

"Lord,
The
one
you
love
is
sick."



This was the message Mary and Martha sent to Jesus when their brother Lazarus, was at the point of death. Seven well-chosen words. No telegram today was better worded. They could have said, "Our brother Lazarus is sick," but they chose to word the message, "The one you love is sick." "The one you love" - what a fitting way of referring to their brother! Friend, do you realize that these words are a fitting description of you also? "The one you love" - that's you. For the Lord truly loves you, whether you realize it or not. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

"Lord the one you love is sick." Lazarus had now become helpless even to the extent of having others wait upon him. He had met with a situation that had overcome him. Whereas his own strength had been sufficient in the past, now he had none. What a moment for Satan to strike! The afflicted often forget that God loves them just as much in their helpless state as when they were strong and healthy. God's Word cannot change even if our condition has changed to one of helplessness. We are still described as those "whom you love". Let us never forget that our God is "a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a

shadow from the heat" (Isaiah 25:4). How comforting to notice that it was while Lazarus lay in this helpless condition that they referred to him as "The one you love."

"Lord, the one you love" is now seemingly quite useless. How tragic if the Lord should cease to love us when we can no longer engage in some outward activity for Him! Such suggestions come from the devil. They seem very reasonable. The prophet Isaiah was tempted to say, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain" (Isaiah 49:4). The Lord soon led the prophet out of this depression by bringing him to the conviction, "yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength" (v. 5). What a blessed stopping place for a weary soul! Let us never move away from it. Remember, even though Lazarus lay apparently useless on a sick-bed, still he was referred to as "The one you love."

"Lord, the one you love" is at the point of death. What sweet words at a time like that, to be referred to as "The one you love"! Can it be true that at the end of life, when we are especially conscious of our many failures and shortcomings, we can still be referred to as "the one you love"? Is there not a danger of putting too much faith in the love of God? Never! Listen to the apostle Paul, "I am persuaded that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

Regardless of where you are, or who you are, these words, "Lord, the one you love is sick" describes Christ's relationship to you. May your memory grasp them fast. Let them sound and resound in your mind over and over again - "Lord, the one you love" is sick, is tired, is weary, is discouraged, is at death's door, or in any other possible situation. To any and to all we cry out with Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Romans 8:35,37).

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