

The Lord My Bishop

by Octavius Winslow

Jesus is the loving, divine Bishop of our souls, watching over us with eternal, redeeming love and giving us spiritual life.

Scripture: John 1:3, Romans 8:38, Colossians 3:4, 1 Peter 2:25

Topics: "Jesus as Bishop", "Spiritual Oversight"

Description

Octavius Winslow emphasizes that Jesus is the Bishop of our souls, highlighting His role as the Overseer who cares for the spiritual interests of believers. He explains that Jesus, as the Creator, provides spiritual life and redemption, making Him uniquely qualified to guide and protect our souls. Winslow reassures believers of the intimate relationship they have with Christ, who watches over them with love and vigilance. He contrasts Jesus with earthly bishops, underscoring that only Christ can offer true grace and salvation. Ultimately, Winslow calls believers to remain close to their divine Bishop, who will exalt them in the eternal Church.

Transcript

"The Lord is my portion, says my soul."

"The Bishop of your souls."--1 Pet. 2:25

The Greek word, episkopos, rendered Bishop, signifies Overseer, one who watches over the interests of the Church, superintends its order, and administers its discipline. In this sense it primarily and pre-eminently applies to the Lord Jesus Christ as the Universal Bishop of His one elect Church, and especially as the Bishop, or, Overseer of each individual member of that Church. Now, there is something peculiarly beautiful and assuring in this title of Jesus, as it relates to the spiritual interests of the believer. Observe, Jesus is the Bishop, or, Overseer of the soul, as distinct from the providential care He takes of the body. "The Bishop of your souls." Study your Lord, O believer, as sustaining this high, responsible, and close relation to you, and receive the divine instruction and rich comfort the Holy Spirit intended to convey to you thereby.

As the Bishop of our soul, He is its author; thus, He is more than all other bishops could possibly be--He is a creating bishop. Thereby Jesus proves His Divinity. The Creator must necessarily be before and above the thing created. Now creation is ascribed to Jesus. "All things were made by Him (Logos, the Word), and without Him was not anything made that was made." To what rational conclusion do these words conduct

us but the one, that the Bishop of our souls is essentially and absolutely GOD? Oh, blessed, assuring truth! what substance and stability it gives to faith reposing upon the Atonement. The Atonement reposes, in its turn, upon--DEITY.

Jesus is a life-giving Bishop. We have more than natural life from Him; we have spiritual life. "In Him was life" essential; in Him also was life Mediatorial; and this life was in Him for us. "Christ who is our life." Sweet thought! the spiritual life by which we become, in the highest sense, 'living souls,' is in Jesus, and from Jesus our Bishop! In virtue of our union with Him, we become partakers of His life; and this we have, not so much in virtue of our engrafting into Him as His dwelling in us by His Spirit. Thus, each believer has a risen or a living Christ dwelling in His heart through the Spirit by faith. And thus the regenerate soul is safe forever, since, before he can be lost, the personal Savior dwelling in him must perish!

Jesus is also a soul-redeeming Bishop. He has done what no other bishop ever has done, or ever could do--He died for us. The Church of Christ has had her martyr bishops--such were Latimer and Cranmer--but they only died for the truth, whereas Christ died for His Church. Their blood was witnessing, sealing blood--Jesus' blood was atoning, redeeming blood. How dear, then, to our divine, redeeming Bishop, must be the souls for whom His own travailed in the unknown sorrow of the garden, and in the death-agonies of the cross!

Lastly, Jesus is, in the divinest and most blessed sense, the Bishop, or Overseer, of our souls. He guards, watches over, keeps, and guides us, moment by moment, with a vigilance, tenderness, and individuality inexpressibly great. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous." The eye of His providence watches over your body, the eye of His grace watches over your soul. It is the oversight of love, eternal love, redeeming, unchanging love! Oh, what a loving Bishop is Jesus! Was ever love like His? Was ever such love heard of, thought of, displayed, as the love of Jesus, the Bishop of our souls? My soul, keep near your Bishop's side! No other bishop possesses His authority, can give His Spirit, offer His sacrifice, or communicate His grace. Earthly bishops are but men, men of like passions as ourselves--sinful, fallible, mortal. But Jesus is the Divine human Bishop, at whose feet, O my soul, you sit--to whose authority humbly you submit--in the luster of whose divine mitre you ever rejoice, until He shall exalt you to be a "king and a priest" in the Church above, where at His feet all crowns, and coronets, and mitres shall be devoutly and adoringly laid, and He shall be "LORD OF ALL."

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