

Whatever his own incapacity to resist Satan, he could appeal to the grace of Him who knows all things. The knowledge that he could confide in Jesus, was that which made him strong. It was after reminding Peter of the utter incapacity of the flesh, that the Lord confided His sheep to him,—“Feed My lambs,”—and it was not till then that he could strengthen his brethren. The flesh has a certain confidence in the flesh, and this is often the folly into which we fall. It is then necessary to learn ourselves by conflict with Satan; every Christian has to learn what he is through the circumstances in which he is placed. God leaves us there to be sifted by Satan, that we may learn our own hearts. Had we enough humility and faithfulness to say, “I can do nothing without Thee,” God would not leave us to this sad experience of our infirmity. When we are really weak, God never leaves us; but when unconscious of our infirmities, we have to learn them by experience.

If a Christian does not walk under a constant sense of his infirmity, God leaves him in the presence of Satan, that he may there be taught by it. It is then also that he commits faults that are irreparable: and it is this which is the most sorrowful part of all.

Jacob halted all his life. Why was this? It was because he had halted morally during one and twenty years. He wrestled mightily, yet he must have been conscious what a feeble creature he was