

# Reason for Defeat

by Alan Redpath

---

*The reason for Christian defeat is a defective view of the atonement of the cross, and the solution is to understand and experience deliverance from sin as a ruling principle through faith in Jesus' life and power.*

**Duration:** 45:42

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:6

**Topics:** "Defeat"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Romans 6:6, which talks about the crucifixion of our old sinful nature. He highlights the struggle that many Christians face in revealing growth and living in victory. The preacher uses the analogy of a cricket match to emphasize the importance of knowing whether we are facing defeat or in sight of victory in our Christian walk. He emphasizes that the experience of deliverance brings glorious liberty and frees us from the need to improve ourselves through our own efforts.

---

## Transcript

Dr. Alan Redpath entitled this address, Bless Me, Even Me, My Father. Shall we pray together? We thank Thee, dear Lord, that Thou dost satisfy the longing soul and fill the hungry with goodness. How we pray Thee that Jesus satisfies.

We ask that tonight we may enter not only into life, but into life more abundant, which He has offered to every one of us. We thank Thee and pray Thee for all that Thou hast said to us already this evening. The message that I would seek to bring may simply underline, underscore, may drive home the truth that has been proclaimed, so that we leave this place with a sense of liberty and understanding and insight given to us by Thy Holy Spirit.

So hide the messenger behind the cross, and may we see Jesus only. We ask it for His name's sake. Amen.

Will you open your Bibles, please, at Romans chapter 6. Sometimes in a convention like this, the second speaker in the evening finds himself at somewhat of a loss, because the message that has been given in the first place has been so clear and presented such a measure of the truth that most of your sermon has already gone. But I just pray that the Lord may help me to underline and underscore all that Dr. Fleece has said so helpfully to us tonight. It'll be saying the same thing, but from a different angle, and seeking to apply it to every heart.

Romans 6, this chapter is the charter of Christian liberty, a wonderful, thrilling chapter, which we can't consider in detail, but I'm taking one verse from it as a principle that I hope we'll get hold of and really get right into our heart and life this evening. Verse 6. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Do you often wonder why it is that so many of us as Christians are so slow to reveal any evidence of growth? Why is it that we live so long in defeat? Why is it that there's so little ringing, clear-cut testimony to victory in the Christian life? Why do these things happen? With the result that very often we're disillusioned about Christian experience.

When we were converted, we imagined that everything was going to be plain sailing from that day on. And we would find there'd be no more problems with sin. We had entered into the reality, there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

We'd received forgiveness, and we were free from it. That subsequent years of Christian experience have proved that this view of sin is a fallacy. For while we're assured of forgiveness, we've found ourselves too often engaged in a battle which was too much for us.

And our testimony has been silent. And we've had nothing to say about Jesus as Saviour, simply because we've had no real experience of deliverance from sin. Why should these things be? Now I'm sure that that question needs answering.

An answer to it has got to be found. If we're ever to recover the ringing certainty of witness for Christ. A great predecessor of mine in Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh, who is known to many of you here as Dr. Graham Scroggie, I'm sure you've read many of his books, used to say very often from the Catholic platform in England, too many Christians live on the right side of Easter but the wrong side of Pentecost.

On the right side of pardon but the wrong side of power. The right side of forgiveness but the wrong side of fellowship. They are out of Egypt but they have not reached the land of blessing.

And are wandering about in the wilderness of dissatisfaction and frustration. So says Dr. Scroggie. And so echo many of our hearts here this evening.

You know we have some lovely hymns in our hymn books which talk about Canaan's happy shore and what we ought to do in the swelling of Jordan and in Canaan's happy land which absolutely have no foundation in scripture whatsoever. But bless your heart we'll go on singing them till our dying day so carry on, it's fine, I love them, I suppose you do too. But they're absolutely unscriptural because Canaan in the Bible is never a picture of heaven.

But the difference in the experience of the children of Israel in Canaan from what was their experience in the wilderness was in the wilderness it was battle and defeat but in Canaan it was battle and victory. Still battle. The Lord knows there'll be battle until we see him.

But then the battles will all be over, praise the Lord. But you see we're in a battle, in a fight, all the time. That's the thrilling thing about the Christian life.

You know, if you'll excuse me, digressing a moment, there's a world-shaking event taking place this very day in Jamaica. And I've looked through every paper in Birmingham and I can't find a word about it. Do you know what it is? It's the last of five cricket test matches which are being played between the West Indies and England.

And I don't know a word of what's happening. They've already played four. All four were drawn.

Nobody won, nobody lost. And this last one is critical. And there's not a thing.

Oh dear. Perhaps some of you know something about what's happening. If you do, do relieve my anxiety.

Please, if you can tell me how I can find out. Some years ago in Chicago I was faced with a similar predicament. And I bought every paper in Chicago to find out.

My, and when you do that you buy a library. Shoes, Daily News and Tribune and all the rest, not one word did I find about these test matches that were going on. And a friend of mine, I should say that the papers were full of what was happening about somebody called White Sox or something or Cubs.

I didn't know anything about that. But there was nothing about this cricket match. So you see, a friend of mine in London, knowing that I would be interested, sent me a copy of the London Daily Telegraph.

And during a test match you know where to look for the report. You don't bother to look on the back page or the centre page. You look right on the front page.

What Wilson and Co are doing doesn't matter. Everything is right centred on the test match. And I opened the paper and there on the front page was this statement.

In huge print. England facing defeat. Oh, that was a sad day.

And I went to the church office at Moody Church and nobody cared a hoot. And no sympathy. I couldn't get a drain of sympathy for anybody.

Two days later, perhaps I should have explained that a test match lasts five days and it starts at 11 o'clock in the morning and stops at 1 for lunch, and starts at 2 and stops again at half past 3 for a cup of tea, and starts again at 4 and finally finishes at half past 6. Well, two days later my friend in London sent me another copy of the Daily Telegraph and I opened it with a sense of foreboding. And there, what do you think I saw? England in sight of victory. And in two days the whole situation had been absolutely transformed.

Now, my dear friend, my concern in preaching tonight is to ask you this question. Tell me, are you facing defeat? Or are you in sight of victory? Oh, what a lot depends upon the answer to that question. For this convention of Keswick is not a side issue.

We're not gathered here for a little holiness huddle. No, we're not. A little bit of dotting our I's and crossing our T's and getting our doctrine right.

But we're here to see how the church in Birmingham can recover her lost power and vitality and once again become a dynamic force in this community which could shake this city for God. That's the purpose of this convention. That's why it's a convention, not a conference.

A conference is a place that you discuss a subject. But a convention is a place where you do business. And we're here for a convention to find the answer to these questions.

And this can only be done by believing people who are enjoying full salvation. What, therefore, is the reason for our defeat and what is the way out of it? Now, personally, I'm convinced that the reason for

defeat is that we have never really realized the full significance of Calvary's cross. We're tremendously concerned these days about experiences of the Holy Spirit.

But we need to remember that it is Jesus who satisfies and we are complete in him. And it is always the work of the third person of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit, who administers the kingdom of God in the territory of my heart. It is always his work to reveal Christ to me.

Any experience of the Holy Spirit which takes me off-center, off-Jesus, to the Holy Spirit, is unscriptural. And it is always his work to reveal the living Christ in my heart. I am praying that he may do that for you and for me this evening.

Now, you see, a defective view of the atonement of the cross is always due to a defective view of sin. And Romans 6, in no uncertain terms, gives us the definition of sin and spells out its true character. I ask you just to concentrate for a few minutes on verse 6. Let me read this verse to you again as it appears in the Living Letters paraphrase of the New Testament.

Your old evil desires were nailed to the cross with him. The part of you that loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded so that your sin-loving body is no longer under sin's control and no longer needs to be a slave to sin. Here we see deliverance from sin explained.

In Romans 6, the subject Paul is dealing with is much more than sinful acts, as we've heard this evening from Dr. Fleece in another context. It is the principle of sin, S-I-N itself, which exists in all of us by nature. Sin with a capital S. The old self, a tyrant and a rebel.

All that I am apart from the grace of God which is unalterably sinful and which grace never changes but replaces with the saving life of Christ. Now, all of us have found it comparatively easy to understand that the Lord Jesus was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquity and that he died for our sins on the cross and that as we receive him as our Savior we have forgiveness full and free. But somehow, that didn't deal with the sin principle.

We see that the cross has dealt with the fruit of sin but not with the root. With sins and not with sin. And unless we understand this further meaning of the death of the Lord Jesus, we simply can't go on going on sinning because we have no resources that can prevent us from doing so.

And this chapter begins with a shocking question. What? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin continue any longer therein? Surely the Lord has done more for us at Calvary than to give Jesus for the fruit of our rebellion and simply to offer us forgiveness for sins. Wonderful if that is.

Certainly he would never consider having a family of rebels as his children. The cross has struck at the very heart of our rebellion against his authority which is at the root of all sin. Our old man, says Scripture, is crucified with him.

One of the founders of Keswick Convention was Evan Hopkins, a great saint of God who has written a masterly book called *The Law of Liberty in the Spiritual Life*. Sad to say that's out of print in Britain, but I was so glad to see the other day that it has been reprinted in this country. And if there's any book that a minister or a Christian should possess, it's that one, *The Law of Liberty in the Christian Life*, for this book is literally a handbook on Keswick teaching.

And here I'm going to quote just a paragraph from this book. Will you listen with all your ears, both your ears, wide open? Sorry. Here it is.

You with me? Right. Christ's death, which has separated the believer from the consequences of sin as a transgression, has also separated him from the authority of sin as a master and set him free. The believer sees that Christ, by dying for him, has completely delivered him from the penalty of sin.

So it is his privilege to see that because he was identified with Christ in that death, he is also delivered from sin as a ruling principle. Its power is broken. He is in that sense free from sin.

And the cross is the cause of his deliverance. Freedom from sin's ruling power is the immediate privilege of every Christian. It is the essential condition or starting point of every true service, as well as the secret of progress.

Such service and growth are as possible for the young convert as for the mature believer. Therefore, freedom from sin's dominion is a blessing we may claim by faith just as we claim pardon. We may claim it as that which Christ has purchased for us and obtained for our immediate acceptance.

We may go forth as set free from sin's dominion and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Now, that's freedom from sin as a ruling principle. And that's the teaching of the New Testament.

And that's why Keswick was founded. And if Keswick ever ceases to teach that, it might as well close up. Because then it simply becomes another Bible conference.

In order that we may enter by faith into an experience of deliverance from the tyranny of sin as vital and as real as our conversion when we received Christ as our Savior and entered into the joy of forgiveness. Deliverance from sin as well as forgiveness of sin were provided at the cross. But most of us for years have settled for a half salvation.

Sure of forgiveness of sin, but no experience of deliverance from the principle of sin and therefore going on sinning. Now, look with me here in the second place at deliverance from sin established. Go a bit further in Romans 6, chapter 6, and what does it say? That the body of sin might be destroyed.

Or, as Living Letters puts it, the part of you that loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded that your sin-loving body is no longer under sin's control. Oh, but you say to me that's all very well. But these old desires that have been nailed to the cross, as you say, are always with me.

And I'm very conscious of them. If that part of me which loves to sin was crushed and fatally wounded, why is it that I'm so conscious of its existence? Now, just a minute. Let's think again what Jesus did for us at Calvary.

Not only was He dying for our sins, but that transaction which affected a complete deliverance for our sins was accepted in heaven because it was based upon a life which had died to the principle of sin. And having died to the sin principle, He was able in His death to forgive our sins. Do you remember that wonderful word of the Apostle Paul in Philippians chapter 2? Let me read it to you.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and

became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. What was Jesus doing all that time? He was stepping down a ladder that led Him from a throne in heaven to a manger in Bethlehem, and ultimately to a cross at Calvary. And He was living a life which all the time forsook His rights, and refused to act independently of God.

Therefore in Him there was no sin principle, because the very root of sin is my demand for my independence, the assertion to my right, to my own way, arrogance. In Scotland we have a national motto. I suppose most countries do.

You know what it is? It's a thistle. You know what that is? It's a very prickly, prickly flower. If you touch it, you wouldn't want to touch it again.

It's a thistle. And this motto is this thistle surrounded by a cluster of leaves, and underneath it, in Latin, written, which means, nobody touches me with impunity. That's very expressive of Scottish national temperament.

That's why it was that in the World War II, always, the Scottish Highlander, the Black Watch and other regiments, went into battle first. You can't touch a Scotsman with impunity. You touch me and, poof, you know, they'll blow up.

Now see, see, that may be a Scottish national motto, but it is also the symptom of human nature. That's what sin is, demanding my own rights. Now the Lord Jesus never did that.

He never rebelled. He was always submissive. And because of that life of meekness and submission, against which all the powers on earth and in hell fought tooth and nail, but to whom he never submitted for a moment, because that life was an utterly dependent life, a submissive life, an obedient life, he died to the sin principle and condemned it in the flesh.

And he hung upon the cross as a condemned criminal, not only to forgive our sin, but as one who took to Calvary a nature that had never yielded to the principle of SIN. He was made sin for us. Not only did he take our place as sinners, but he took our place as rebels.

He was made sin for us. Now if I have claimed the benefit of a share and oneness in his death, in the death he died, so that I may be forgiven, surely, surely I can also claim a share in the life he lived, which he took to the grave, in order that I in him might know deliverance from the sin principle, if I can say he bore my sins in his body on the tree. Hallelujah.

Thank you, Lord. Can't I also say that at Calvary he nailed every evil desire to the cross, crushed it, wounded it, fatally, that part of me that loves to sin so that this body of sin, this sin-loving body, need no longer be under sin's dominion? That should be part of my conversion experience. For the life that he lived and the death that he died resulted in his perfect humanity being raised to the throne in heaven.

Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name that is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord. You see, death hath no power over that kind of life. And having received from the Father the gift of the Holy Spirit, he imparted to you and to me at our conversion his nature in which he had triumphed over sins and over sin.

And at our new birth we receive a life in which there is no rebellion, in which there is no sin principle, a life which can never possibly sin. And he's come to live within every one of us to make his life real, an

everyday experience. My doctor said I hadn't to preach more than 20 minutes and I hadn't to get excited.

But you know, this to me at least is so exciting and so thrilling to think that he's given to me a rebel by nature and therefore a defeated, miserable, sinning man, a new nature which cannot sin. But he hasn't altered the old nature which can do nothing but sin. So you see, the experience of deliverance can be one of glorious liberty.

It means that we don't any longer have to try to improve ourselves. Most Christians spend years doing that, polishing up the flesh. As a fact, trying to make it be good.

Trying to make, just listen, isn't it illogical, trying to make that kind of life you lived before you were converted be a Christian. You came to Jesus for forgiveness because you were so ashamed of that life and then having begun in the spirit you continued in the flesh and you worked at it and you tried hard, you prayed hard, you read the Bible and you said, now I must never sin, I must really overcome. You bite your fingernails and drink coffee and take tranquilizers and consult psychiatrists and the church is in a mess of a nervous breakdown because it has never learned that Jesus doesn't want to improve yourself.

Oh, that's so wonderful to me. How many of us spend years on attempts at self-improvement and just as often find it so futile. God has never planned to improve us or to make us better, but He's planned to replace ourselves with Jesus and that we should by faith draw upon His life and power every moment of the day.

Listen, He never makes it impossible for you to sin, but He always makes it possible for us not to. Temptation isn't sin, thank the Lord. Sinful thoughts are part of the situation.

Now my last word and then we'll pause. I want, very simply, to show you how this deliverance from the sin principle is experienced. You see, it's no use getting forgiveness of sins unless you have this.

It's absolutely vital. How does it all work out in daily life? Well, look again at Romans 6. That the body of sin might be destroyed or literally, much better translation, might be made of none effect, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Your sin-loving body is no longer under sin's control and no longer needs to be a slave of sin.

One of the greatest commentators on this epistle to the Romans was a man of the name of Godet. Some of you no doubt have read his commentary. And he puts this so beautifully that I want to just give it to you.

This is the divine secret of Christian sanctification which distinguishes it from simple natural morality. The latter, that is natural morality, says to a man, become what you want to be. The former says to the believer, become what you are already in Christ.

And that puts a positive fact at the foundation of moral effort to which a Christian can return and have resource anew at every instant. That's the reason why his labor is not lost in barren aspiration and doesn't end in despair. The believer is not disentangled from sin gradually.

He breaks with it in Christ once and for all. He breaks the power of cancelled sin. Sin that has been cancelled because he paid the penalty at the cross.

He breaks its power, not gradually, but in Christ it's broken, finally. Now, of course, that deliverance has no existence whatever apart from Christ in us. If you put a lighted candle into a dark room, the darkness will

vanish.

But the tendency to darkness remains and the room has to be maintained in a continual state of light by the continual counteraction of light to darkness. The law of the spirit of life in Christ is always in force. And we're always dependent on it.

That's the proof that the law of sin and death isn't extinct. And the tendency to sin is with us all. Never in this life will we be free from the presence of sin.

And apart from the law of Jesus as our indwelling light, even the most mature Christian will relapse into a state of decay and sinfulness because the law of sin is no longer counteracted by the law of Jesus. It is the indwelling life of Christ that sets us free from the law of sin and counteracts the natural tendency to sin by the law of his life. In other words, the only good thing about a Christian is Christ.

Now, we say amen, but I mean, do we really believe that? He's the opposite to all that I am by nature. I'm very conscious of my unholiness, but he's holy. I know my impurity, but he's pure.

I know my impatience, but he's patient. I know I'm conscious of my lack of grace, but he's gracious. And oh, what a joy it is every moment to lay hold of Christ and find indeed that this body of sin is made of none effect because of the victorious life of the indwelling Savior day by day.

You see, in Christ we are dead to sin, but sin is never dead to us. And it works in us and always will overwhelm us if we fail to lay hold upon Jesus. Now, you know, some people teach or suggest that Keswick teaches sinless perfection.

Nothing of the sort. It teaches sinful corruption. Holiness by faith in Christ.

Holiness by appropriation of the Christ life. The absolute sinfulness, an inevitable, unalterable sinfulness of the human nature of the flesh is always with us. Ah, but look, look, when temptation comes to me to be impure of you, look after Jesus and say, thank you, Lord, you have purity to match this.

When I'm tempted to blow my top with somebody and I become impatient, oh, thank you, Lord Jesus, for your meekness and calm. The opposite to everything that you are is in Christ and He is in you. What can be more wonderful than that? But you fail to appropriate and you fail to yield then the Holy Spirit goes out of business.

Not out of your heart, but you relapse into spiritual decay and spiritual defeat simply because you failed to claim and to take what Christ has for you and is in you day by day. You yield and He works. You stop yielding and He stops working.

You stop claiming the Lord Jesus and you aren't having it. Lapsing into darkness and failure. Oh, it's so wonderful though, in daily experience, to know the dynamic of the upward pull of the living Lord.

You'll forgive me those of you who have heard me tell you this many times, but I'll never forget a time when I'd been with my dear friend Stephen Alford in New York at his Christian life convention and I went going back to Chicago home and I was in a jet plane and I wanted to get in one and it was a snowy night, very cold, very foggy, no planes were flying to Chicago, everybody was hanging around the airport and then announcement was made that one aeroplane was going to fly to Chicago, so I dashed in and got in and got in I think the very last seat. Every seat was taken, packed, about 150, 160 people in this big

Boeing jet and it was snowing like anything and four men were on the wings of the plane wiping off the snow and defrosting it and I saw the back of the captain's head way, way distant in the cockpit and suddenly I remembered somebody had told me a few days previously that the weight of a jet plane fully loaded with passengers and gasoline was 250,000 pounds. Well I wasn't fearful but I was certainly prayerful and I asked that God would give him, help him to get the thing off the ground.

That heavy dump of a thing, how was he going to get 250,000 pounds up in the air? Well, we taxied to the end of the runway and then stopped again while these four fellows came running after us or after us in some sort of motor thing and got on the wings and started to scrape off snow and ice. It was a very unpromising situation. And presently, presently there was a roar.

Now if you travel economy class in a jet it is a roar. And the plane began to take off and it went and went and went faster and faster when at a speed of about, I believe, 200 miles an hour the pilot pulled a stick and his nose went up in the air and then it began to soar and soar and soar way through the snow and through the clouds out into a brilliant moonlight night and an hour and three quarters I was back in Chicago. Was that an accident? Oh, no.

Was it unusual? No. Had something extraordinary happened? No, no. Perfectly normal.

What had happened? Well, I'll tell you. You know. At 200 miles an hour when that pilot pulled a stick the force of the motive power of that plane was such that a new law began to operate and the law of aerodynamics overcoming the law of gravity the plane felt the upward pull and it was pulled up by a new law which actually was within it which kept in subjection the law of gravity.

Oh, my friend, I tell you I wish I could shout at all of the rooftops but I am such a thrill to know that the law of the spirit of life in Christ has set me free from the law of sin and death. Ah, not from temptation as I told you last night. Not from suffering not from fierce contest with the enemy but, hallelujah, for victory because of the upward pull of the risen Christ indwelling my heart overcoming the law of the flesh.

Christian, do you know that? Let's just face it honestly I'm finished. I just want to ask you this Have you settled for a half salvation? Received forgiveness but never known deliverance? You didn't know perhaps that both were provided at the cross and oh, what a miserable experience it's been how defeated how lack in reality and dynamic and your testimony it's all been so cold and formal and your Christian life hasn't got any cutting edge? It may be that I'm speaking to a pastor who's in just that position. You've got by faith the death of Jesus to forgive your sins but the life of the risen Lord to deliver you you've never known.

Years after he was in the ministry preaching that saintly Bishop of Durham, England Bishop Handley Mole made this discovery and he wrote a hymn which says My Saviour thou hast offered rest O grant it then to me the rest of ceasing from myself to find my all in thee In thy strong hand thy lay me down so shall the work be done for who can work so wondrously as the Almighty One? You have claimed the death of Christ for forgiveness would you make this evening at three minutes to nine in this night of March 1968 the moment when you claim the risen life of Christ for victory? You see? Let's pray together just a moment's quiet when are you asked that the Holy Spirit will imprint on your mind that question you've claimed the death of Jesus for forgiveness will you claim his risen life for victory right now? Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord Heavenly Father make may thy Holy Spirit make this truth thrillingly real in all of our lives that our testimony individually and as a fellowship in this city of Birmingham may recover the tang the note of triumph that thou wilt put a new song in our heart that we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard that this city may yet feel the impact of Christ

intoxicated men and women Oh Lord, do a new thing for us these days we pray for Jesus' sake Amen

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/12/SID12264.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/alan-redpath/reason-for-defeat/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**