

John 11:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

Analysis

The sisters' message demonstrates profound faith: they address Jesus as 'Lord,' express confidence in His care ('he whom thou lovest'), yet avoid presumption by not demanding His presence. Their request is implicit, trusting Christ's wisdom and timing. This balance of reverence, intimacy, and submission models proper prayer. The emphasis on Jesus' love for Lazarus reveals that suffering comes even to those whom Christ loves, challenging prosperity theology.

Historical Context

The sisters likely sent messengers the two-mile journey from Bethany to wherever Jesus was ministering, possibly in Perea across the Jordan. First-century Jewish culture valued indirect, respectful requests to teachers.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the sisters' message model the balance between boldness and submission in prayer?
2. What does this verse teach about the relationship between God's love and our suffering?
3. In what ways can we cultivate this kind of intimate yet reverent address to Christ?

Interlinear Text

ἀπέστειλαν	οὖν	αὶ	ἀδελφαὶ	πρὸς	αὐτὸν	λέγουσαι
sent	Therefore	G3588	his sisters	unto	him	saying
G649	G3767		G79	G4314	G846	G3004
Κύριε	ἴδε	δὲν	φιλεῖς	ἀσθενεῖ		
Lord	G1492	he whom	thou lovest	is sick		
G2962		G3739	G5368	G770		

Additional Cross-References

John 11:5 (Love): Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

Revelation 3:19 (Love): As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

Psalms 16:3 (Parallel theme): But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.

John 13:23 (Love): Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 11:36 (Love): Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

John 11:11 (Parallel theme): These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

2 Timothy 4:20 (Parallel theme): Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

