



JANUARY 9, 2022 | PASTOR MINHO SONG

## “The LORD Fulfills the Desires of Those who Fear Him” (Psalm 145:14-21)

14 The Lord upholds all who fall  
and lifts up all who are bowed down.

15 The eyes of all look to you,  
and you give them their food at the proper time.

16 You open your hand  
and satisfy the desires of every living thing.

17 The Lord is righteous in all his ways  
and faithful in all he does.

18 The Lord is near to all who call on him,  
to all who call on him in truth.

19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;  
he hears their cry and saves them.

20 The Lord watches over all who love him,  
but all the wicked he will destroy.

21 My mouth will speak in praise of the Lord.  
Let every creature praise his holy name  
for ever and ever.

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises  
and faithful in all he does.

We are going through a severe trial right now with the Omicron variant. Some of you may have contracted COVID-19 or know someone who did. It is a trying time, and I pray that the LORD will keep you strong and protect you.

May we continue to praise our King, despite the calamity we are going through. Please do not forget the LORD is nearby, and He will never leave us or forsake us. I want to continue the exposition from last week on Ps. 145 and encourage you to keep trusting the LORD. He is good, and his steadfast love endures forever. David said,

I will exalt you, my God, the King,

I will praise your name forever and ever (vs. 1)



David praised God's greatness and mercy. He said that the LORD is to be praised generation after generation because He is good and faithful in all his ways. This confession comes straight from his heart, from the personal experience of being ministered by God in times of trouble.

Why should we believe that God cares for us?

In vs. 17, David says, "the LORD is righteous in all his ways, and loving toward all he has made." He cares for us because he has made us, and we are his children. Let us not lose heart and become weary because the pandemic continues to threaten our lives. God is nearby. He will never leave us or forsake us.

Two weeks ago, we had infant baptism in our church. It was great to see sixteen children, most of whom are infants born during the pandemic, get baptized. Each child is so precious to their parents. You know that when a child is born, the whole world changes as far as the parents are concerned. Their daily routine, focus in life, joy, and so on all change. Even though the baby demands complete attention from the parents, it is a joy to take care of them.

Why is that? It is because of the love the parents have for the child! After all, the child is theirs!

In the same way, the LORD cares for us because we are his. We belong to him. Even though we have many frailties and shortcomings, the LORD is not in the business of exposing our follies and making fun of them, much less deriving any joy from punishing our sins. No, he does not enjoy that. Instead, the LORD waits patiently, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (vs. 8).

In verses 14 and following, David talks about how the LORD's steadfast love works out in our daily lives.

The LORD is near to all who call on him.

David says that the LORD is near to everyone who calls on him in truth (vs. 18). He can testify how the LORD came to his rescue from his own life.



Ps. 34 is very similar to Ps. 145, except it has the historical context. We read in the introduction to the psalm, "Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he left." The background is 1 Samuel 21:10 to 22:2. David was on the run from Saul, the King of Israel, trying to kill him. Saul was extremely bothered that David enjoyed more popularity and acceptance than he did. Saul was afraid that David might one day take his throne.

So, Saul chased David to kill him. David ran to the Philistine territory and ended up in the presence of its King. Running away from Israel's King, who tried to kill him and ended up in front of his enemy King who would kill him, David's life was far from safe. He prayed for the LORD's rescue at that moment.

This poor man called, and the LORD heard him,

He saved him out of all his troubles. (Ps. 34:6)

What did David do after he prayed to God for help? Somehow, he pretended to be insane and acted like a dog, having his saliva come down his mouth. It worked! The Philistine King was agitated and kicked David out of his presence.

David would recall this moment from time to time and remember it as the proof of God's faithfulness. Yes, God is near to those who earnestly call on him.

I am sure we all had those moments when we experienced how God came to our rescue after we earnestly prayed for him.

I led my youth group to a summer camp more than thirty years ago. We camped at the group site called the Whitefish Lake camp in Algonquin Park. The boys and the girls enjoyed a lovely day at the beach, and some were playing volleyball, others were canoeing.

I noticed one girl playing in the water but going deeper into the water. About ten meters into the lake, her face was no longer seen, only her waving arms above the water. I knew she was in trouble. I ran into the water, and I prayed, "LORD, I do not swim well enough to rescue someone like that. I will be in big trouble if she grabs my hand tight. We both will drown. Please help!"

The LORD spoke to me as I ran towards the water: do not grab her hand. Dive under the water, hold her feet, and push them towards the land. That is precisely what I did. That was the perfect solution in hindsight, given my lack of swimming ability.



I look back at the incident and ask 'what if' questions from time to time. What if the girl drowned? What would have happened to her parents? What if she did not make it? What would have happened to Young Nak Church and my ministry?

I, too, can relate to David, "the LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth (vs. 18)." Yes, as long as we are sincere and truthful in calling on the LORD, the LORD is near to us.

The LORD fulfills the desires of those who fear him.

David goes on to say that the LORD fulfills our hearts. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him. Fulfilling our hearts means the LORD satisfying us so that we can say 'my cup overflows.'

It is one thing to work our tails off to accomplish the goals we set for ourselves. But all those efforts mean nothing, even if we do achieve our goals if we do not have joy and peace in our hearts. If we come to the end of our days and somehow fill the void in our hearts, then we become restless. We are not fulfilled. Unless the LORD fulfills our heart, unless the LORD fulfills the desires of our hearts, worldly accomplishments do not mean ultimate satisfaction.

Let us examine closely what David says, 'the LORD fulfills the desires of those who fear him' (vs. 19). The key point is 'the fear of the LORD.'

What does that mean?

To fear the LORD is to put God at the center of our lives, as though he is the reason we move and have our being. In the past, we used to live for ourselves. We made personal goals and worked for those goals. We would then look at how things went and evaluate things based on our standards and values. But after we have come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, we are different now. We do not look at the world with our standards and values. No, we do so with the Kingdom values and norms. After all, it is God's world, and He is the King.

David confessed earlier, "I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name forever and ever" (vs. 1). If we revere the LORD as our King and fear the LORD as our God, then God will fulfill our desires. And we know that our desires are not far from the Kingdom values.



Our prayers change, too. No longer do we pray for ourselves only, but we take on more significant concerns, and we pray that the Kingdom come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Yes, that is how our prayers change!

In uncertain times like now, our confidence comes from the LORD. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him. He is near to all who call on him in truth.

It was getting close to Christmas in 1944, but there was no relief in sight. The young theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer knew that his days were ending in the German prison. But he felt a strange warmth and assurance despite the ever-pressing threat from the Nazis.

So he began writing a poem titled, Von guten Mächten treu und still umgeben (Faithfully and quietly surrounded by good powers)

By loving forces silently surrounded,

I feel quite soothed, secure, and filled with grace.

So I would like to live these days together,

and go with you into another year.

By loving forces wonderfully sheltered,

we are awaiting fearlessly what comes.

God is with us at dusk and in the morning

and most assuredly on every day

Still matters of the past are pressing our hearts

and evil days are weighing down on us.

Oh Lord, to our souls, so scared and sore,

give rescue, as it's that you made us for.



Bonhoeffer draw strength and inspiration from the LORD. He did not fear as he put complete trust in the LORD. The following year he became a martyr, and he would go on inspiring so many believers worldwide to fight for the good and stand up against the evil powers.

May the LORD give you strength and fulfill the desires you have for His Kingdom and His righteousness.