

The Living One

by H.J. Vine

The Living One is a living, loving, personal Saviour who has been raised from among the dead and is precious to God, providing us with spiritual guidance and support.

Scripture: Proverbs 17:17, Jeremiah 4:1, Matthew 16:18, Luke 24:39, Acts 11:23, Hebrews 5:8, Revelation 1:18

Topics: "Jesus Christ", "Eternal Assurance"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches about the significance of believers having a living Saviour, a living Lord, and a living Head in Jesus Christ, who conquered death and holds all authority, building His spiritual house with believers as living stones. Despite the challenges and lawlessness in the world and the church, believers are encouraged to not fear but to abide with the living Lord, who loves them unconditionally and continues to serve them with grace and compassion, interceding for them in their weaknesses. His present love and ongoing work in believers' lives are a source of encouragement and assurance as they await His glorious return.

Transcript

Believers have come to a living Saviour! The Lord upon whom we call is a living Lord! The Head of the assembly to which we belong is a living Head! He can never die! He ever lives!

The Lord Jesus Christ, though still refused by the world, is precious to God. He is the living Stone, rejected by the religious builders; but in connection with whom God is building up a spiritual house, for His own praise. In this house, of which every true believer is a stone, the word of Hezekiah is abundantly fulfilled, "The living, the living! He shall praise Thee!"

It is true that many sincere souls might yet be asked the question, "Why seek ye the Living One among the dead?" for death still seems to overshadow all for them. The life, and love, and liberty which are in Christ Jesus, raised from among the dead, they do not enjoy. They know little of the meaning of the words, "In the light of His countenance is life; and His favour is as a cloud of the latter rain."

There are, however, many who speak of a "living Christ," who show by what they say that it is not the Christ of Scripture which is in their thoughts. It is a mere experience that they are seeking after, or an ethical ideal which fills their imaginations; with some it is simply an example or a moral principle. The Son of God, a living, loving, personal Saviour, who having died for our sins, has been raised again from among the dead, and who now lives, the Man Christ Jesus, in the glory of God--to Him they are strangers; nor is

He owned by them to be the Christ who is over all, God--the Creator, the Controller and Sustainer of all.

In speaking therefore of the Living One we shall not follow the fancies of such, but shall seek grace to gather what the Scriptures of Truth tell us concerning Him, as made known to us by the Holy Spirit, that other Comforter. Here we shall be on ground that is solid, safe, and sure, because God-given.

But there are those who sincerely love our Lord Jesus Christ, who, seeing the abounding lawlessness, and the miserable state of the assemblies, as responsible witnesses on earth, have become depressed and downcast. Knowing something of the majesty and holiness of the Lord, they feel the more the failure they deplore. Too much occupation with the sad state of Christendom has left them low in soul. This is wrong, though often the outcome of great sincerity, sincerity which feels that which is inconsistent with the holiness of God. The eye must be lifted up from the confusion and departure from truth to the Lord Himself, the living Son of God; the heart must afresh be cheered by His own changeless love. This will set the soul free according to God.

He that Lives

When John turned and beheld our Lord Jesus Christ standing in judicial majesty, like unto the Son of Man, in the midst of that which symbolized the seven assemblies, he fell at His feet as dead (Rev. 1:17). Why was this? He had leaned on the Lord's breast at supper; he had enjoyed His confidence and His love; these had been so real to him that he had styled himself "The disciple whom Jesus loved." Had that love changed? Far be the thought! Then why is he so overcome? It was because of the fiery holiness which he saw in the midst of the assemblies. He beheld the Lord shining in the supreme splendour of His pre-eminent majesty as the divine Judge. Who could stand before Him thus?

The blessed Saviour, however, would not have him cast down. He would cheer and strengthen and encourage him. He laid His right hand upon him, and said, "FEAR NOT!" Now often he had heard those words fall from His gracious lips before, and they banished all terror from his heart. And those words were spoken for us. Oh, may we be enabled to hear them, for surely we need them. The state of Christendom has not improved; worse and worse have things become; the assemblies have not returned to that first love which they so early left; nevertheless, "FEAR NOT!"

We may feel the right hand of His strength upon us, for it is upon all His own. He holds them; and none else can ever claim them. Heed carefully His encouraging words, "I am the First and the Last." This is Jehovah Himself (Isa. 44:6). There was none before Him; none can come after Him. "I AM HE THAT LIVES, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:18).

There could be no doubt left in John's mind as to who it was that thus spake. It was Jesus in very truth. It was the Living One, whose love was so precious to him. He had become dead, and thereby expressed that love, and also overthrown the power of the devil. He is now alive for evermore, the victorious One, the triumphant Conqueror of Death and the grave and Satan. He holds the keys. He has all power now. And whatever the state of the assemblies may be, nothing can hinder Him building His own assembly. This He is doing upon His Father's revelation of Himself as the Christ, the Son of the living God. And as He said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). There may be all sorts of Satanic schemes laid; they will utterly fail. The Living One goes on building in life and resurrection; and all will come out in perfection. He may give Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven; but He builds His church Himself and holds in His own hands the keys of death and Hades.

We are in safety as we cleave to the Lord. At the beginning the believers were exhorted, "with purpose of heart to abide with the Lord" (Acts 11:23, N.Tr.). This is of immediate importance for us also, if we would be kept bright for His glory whilst waiting for His return; serving Him faithfully, and walking in the truth, as we look and long for the blissful moment of His coming, to receive us to Himself.

Time after time Jeremiah sought to arouse the people of God with the cry, "THE LORD LIVES!" "THE LORD LIVES!!" "If thou wilt return, O Israel, says the Lord, return unto Me . . . and thou shalt swear, The Lord lives, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in Him, and in Him shall they glory" (Jer. 4:1-2). This is the way of true revival, and of overflow for others.

It is our Lord Jesus Christ who is for us the Living One; once dead, but now alive for evermore. All authority is given to Him. He is our living Saviour; our living Lord; and He is the living Head of the assembly to which we belong; in whom all fullness resides; and the Holy Spirit of Truth is here to enable us to abide with the living Lord.

This will not make us indifferent to the abounding evil; it will however keep us from getting under it. And constrained by His love, we shall still keep His commandments, and serve Him, as we wait and watch for His return.

He Loves

The love of Christ has already been proved. "Hereby we have known love, because He has laid down His life for us." That love, however, though told out fully at Calvary, is not a past thing. It still fills His heart for us. Expressed at the cross, it endures on the throne. Always the same; the glory into which He has gone has not changed His love for us. In all its active perfectness, that love still serves us. His past service of love was perfect; so also is His present service. He is "The Friend that loves at all times" (Prov. 17:17, N.Tr.).

How suitably the Book of Revelation begins by speaking of His present love for us before unfolding the coming judgments upon the assemblies, the nations, and the wicked. Glory is ascribed in chapter 1 verse 4, to "HIM THAT LOVES US." It is not "loved us" simply, as if it were past; it is a present, living love. That which the waters of death could not quench, nor the floods drown. That which is in the heart of the One who is above all things; once in the depths of suffering, shame, and death; now in the heights of gladness, glory, and immortality; Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the first Begotten of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth; He it is that "loves us." Blessed be His holy name!

Our hearts need to be encouraged by the knowledge of the present activities of His love for us. He may have to pour out judgments upon the lawless; but for His own, His dealings are all in grace and love. Let us allow none to cheat us of this divine fact.

His Present Service of Love

The Lord is constantly solicitous concerning the spiritual education of each of His own. To this end He deals with us individually. He has a present mind concerning us, each one according to the progress we have made in our schooling. To understand the activities of His love we must grasp this. It is a most marvellous fact that He Himself learned from the things which He suffered, though He were Son (Heb. 5:8). He lives now, and lovingly watches our progress. If it is true of an earthly father, "He that loves his son chastens him betimes," for he seeks his good; it is also true, "Whom the Lord loves He chastens" and

we know it is "for our profit." If we are without this educational dealing, we have no part in His love at all. He loves His own too well to leave them alone.

In our weaknesses, too, He sympathizes with us at all times. He is not indifferent to the infirmities of those for whom He died. He knows our feeble frame. And He ever lives, that blessed Man in the glory of God, to make intercession for us. His love sustains Him in His present service on our behalf, for we are weak and wayward. How blessed it is to know that "He continues ever." Men tell us that they have now discovered that the spirit continues always, and that there is no such thing as discontinuity. Those who know our Lord Jesus Christ understood this long ago. Jesus, however, not only in Spirit, but in His body, raised from among the dead, "CONTINUES EVER." He is a real, living, loving, sympathizing Man at the right hand of God. He said in resurrection, "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have" (Luke 24:39). But He not only sympathizes, He saves to the uttermost His own who draw near to God by Him. This is beyond the ken of the unregenerate, however scholarly they may be.

Let our hearts then be encouraged in the Lord! We are His! He has unfurled the banner of His triumph over us! His banner is love!

"O blessed living Lord, engage our hearts with Thee,

And strike within the answering chord to love so rich and free."

HE LIVES; HE LOVES; BEHOLD, HE COMES; His love will then present us to Himself with exceeding joy, and conduct us into the riches of redemption, giving them to us to share with Himself. Blessed be His name for ever.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/hj-vine/the-living-one/>

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