes. God does never ask you to admit mistakes.

God only is asking you to confess sin. Admitting mistakes makes you beautiful. Confessing sin makes you ugly.

You see, if I tell you this morning, I made a mistake this morning, I lied to Charles Price. You may say, well, actually it happens to me too, I sometimes lie, and at least this is a person who admits that he lied. You know what, I turn out to be a beautiful person in this room.

It sounds a little different if I confess to you this morning, friends, I have a problem, I'm a liar. I lie, all the time. That's confessing sin, makes you ugly.

The Bible does not encourage us to admit mistakes. The Bible tells us to confess sin. But I want to encourage you, allow this process of being wounded.

You will be wounded. I love Hosea chapter 6 verse 1, it says, God wounds you in order to heal you. But allow God to wound you if you want to experience healing in your life.

And if you are a normal congregation, in this congregation there's lots of people who are wounded. The second thing, so first of all, identify the rights that you violated. Secondly, the second thing that we need to do is take those rights and transfer those rights over to God.

Give them to God. I call this the prayer of dedication. Let go of all your rights, all your so-called securities that you are holding on to in your life.

And you know what, this is incredibly scary. I want to tell you something, if you do not do this under tears or trembling, you do not know what I'm talking about. You know, when you stand there, you have nothing left.

You're totally helpless. It's like in rebelling. In Upward Bound, we do rebelling.

I tell the students, this rope holds 2,500 kilograms. Do you believe that? And they say, yes, we do. And they really do believe.

They are not hypocrites. They really believe. The next day I go up with 60 believers.

They all believe. I put them on the rope. We stand on the top of this mountain.

It goes down a hundred meters or whatever. And then I say, jump off and have fun. But you know what, they do not jump.

Everything goes wrong. Mouth is dry. The hands are wet.

And then they hold on everything they find, grass and rock. And when they get my hair, I finally throw them off. And then they fall backwards.

And then they hang. And then they look up and say, this really holds. Now they believed one day earlier that it holds 2,500 kilograms.

They maybe have 60. But they never entered into their faith. They never were active in their faith.

But you know what, when you yield, when you transfer your rights over to God, you know what it is? It's a free fall without a rope. You just fall back. And you have nothing, no grass, no rock, no profession, no family.

You hold on to nothing. You give all those rights over to God. You are totally naked.

But you only fall into the hands of God. But this is hard. Because you lose everything in order to gain everything.

I think it was Khariton Poom who said, he is no fool who loses what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose. Free fall. And then the third point that God asks us to do is purpose to thank God whatever the outcome of that decision may be.

If you this morning say, Lord, I have held on to this and this and that. But Lord, I am giving those rights over to you. Take them away or give them back.

It's your business, God. I want you to be Lord of my life. I have nothing left but you.

And now just thank God. Because you don't know what happened. You know what the exciting thing is now? Once you do that, you know what's exciting? You have no clue what's coming tomorrow.

Your future is as big as God himself. I told the young people the other day, I have a poster at home which displays a guy standing on a mountaintop and hundreds of peaks around him and the clouds in the sky. And it says, the sky is the limit.

Well, I made a cross above it because I don't like it. It's far too small. God himself is the limit.

And I wrote it there. God himself is the limit. It's not the sky that's too small.

It's God is the limit. Reach for the stars. Don't live a mediocrity life holding on to your rights.

Let it go and be surprised what God can do with your life. Major Thomas told me about 11 years ago, he said, young boy, he said, if you surrender your life to Christ, he will do things in your life that you didn't dream about in your wildest dreams. And I thought, well, that's nice words of a nice old man.

Today I know better. It's true. It's true.

The Lord Jesus, 2000 years ago, he gave up all his rights. He made himself nothing of no reputation. He came on earth, becoming one of us and one of the lowest of us.

He gave up all his rights. He didn't hold on to anything. He simply surrendered all his rights to his father and he left it to his father what the outcome will be.

The Lord Jesus says, as the father sent me, so I'm sending you. Surrender all your rights to me and you will be surprised what I can do with your life. Not because you're so great, not because you're so good, but because I'm the Lord.

I'd like to pray with you now. And then we will hear a song, my friend. And after that, I want to, for those who want to, if you don't want to, that's fine.

Just stay in your chair or go somewhere under a tree. Take a piece of paper, a pen with you. Write down the rights that you violated.

First point. Second point. Transfer those rights over to God.

And thirdly, thank him for whatever the outcome. If you do that, it may be a new start, having Christ as your Lord, surrendering your life to him. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you so much for this weekend. We thank you so much for the privilege of opening your word and seeing you, Jesus, the living word, not the written code, but the living word, Jesus Christ. Lord, I want to ask for forgiveness where I violated rights, where I held onto rights that nobody has ever given to me.

Father, forgive me where I was angry, disappointed or bitter, because I thought somebody violated something when actually nobody did. Father, forgive me. I want to repent.

Lord, I pray for myself and I pray for each one here that we may have the courage to come to you, to come before you now. Identify our rights, name them and speak them out, and then hand them over to you. Transfer them, totally surrender, free fall into your hands.

He is no fool, Lord, who gives up what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose, Christ. Lord, we want to thank you for whatever you have in store, whether we are still here in Australia tomorrow or whether we are in Africa next week, it does not matter, Lord, because you are alive. Whether we are single tomorrow or married tomorrow, that's not our life, Lord.

As thankful as we are, you are our life. Whether we are healthy, Lord, or have to endure pain, Lord, we want to accept it, because you know. Father, we want to surrender and I pray that we have the courage to do so.

Because you are the only one trustworthy, you are the only one who never misuses anyone, and you are the only one who is worthy to receive our life. You are the only one, Jesus, who deserves our life, because you have given us yours. That's my prayer for me, for my family, that's my prayer for these lovely people here, and I pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. Let's listen to a beautiful song with meaningful words and then have a little bit of quiet time with the Lord.

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