

This Christ did not do. He grappled with the enemy, and protected the sheep from the assaults of the wolves; and in the encounter He lost His life. To protect His sheep He gave up His life, because the sheep He died to save are His very own.

This being so, we need not to measure our hope by our power to persevere; the true measure of our hope is in Christ's possession of us. Our Lord tells us that the hireling fleeth, leaving the wolves to destroy the sheep, because he is a hireling, and as such, careth not for the sheep. Not so with Him. He careth for us because He has purchased us as His peculiar possession. His interests are one with ours. He knows His sheep, and His sheep know Him. There is that intimate fellowship between the Good Shepherd and His own sheep which subsists between Himself and His Father.

By virtue of His incarnation, when we suffer He suffers too; when we strive He strives within us.

You don't have to look at Him to know how to fight; He is actually one with us, enduring our temptations, and, if we win, it is no longer we but Christ that dwelleth in us.

When He bids us persevere to the end, He is not asking us to do the impossible—and it would be the impossible, were not He with us, and in us, to win the battle. Because we are His own, we are priceless in His sight. His possession of us, then, is the measure of our hope; not our own weakness, but the strength of one who has identified Himself with the sheep of His flock. There is not a single wandering