

Romans 6 - an Everest

by F.J. Huegel

Romans 6 explains the gospel and the nature of sin and its consequences, and shows how we can be justified and overcome sin through faith in Jesus Christ.

Duration: 1:02:09

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 2:17-24, Romans 3:25-26, Ephesians 6:11

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Overcoming Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a story about a general who experiences a transformative moment. Initially overwhelmed by the peace that was signed, the general eventually rises to his feet in a majestic fashion, asserting his authority. The speaker then connects this story to the biblical command to stand against the devil's schemes, referencing Ephesians 6. The sermon also touches on the issue of sin and the need for individuals to glorify God and be thankful. The speaker concludes by discussing the judgment expected from Paul towards the chosen people and the importance of following God's law.

Transcript

And now may the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer. Amen. I was really happy to come to know that some of the dear ones present have been desirous that I might turn back to my favorite theme, Romans, Romans 6, and I don't have to be urged to turn to Romans.

I think it is well, friends, for the matter that's been upon our hearts is perfect love for Jesus. It springs, after all, from this source, Romans 6. I have entitled Romans 6 an Everest. Romans 7, perhaps we will enter tomorrow evening upon Romans 7, a valley of tears.

Strange, isn't it? We will discover why tomorrow. And Romans 8, a thousand hallelujahs. Indeed, a thousand hallelujahs.

Romans 6 really isn't just one passage, it's all the word of God, yes, but I was about to say Romans 6 isn't just one passage among many, many. It's a veritable Everest. Our English Christian brethren, friends, speak of it as the Magna Carta of our Christian liberty.

Before we can enter upon Romans 6, we must turn back over the pages of the epistle and begin at the beginning. Very elementary, yes, but to truly appreciate the meaning of Romans 6 we must follow Paul

right through these doctrinal chapters in the unfolding of his, may I call it, argument. My brethren realize that the position of the epistle, this being the first in the series, does not obey the law of chronology.

No, it wasn't the first written. There's another law, one akin to that which determines the procedure of an architect, of a constructor, in the raising of some great edifice. First, the foundation.

Here Paul lays the foundation stones upon which all rest. Here we have the apostle defining the gospel. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

He writes, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Now, the apostle proceeds as physicians who want to proceed. Before a diagnosis, before any thought of treatment, of medicine, there must be a thorough examination of the condition of the patient.

Heart and lungs, blood, organs. And then the diagnosis. And then medicine and treatment.

So the apostle subjects his patient to a thorough examination. There are really two. The Gentiles and the Jews.

For Paul, of course, first of all a Christian, but still a Jew, there were two great families in the world. On the one hand, the Gentile folk. You and I are Gentile.

And on the other, the Jewish folk. He turns, first of all, to the Gentile world and all the discovery he makes. There are things here one cannot read without blessing, with shame.

But of course the apostle must be true, a realist, in his analysis and in his diagnosis. Men with men, women with women, in the most shameful perversions. And then the idolatry of which he speaks.

We have a saying there in Mexico, the man who doesn't know the Lord, God, will worship any old stick. Well really, if it had been sticks, it wouldn't have been so shameful. So Paul tells us that there in the Gentile world, people were worshipping four-footed beasts and serpents.

And he goes on to say, as it is in the 20th verse of the 1st chapter, that the pagan world was really without excuse. You might say, but why the Bible was not in the hands of the Gentile world, to which Paul addresses himself? Later, of course, we know. Why without excuse will Paul think of the universe? Paul thinks of creation.

Ah, and if in his day, how much more in our day? For now it is known as it was not in that day, that there just no limit. There are three hundred million universes, as the world's being like the grains of sand on the shores of the sea. As was stated the other evening, universe with its laws and with its order and with its beauty and with its glory and open book.

The invisible things of him, the Lord God, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. The invisible, by the things that are made. Even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, but neither were thankful, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was dark. Paul turns then to his brethren. Behold, if I were called a Jew.

Now, of course, his fellow countrymen expected from Paul a less severe judgment. And in a sense, rightfully chosen people, in their hands the law of God, taught over the centuries by the great men of God, prophets sent to Israel. Their temple, one of the wonders of the ancient world.

The ceremonial sacrifices ordained of God, back in the days of Moses, faithfully performed from day to day, the chosen people. But let us see. It would appear that Paul was even more severe in dealing with his own.

Behold, I was called a Jew, beginning with the seventeenth verse. And retest in the law, makest thy boast of God, and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou art thyself a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes. Which has the form of knowledge of the truth and the law.

Very well. But now the matter changes. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest, a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest, a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? Thou that appoist idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through the quaking of the law, dishonors God? Now that terrible falsehood doth, ah, they never forgave him.

For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles too. Oh, how they hated him, and how they persecuted him. Forever in his heels, like a pack of dogs.

And when finally he bowed his head into their hands there in the temple, they would have thrown him to shreds, had it not been for a Roman captain who plucked him from the hands of the infuriated multitude. To carry him to a Roman castle. And then that legal, legal mockery.

That process all before a Roman judge is accused by his own. And the moment comes when, to save himself from his own people, and to fulfill his God-given mission, he must appeal to Caesar. He must find protection under the Roman flag.

I appeal to Caesar. To Caesar thou shalt go. Well, you know the story.

Paul puts all the world under conviction of Satan. There is not one. He goes on to say that it's just all his sin.

And comes short of the glory of God. And now we leave that dark picture, that negative side of the question. And now we enter upon the field of the gospel.

We know from the scriptures, friends, that man's sin postulated for the Lord God a great problem of a governmental nature. For his law reads, the soul that sinneth it shall die. In all sin, what shall he do? He does not desire.

Oh, on the contrary. How greatly he desires that men might be forgiven and justified and redeemed and brought back into the family of God. But his law, his word, his government, his throne, his righteousness, of course, demands the death of the sinner.

He cannot pass over the demands of his law. Oh, a problem of infinite dimensions, postulated by man's sin. There, within the government of God.

Now, parents understand. Ah, yes, we come now to something, in comparison, we might say very, very tiny. And yet the same governmental problem is forever presenting itself in our homes.

I cannot forget the testimony of one who arose to address a gathering such as this in the shadow of what we tell him is a little one, his parents passing on. Taken up as he was by grandmothers. He went on to say to all poor grandmothers, well, it comes to me in Spanish, *que dolor de cabeza*.

Some law or other seems to me more expressive, and I note by your response that you all understand only too well. For he went on to say, I was once come home from school with things that were not mine, a knife, a tablet, a pencil, fountain pen. And he said that grandmother did all that she could possibly do, pleading with him that he might forego this vile habit, all in vain, until one day grandmother threatened him.

You see, my boy, this needle, well, grandmothers will want to be there knitting with their needles, sewing. If you come again from school with something that's not yours, I'll thrust it into a flame until it's at high heat, and I'll thrust the needle through your hand. Do you understand? He went on to say that he understood only too well, and for a month nothing was touched.

And then again he came with something that was not his own, and that grandmother observed it at once. My boy, what do you have? You remember what I said, yes? Well, now we'll have to fulfill the sentence. As you will continue and finally spend your days in prison, we will have to fulfill the sentence.

And she thrust the needle into a flame, and when it was at high heat, raised his hand only to lower it, he went on to say, and to raise her own hand and to thrust the needle through. Ah, the man went on to say, I could smell burning flesh. It was the most tremendous moment of my life.

I could feel in that instant how Grandmother Faustus regarded my sin. He wanted me a mighty moral revolution. Years have gone by, now I'm a man, and I can testify from that moment on, my hands have been cleaned.

Grandmother saved me, she healed me through her sacrifice. I say parents understand this problem of infinite dimension in the government of God. Now, theologians are not always prone to give their consent.

I recall one with whom I spoke in Buenos Aires, no. God is love, yes. There was no need, there was no need.

Yes, God is love. Ah, but he's a God of order, and he hates sin, and his word has been given, and his word must be fulfilled. Now, the Bible itself tells us, we have it in Deuteronomy, and we have it in the Psalms, that God cannot justify the wicked.

What happens to the judge here on earth who justifies? And there are judges for one reason or another. It might be money, it might be pressures from friends, influences. There are judges who justify the wicked, but they cease to be judges to become wicked themselves.

No, God cannot justify the wicked, but he found a way, our friend, it's so wonderful, he found a way whereby he might justify the wicked and yet be just. Now, that really is the theme of Romans. He found a way.

So that in justifying the wicked they might not fall upon his throne, his government, his law, even the faintest trace of a shred of reproach. And that's the gospel. Now, Paul states it in this fashion.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God being justified freely. Here it is. By his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.

Here is where theologians are wont to stumble. Ah, it comes in such a blow to our pride. Our pride.

Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness. Yes. For the remission of sins that have passed through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at his time his righteousness.

That he might be just and a justifier of him which believeth in Jesus, the wicked, which believeth in Jesus. Well, this brings us to the great doctrine, does it not, of justification by faith. Which Luther took up, you will recall, in what passion it was sounded forth, proclaimed afresh to the world.

Therefore being justified by faith. But I want for us to pause just a moment. Yes, by faith.

But not faith, please observe, as the procuring cause. Now, what do we read in verse nine? Being now justified by his blood is the procuring cause. That is to say, it springs from the cross.

The files and heads of our justification, the shed blood of our adorable Redeemer. Faith, yes, of course. But let's not confound our faith with the procuring cause.

For I find no other word to express the fact that it springs from the shed blood of Jesus Christ our Lord for every sin. I think it was that great British preacher, McKinney, used to say of mine, I find no other word to express the fact that it springs from the shed blood of Jesus Christ our Lord for every sin. I think it was that great British preacher, McKinney, used to say of mine, for the gift, the gift our justification, it springs from the cross of Christ.

Justified by his blood. Let's get that truth, please. In other words, it's not that because of some great merit in our faith that we're justified.

The merit is all in the crucified risen Lord, so we can rest. We don't have to look and see if we have enough faith. And so stumble, as many do.

Look away from your faith to the crucified and rest in his bleeding, in his wounded eyes. We've come now to Romans 6, perhaps taking a little bit too much time for the introduction. Now in Romans 6 the problem is of a different nature.

You know up to Romans 6, it's our sins. From Romans 6 on, it's our sin. That is to say, our sin as a governing principle.

Our sin as a law. Paul speaks much from Romans 6 on of the law of sin. For sin not only engenders guilt, it breeds slavery.

It constitutes itself in a law. Ah, and it's just as illusory. He couldn't override that.

He couldn't silence Satan. How dare you say that? Here it is. Let me illustrate.

The principles involved, friends, are really very simple. We all recognize them. In our relationships, let's presume, here on the campus of the Rio Grande Bible Institute, I commit a great fault.

One of the students would say, Charles, I don't know whether there's a Charles over there. Charles goes to the president of the Rio Grande Bible Institute, my dear brother Ehlert, with an accusation. Charles saw.

Charles knows. Charles knows. He goes to the president with an accusation.

Can the president of the Rio Grande Bible Institute silence him by the mere exercise of his authority? No. Who are you to accuse the preacher? To me. He can't do that.

If he does, things are going to get worse. Charles may have to leave the institution. Charles may go out on the street and tell everybody he meets.

No, this matter can only be arranged on the grounds of moral, ethical procedures. Let's presume, I don't like the illustration, but I want this thing to be pinpointed, focused, so that you can just see it. Let's presume that it's a matter of money, only that you might be able to see it.

I owe Charles \$500, and I'm not willing to pay it, not even to recognize the fact. Charles goes to the president of the Bible Institute. Now, he can't silence him by a mere exercise of his authority, but he can silence him by working justice.

How much did you say Mr. Hegel owes you \$500? Here's your \$500. Thank you. Well, now Charles is silenced.

There's nothing more Charles can say. The debt has been paid. I repeat, I don't like the illustration too well, but there it is.

Charles was silenced on moral grounds, and the devil was silenced, the accuser of the brethren, who according to this word, day and night, you'll recall the book of Job. These are strange things, I don't understand them, but here they are, and I believe them. Job! Accusing! Satan accusing Job! No! He's not the righteous man, you say.

You bought him! Why, he's the richest man on earth! Look how you've blessed him! You take away these blessings, Lord, this man will curse you. But you know the story, how the Lord accepted the challenge, and it was made manifest that Job's love was pure. The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

It's alright. Satan was silenced. And here we read that the accuser of the brethren, oh, this broken law, God's law, which gave him ground, and God couldn't override it with all his power and glory.

To accuse man before God, day and night. But the Lord found a way to silence him, and it's a way that will be throughout all eternity, reasoned for, hallelujahs, on the part of the redeemed. It was done so wonderfully, in perfect keeping with the demands of justice.

There will never be found in all the ages to come the slightest trace of a flaw in God's government. That law which demands the death of the sinner, fulfilled in a man, the last Adam, the Son of Man, the Son of God, he tasted death for every man. Now it's on that ground that God silences the devil.

Now is come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God, ah, yes. Now the crucified risen Lord, whose precious blood cleanseth from all, now is come salvation and strength in the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down. The Savior said it, you know, when he turned his face toward the cross, now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

And so it was. In view of this fact, oh, this wondrous, nothing greater, the Savior is in a position to say all authority has been given unto me, to man saying that, brethren. The last Adam, federal head of the race, it's a man that says this, ah, I believe in his deity, the God of man.

All authority has been given unto me. Go ye therefore, friends, how we need to write deep into our entire evangelistic undertaking this fact, else it will be superficial, all authority has been given unto me. Go ye therefore in the light of this fact to enforce the throne rights of your King.

Liberating souls from the thralldom of the prince of darkness, he still stops over the earth. The hour of his doom has not yet come. We read that he shall be cast into the lake of fire, but he still stops the earth with his host of evil spirits.

But he's a defeated foe. I'm going to say it again here tonight. The weakest Christian, why, that babe that was born last night out here in a mission station, only a day old, he has more power.

I should use the word authority, it's not a question of power. He has more authority than the prince of this world. Why, he's linked up with the risen Christ, and he shares his authority.

He has the right to take upon his lips that name which is above every name, the name of Jesus. That devils tremble and flee before that name risen. We are living in an age of unprecedented satanic oppression, I need not tell you that, that's well known among Christians everywhere.

Ah yes, friends, it would appear that the enemy, knowing that his time is short, has come with great wrath. And we are commanded, as it is in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, to buckle on the armor of life and to stand. Till we stand the while of the death.

We have the right to say no. I'm in charge here. Now, I'm just going to have to tell that story again, you dear brethren, I see it on your faces.

My good brethren, the members of the faculty here have heard this story every year that I've come. Brother, listen, I'm getting down pretty deep into that burn, you're talking about me coming back. Yeah, you know the story, but I'm not ashamed to repeat it, it's worth a million.

Why, it was written right up here in Texas, I've forgotten the name of the village, by General Wainwright before he died. He felt he must write and tell the story of his sufferings. Five years there in that Manchurian concentration camp, the abuse of the prison keepers, sickness, loneliness.

Never a word reached his ears regarding the events in the outside world. Hunger. Five years.

And then one day General Wainwright was just, oh General Wainwright was a dying man. He came from the sky, a little plane, and settled down there in the concentration camp, outstepped the colonel of the allied forces. Where is General Wainwright? I've been sent to speak to General Wainwright, you'll find him over in that corner of the camp, colonel.

General, I have been sent by the allied forces to tell you that the Japanese have been defeated, in three weeks we've signed the peace. The general couldn't take it in at first, it was too much. And the colonel flew away in his little plane, but the general was able to take it in.

And the general was able to get up onto his feet. Boy, that would raise any man, dare I say it, from the dead. Well, near dead.

In majestic fashion, he got to his feet. Three hours later, he says the prison keepers came, not knowing what had happened, to deal with him as they had always dealt with him. Why, he was dirt under their feet.

Their greatest pleasure of using the general. But they observed great change. The general on his feet, in a majestic fashion, I am in charge here, sir.

Ah, yes, oh, this man knows, this man knows. The game was up. Yes, general.

These are my orders. Yes, general. And from that hour on, the general says he was king in the prison.

You know, there are just millions of Christians that haven't taken it in yet. See what I mean? That the devil's a defeated foe. That the game for the devil's up.

They don't know it. Why, I was preaching to a group of pastors down in the south of Mexico two or three years ago, Tabasco. And after it was all over, I usually touch on this, one of the pastors wrote to me.

He said, oh, how I thank you. Why, I never knew that it was true that the devil's a defeated foe. My brother, that's the gospel.

For this purpose, John says, the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Everything else was secondary. And so, friends, you see in the greatest conflict of the ages, between two thrones, in the greatest conflict of the ages, who won? Ah, that lonely man.

Yes, that lonely man. Hang on a cross to God now. Won on the ground of the fulfillment of living righteousness.

Get that, please. The devil can't point to a broken law. It would nail to the cross.

And furthermore, what is it that gives ground to the devil? Our pride. And you know the Savior put an end to pride on the cross. He forged a new humanity, the new creation.

And there's no room for pride there. And so you see, when he took the old creation to the cross, the old man was crucified together with Christ. He just cut from out, out from beneath the devil's feet, all ground.

All ground taken away. Put into an end the old creation, over which Satan does have power, because its governing principle is pride. And bringing into being the new creation, over which Satan has no authority.

Yes, we can say with Wainwright, if we stand with Jesus, united to him, united in his death and in his resurrection, because if I'm standing on the ground of pride, I can't rise up and overcome Satan. Why, he'll laugh at me. He says, all the ground's mine.

But if I'm standing on the ground of redemption, one with the crucified, ah. I can do as did General Wainwright. I can say, I'm in charge here.

And it works, brethren, it works. Indeed it does. You can move mountains.

That's what that verse means over there in Mark 11, 24, 5. To say to this mountain, that's what it means. He's not talking about the kind of mountains we have around Mexico City. Mountains, ah, in the scriptures, dominions.

You can say to this mountain, he's out. Ah, Satan flees. Satan flees.

He can't stand up before the victory wrought on Calvary. It avails. And brethren, there's nothing we so need today.

Oh, nothing so tragic as for missionaries to go to the foreign field without these weapons. I did it. Ah, I know what it cost.

Brethren, the agony, the shame, the suffering. Well, thank God, he wrought and he brought these weapons to me in time. But I wouldn't do without them for a day, for an hour.

The authority of the believer in view of the victory wrought on Calvary by a man. The Son of Man. The Son of God.

Now the victory's yours. And we're told that we're more than conquerors. Through him we'll love this.

Victory's yours. And you can apply it day by day in a thousand different ways as the occasion arises and you become aware of the working of the principle of the darkness of this world. I wonder if I may just give you one illustration.

It's five minutes to nine. I'm thinking cheaply as I give this of the missionary students here. Some three years ago, maybe four now, I was in Costa Rica where that language school you know is found.

Some two hundred, at that time I think something like a hundred and ninety, close to two hundred missionaries preparing for the Latin field. At the close of the service a young man came up to speak to me and he said, I want you to come and have dinner with us very well. Lovely family, the little ones, the good wife.

He was an artist with a crayon. He could, with a few dashes, there was the face of the Savior. After dinner he said, you know what's happening here? Rocks as big as your fist.

He showed me one afterwards. Rain down on this house and in the garden. My children play there.

What shall I do? Well it struck me at once, this must be the work of the enemy. This isn't just some fanatical folk. This is the work of the enemy to frighten this man, drive him from the field.

David, I think it's the enemy. So I went through the scriptures with him to show him that the enemy is a defeated foe. And it was all Greek to him.

This missionary on the way to the field. He didn't understand. But he was willing.

I said, will you say amen to what I'm going to do? Yes, I'll say amen. He didn't understand, but he would say amen. And so going through the word and showing him how through death the Redeemer destroyed him, why the power of death, that is to say, shattered his authority.

Through his death he destroyed. Prince of darkness. And so it was just a tiny prayer.

But a prayer of authority against the enemy to take hands off that home in the holy name of Jesus. And to leave that home in peace and to flee. Amen.

He said, I feel better. Yes, you feel better now. Your fear is gone.

Amen. Praise the Lord. Two nights later I was preaching in a downtown Methodist church there, San Jose.

In walked the whole family, all smiled. And I noticed the little ones wanted to get up and sit with me. They looked like folks.

At the closing of the service, the father came and spoke to me. He said there hadn't been a rock since. Praise God.

Later on in the week it was Sunday night. Another church, the Central American Mission. The whole family all smiled.

Father came forward. There hadn't been a rock since. Praise the Lord.

And the good wife said to me, can I write this home to friends in North America? Well, you do as you like. I don't know whether they'll understand this sort of thing. A year later, a year and a half, when was it? A year ago when I was in Buenos Aires.

There he was, taking part with me in a Victorious Life conference. David. David.

It works, friends. It works. Even if you're down and you don't know whether the enemy's behind it, you can say, well, now if the enemy is behind it, I owe the victory of Calvary, and I bind the strong man and cast him out.

You'd be amazed at the things that clear up. The mountains that move. Hmm? All authority has been given unto me in heaven and upon earth.

Go ye therefore. I wonder if we've ever gotten the full import of that therefore. Now, that's the real, that's the biggest reason for your going.

You know, it irritates me, Saul. I wrote an article about these things years ago, and a missionary leader back here in America, on some missionary board, wrote to me, oh, no, he said, these things clear up when civilization comes. Huh? You're sitting up there in that swivel chair of yours, and you're telling me a thing like this.

This is superstition. It all passed away with civilization. Listen, it gets worse with civilization.

It gets worse. And here's my verdict regarding that. Yes, all these benighted souls in the islands of the sea, millions, it's true, they are mistaken as to their methods by which they seek to appease evil spirits.

But they are not mistaken regarding the fact of satanic oppression. We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, the governors of the darkness of this world, wicked spirits in my place. And there's only one way.

There's only one method. There's only one weapon. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God for the pulling down of strongholds.

It's the victory won on Calvary. Stand on the ground of the blood. Stand on Romans 6, where we are told that the old man was crucified.

Just get close to the crucified and stand by faith with him in his death. And then give your orders. Say, I'm in charge here.

Oh, he'll try to frighten you. Oh, it'll be just standard. I'm in charge here, and these are my orders.

And he flees, and mountains move. Gracious Father, how we thank Thee. Oh, it cost our Redeemer so much to come all the way from glory and then to go all the way to Calvary that as a man he might shatter this alliance with the Prince of Darkness and put an end utterly to his authority.

How we praise Thee that it's a fact, Father. We have nothing to fear. It's been done.

Praise God. And we only have one request, Father. Teach us to lay hold of these weapons.

Why, Father, it breaks our hearts to see what the devil's doing today. And we're the Christians to rise up as soldiers and say, No, I'm in charge here. Lord, raise up children of the cross who have walked around in the armor of light and stand before the enemy and say, I'm in charge here.

These are my orders. We ask it in that worthy name, Father, that is above every name. In the blessed name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord, Amen.

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