These words of our Lord in the garden, when He came from His agony, and found the apostles asleep, are very sorrowful and touching. They show an ineffable depth of tenderness and compassion. He utters no reproach, no sharp complaint, at their unreasonableness; but only, "What? Could ye not watch with me one hour?" And He turned away all thought from Himself to them; and, for their sakes, bade them, "Watch and pray," for that their trial was at hand. Now in this we have a wonderful glimpse of the love of Christ. How far otherwise...
we should not in such a case, we all well know. When any seem to us to be less freely awake to the trial we may happen to be undergoing, we are above measure excited, as if some great wrong were done to us. There is nothing the redest so much as this collected manner of those who are about us in our afflictions. If they still seem the same when we are so changed, then if they can still be natural, feel common interests, and take their wretched rest, we feel exceedingly apprised, and almost forget our other trials, in the kindling of a sort of consentient. We have here, then, a wonderful pattern of patience and forgetfulness of self; for if there was a reason of sorrow to
Any horn of woman, it was the hour
of agony in the garden. It seems strange
to us how His disciples could have
slept at such a time. They had but
then left the upper chamber, where they
had seen and heard all the last
words and acts of that last Passover;
they had heard Him saying, "With
whome I have desired to eat this pass-
with you before I suffer"; and little as they
understood the full meaning of that mystery
of sorrow, yet from His way of speaking
they must have felt overcast by the
belief that some trial, greater than
any before, was nigh at hand. Moreover
they had seen Him, "troubled in spirit";
and heard Him say, "One of you shall
betray me." I 

J. A. John, XIII, 21.
giving words to them when He went away from them, a short rest in the garden. There enough, He should have thought, to keep us watchful: "Then He said to them: 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death. Stay you here and watch with Me." And with all these things fell upon them, it would have seemed that they, least of all, could have slept - they, the forsaken three - Peter who loved His Master with so Earnest and Woven a Love, and James who was counted worthy to be the Companion of Peter, and the disciple who an hour before had lain on His Breast at Supper. So St. Luke's Gospel, we read that they were

I. Matt xxvi. 38.
"Sleeping for sorrow." And this secret cause of their heaviness, it may be, the Evangelist learned of some one who well knew what passed on that awful night. Who can doubt but that they sadly told all their infirmities? St. Matthew and St. Mark also say that "their eyes were heavy." And they that have entered into the depths of sorrow know well how nearly they are to slumber to the languorous and5 wearisome agitation. Able grief; how the "light jacket for clothing upward" and the eyes, which gaze fixedly and see nothing, close for very emptiness. But none knew this better than He, the Man of Sorrows, whom He spoke these words of mild up.

2 St. Luke xxii. 45 3 St. Matt xxvi. 43.
Blaeeing. It was at that hour they had most need to watch, as being by 
Sorrow least able to stand against temptation. There, then, is an example 
of an almost blameless inferiority: apt yet though hardly to be blamed, it 
was not the less need with caution. 
And here we have a great warning. 
And a no less consolation: a great 
warning, indeed, for if they thinkful 
at such an hour, how may we not 
Fear that our temptations will often 
fall upon us unawares? And yet, for 
Our consolation, be see how gently 
He bare with them; And He will 
Surely be no more severe with us

In truth, He made their defence for them, by the teaching how to 
face the truth. And by teaching it 
acknowledge the truth of the plea 
"The Spirit indeed is willing, but the 
flesh weak." Let us consider these 
words.

And, first, we must observe, that by the 
Spirit "is to be understood what we 
call the heart or will, illuminated by 
the grace of God, as when St. Paul says 
"the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and 
the Spirit against the flesh." I Tim. 4: 
he prays for the Thessalonians, that their 
"whole spirit, and soul, and body may be pre-
severed blameless." And again, "the Spirit 
himself beareth witness to our spirit, that 
we are the sons of God." And next, by 
Gal. v. 17 ² Thess. v. 23. ³ Rom. viii. 16.
The flesh is to be understood as fallen manhood, with its affections and lusts, so far as they still remain even in the regenerate. Now when our regeneration we are under the power of the flesh, then there is no willingness to serve God; emphatic: after our regeneration, the flesh is put under the dominion of the Spirit. St. Paul speaks not as an Apostle standing above other men, but as one born again of the Spirit, when he says, "I can do all things in Christ, who strengtheneth me." Such, I say, is the state of the regenerate. They "can do all things"; but alas, they do not. The flesh has no more dominion, except we willingly be subject it with its sovereignty. We may still betray our
Selues to it again, and become two-fold more subservient to it than before; deep short of this, even though we were yielded to it a dominion over us yet it is to us "a dead let and hindrance to running the race that is set before us." When it cannot overcome, yet it still can take and weaken; or, in other words, it is a weakness in itself; for, under the overruling power of the Spirit, our regenerate Manhood becomes a servant of God; it is once more consecrated to God's service; but having been stripped and wounded by the powers of sin, and left as it were dead, even after it rising again through holy baptism, it is weak and failing: and therefore to find such paradises in the lives of
true Christians. They are very willing, very purposing, and desiring, and yearning, and beginning well; and even more than this, we see them growing in grace and spiritual strength; and yet the sad thing, also failing and falling short, in their trying to reach some far mark, but not attaining it—purposing great things, and hardly accomplishing little things. Such, indeed, for at least a large part of their earthly life, is the state of most Baptist people; and that not because they are under any subduing dominion of unbelief; for, as some would have us believe, who opposed St. Paul’s description of his state before his regeneration. As if he were speaking
of himself after he had been born again, through the grace of Christ; but because the flesh is weak — that is, their whole nature, though made new by the Spirit, is still feeble, and soon exhausted, and ready to yield, and easily cast down. And this is what St. Paul means when he says, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary one to another so that you do not the things that you would." He is speaking, not of two natures, but of one — of our fallen, but regenerate mankind, in which there still the susceptibilities of evil, besetting and weakening the renewed heart are still by many foes and stubborn hardness.

Gal V. 17.
Such, then, is the state of your case, of whom it may be truly said, that "the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. How can we take two or two particular examples of this truth. 1. For instance, we may trace the weak, base of our nature in the great fluctuation of our union state. I do not mean in such as had in a falling away from baptismal grace, or even the sin of any serious sin. These are examples rather of the strength of the flesh in its own hereditary rebellion against God, than of the weakness of our regenerate nature. I am speaking now of such variations as fall within the limits of a life in the main.
sedent to the faith. Now no one can
have carefully watched one himself into
but perceiving how different he is at
different times. Let him compare the
reclaiming effects of his obedience, his
prolonged and earnest prayers, his
subdued and yielding temper, in a
time of sorrow or great fear; or again,
the depth of his self-accusation and
repentance, and the watchful adherence
with which he repelled the approaches
of evil thoughts in a time of leisure.
Richesse, or in a season of great fruit,
Al blessings; let him compare such
state with his condition, it may be,
Some few years after. Then change of posi-
tion in life, as mere toil or elevation,
As accession of wealth, has come upon him,
Though he is still in the fear of God, he is a changed man. It is difficult, perhaps, to see exactly what is the change. It may be, though he feels it himself, he could not tell what it is; only that he is more self-possessed, less given to flight, less susceptible of impressions that he retains them less steadily, and has lost, as it were, the life and flexibility of his mind. Now there can be no doubt that all the while he has been sincere in his desire to serve God, but rather by the withdrawal of the outward discipline under which he was once brought higher to the unseen world, or by weariness in well-doing, and the fretting of little daily counteactions, he
has given way, and declined from his
former and more devoted state. Of
course such persons are in great danger
of being overthrown by the direct assault
of sins coming upon them suddenly,
as St. Peter was, a few hours after his
death, warned him in the garden. It is
more likely than not that such falls
as mingle in from time to time; but
though really sorrowed over, yet cease
behind a deadening effect, which is:
not enough noticed at the time, and then
itself afterwards only indistinctly or
effects as we are among many causes
of destruction.

2. It may take as another example
of this weakness, the speedy fading
away of some impressions even in those
That his mind is not of real devotion. In the first place, it seems true that the mind cannot without a strain be kept at one pitch. Like the power of light, it must have its intervals of iteration and recession. It seems by some law of its inscrutable nature, to need to be un bent. And therefore after fixed contemplation of the unseen world, or prayer of great length, or after a day of fasting, it may be that the conditions of our nature require that it should be relaxed. And this may be called a rest in our soul, the weariness of the flesh. For of the ministering angels this place is strength, and of the spirit of the first made perfect, we are told that they rest not day or night.
from their heavenly adoration. In their
there is nothing of earthly, and therefore,
nothing of inferiority. They count up
as eagles, with keen receiving thought
In our sense, then, it may be said that
owing to the weakness of the flesh, our
adoration is but a faint and broken
reflection of theirs. But this is not
the sense with which we have now
to do. This is the insinuated, flawless
inferiority of fallen man. We are speaking
of something further; something which,
if we will, is within the limits of
our strength; and therefore, if we will
not, is worthy of blame. For instance
it is a sad thought when we reflect
for how short a time we retain the
possession of mind which was brought in us
by our last day of fasting, on our last act of self examination. For a time we were bowed under the Eternal Will, and sleep by a sense of God's nearness, and a light of our own illumined hearts; for a time, all the faults of our inferior nature were to hold us in check, that we deemed to be let free from their oppression; our better self rose to the surface, and maintained its ascendancy; we were drawn into harmony with the secret order of His Spiritual Kingdom; all things, even the most adverse and chastening, seemed to us to be good; we were willing to be disposed of by Him though it took cost in all we had been long ing for in life. Again, in times of great affliction,
When, by acts of self-humiliation, and pondering over the tenets of His purpose, we have brought ourselves to a calm subordinate state, so as to feel as well as know, that if we had chosen for ourselves, we should have chosen accursed, and that our piercing sorrows are the last hope of breaking us into subjection, the necessary means of winning for us a crown in heaven; — it is sad to see how quickly these pure and blessed thoughts, with their fresh and saintly feelings, are blown away like the morning dew. So great is the change, that we seem to be other men. Our lighter thoughts, jotted away our humiliation; lofty and self-trusting impulses held our acts of
Witnesses, and seem to turn our very prayers into an unreal and inutile profession; we grow restless, self-guiding, selfish; we take up again a self-seeking tone, and lose our seat among those that are poor in spirit, or the poor sad, and retract our acquiescence in God's ways, and in anguish of heart join the blessing which should have blessed and sanctified us. In like manner, then, by a great struggle against ourselves, we have overcome any evil temper of the mind, by which, for a season, we have been mysteriously buffeted, though for a time it seemed to lie hid within us, it comes back upon us thundering, and laces possession of the whole mind.
Before it betrays its return. All at once we find ourselves within its grasp; and all its strife is to be fought over again. And we feel crushed out, and to have no more spirit in us; as if, in Shakespeare's words, "Sin received," and we "died." They that have watched themselves narrowly, know by what subtle and imperceptible movements of the mind we thus sink away from our better dispositions; and how all the while that we are desiring to hold our state unchanged, our highly wrought impressions are passing off. Not only as things without stifle and draw us down, — such as superficial talkings, many companions, differences of opinion, eager discussion, incivilities}
assertions, words not weightless. And the like, but it seems as if the mind were ever
shading its own better energies by a
sort of radiation; as if they were ever
escaping, and leaving us chilled and
downcast. We find ourselves interwoven
shrunken, unhappy. Here, then, is
another example of a willing spirit
surrised by the meekness of our fallen
nature. We have hardly come out of
our recent vigil before we are overcome
with slumber.

3. I will take only one more example, and
then bring this subject to an end with
one or two short remarks. This same
meekness which befits our imperfect nature
is the reason why we fall so far short
in effect of our aims and resolutions,
And in a word, of the whole law and measure of obedience. By the gift of regeneration, and by the power of the sanctified and illuminated reason, we are able to perceive in some sort the idea of holiness as it exists in the Eternal Mind. It will deep desire we choose it for our law of life. But the powers and energies of our fallen nature, even though regenerate, are too small for our aspirations. So desire we can reach to a sinless perfection of being, but we need our purest and most noble obedience to mingled ccp and imperfectness at the best; for the most part there is a base intermingling of a base alloy. How much of self, and sloth, and of the characteristic faults, and of secondary sins lying just below the horizon of our
Visible acts, so there to be found in our
works of charity, our alms deeds, our
fast, our prayers, our Confessions, even
at the steps of the altar. We are always
resolving, or more than we keep, professing
more than we do, feeling less than we
day; professing before our eyes a more
perfect pattern than we ever attain;
and that not only when we propose
to ourselves the example of our Lord,
whom none can follow in this world:
"Whatever I do forth," but even of men
least like ourselves, as His Saints ask of
His servants yet living on Earth.
After all, ours is a poor, flagging,
lazing, laggard obedience at the best.
Yet we are not only willing, but earnestly
Desiring, striving, and praying Him to raise us to a higher measure of blessedness; and, nevertheless, our guiding our will baffled, and our acts most imperfect, I will give one instance then pass on.

Let us take the whole branch of our personal religion which is expressed in the words "discipline" and "devotion." With our whole soul the purpose is just, pray, watch, meditate, believe ourselves, and yet when we look back on our habits nothing we shall find that we have been trained by failing, losing things undeservedly, being short of our rules, changing them, learning for our expenses, but really to relieve the necessities of our imperfect nature. Compare the End of Text with
its beginning, or the evening of a fast-day
with the morning; let stand by side
your resolutions and your fulfilments;
your rules and your acts; And who shall
so unconfounded?
So all this there, we see the tokens of
the fall, which are still upon the reason.
Only this was seen “Temple in all things
when we are, without sin.” Though
we lose our branchage with its several
infirmities yet its hallowed and survive
it with transcendent strength. We by our
explanation are made partakers of that
hallowed nature, not in perfection,
but in imperfection; not in its fulness,
but in a measure. It is in us, but
made subject to the laws which control
our humanity and our probation. Such
to the King of Saints in the midst of His brethren: He shining with full orb through heaven and earth, they in partial reflections, sometimes obscured, sometimes breaking forth, waiting and watching, yet, on the whole, ever shining. "And increase them to perfect day." We have received this great gift of God, that our Spirit is willing." There is no worship sign that we are members of this mystical body, through which the Will that moves heaven and earth, and sends love to angels, and leads the morning star, and out of hardness brings light, out of discord harmony, pours itself abroad, fills all the regenerate, and unites them to Himself.

In the first place, therefore, do not be
Out of heart at the bare present conscious
real of the weaknesses of your terrestrial nature.
It is well known and better understood
and more closely traced by St. John, to
whose perfection you are mystically
limited. If we were not fallen man,
what need were there that the Word
should be made flesh, and God become
man, taking up the weaknesses of our
mankind into the power of His Godhead?
It is the very condition of the regenerate
and the Lord which preserves the uniting
together of His mystical body, and the
stirring of a new creation out of the
old, that it should be gradual;
perfection passing into perfection.
health being slowly withdrawn up of life, by slowest, long-suffering, Cast forth, by violence. Moreover we know not what mysterious purpose in the spiritual world. May be fulfilled, even in our heathenness, so how the glory of the Son of God, and the ascendant of dust, may be perfected in our infirmity. It was not all fulfilled then in His innocence and perfect manhood. So bruised Satan under His feet. So will do more, and bruise him. Exemore under the feet of our weak and imperfect nature. What St. Paul said of the apostolic grace is true also of our regeneration. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency may be of the power of God, and not of us."

I 2 P. IV. 1.
And the abatement of the powers of evil to the
more absolute in this, that the heaviest
in God's kingdom is stronger than they.
This, it may be, besides his own humiliation
was the hidden meaning of St. Paul's long
suffering with the messenger of Satan:
"For to whom shall it be ascribed? I brought the seed
that it might depart from me: And He
said to me: My grace is sufficient for thee:
for power is made perfect in weakness.
And, once more; as there seems to be some
great purpose in the permission of this death,
so does there also appear to be as
deep a design in permitting the infirmities
of the saints to cleave so long and closely
about them. They are ever crying to be released
"from the body of this death," to be set
free from the hampering of indwelling sins.
And to be healed of the very susceptibilities of temptation. The prayer of the saints has ever been, to be "Endued with much strength," to be made like to the One who was without sin. They have been saying about seeking rest, and lying, "Spirke us with hypro, and I shall be cleansed: thon shalt wash us deep, I shall be made whiter than snow." Act out if we the unclean spirit, for Satan personally subjected to the tyranny of this self, which of a child hath domonstrated us. Lord, how long wilt thou not speak the word and heal us?"

At first sight we might be tempted to think that, as "the will of God" is "Our sanctification," we could not be too speedily delivered from the infirmities of the flesh. But in this he should overlook our great
reality in our present state. We must be
made partakers of the humiliation of Christ,
and therefore we are left jaded about
with the burden of our fallen nature.
It is by learning the depth of our fall, one
of the evil that dwells in us, that we
are to be fully absolved. We must think
of the depths in the way to see He will
"lift up" our head. Therefore, God suffers
weaknesses and infirmities to cheap about
His holiest servants, even as He sufferers
"to bear a dishonoring body to the last. Great
is the mystery of our humiliation, even the
for which we are absolved, to oversleep to
perfect our abasement; deep, besides to,
our faults and weaknesses are left about
us for our purification. The cleansing of
Spiritual flesh is a deep and laboring
work. It is not as the baking of a oily
garment, which is read and passive in
the fuller's hand. It is wrought by the
energy and repulsion of a holy will, active
and invisible in its warfare against itself.
The pains of interacting flesh are, it may be,
an absolute condition to the perfection of
holiness in a fallen being. Of those beings
deep holy spirits, which have been kept
their first estate, and are the nearest
types of the unchangeable and holy God, we
know nothing. But for the restoration of
us, fallen, and alienated, and redeemed,
and lost again, not a re-molding as
of dead and passive matter, but the living
and intense action of a moral nature,
seems ordained by the eternal laws
of will and being. Our necessities exp
faults, therefore, are left to abide in us, that we may learn the perfection of hating what
God abhors. They are as a purifying fire,
which eats through us with a sleepless
pain, and an anguish which cleanses the
soul. When God shows to us the inner
depths of our spiritual being, leading us,
as He led His prophet of old, through
chambers hallmarked to Himself, but its
filled by secret abominations, He reveals
to us a mystery of fear and solemn which
has nothing like it on this side of the
grave. Nevertheless, let us pray of Him to
shew us all. If we would be safe, we
must know the worst. And this will
teach us to lay our hand upon our mouth,
when we are tempted to cry, "How long,
O Lord?" and turn us from the deadly
wish "to be unclothed." Need to be delivered.
from ourselves; because it may be that we blindly desire the shortening of our purification, with we know not what loss of glory in His Kingdom. Better is it to bear about the Cross of our own fallen hearts until it has wrought in us His cleansing work. Suffer from us sorrow, so it be purifying. Our sins and our lives lie so deep, they must needs be long in the refiner's fire. Pray rather that, if need be, you may be tried therein, that all may be clean purged out.