

- 1 In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge;
let me never be put to shame.**
- 2 Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness;
turn your ear to me and save me.**
- 3 Be my rock of refuge,
to which I can always go;
give the command to save me,
for you are my rock and my fortress.**
- 4 Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,
from the grasp of evil and cruel men.**
- 9 Do not cast me away when I am old;
do not forsake me when my strength is gone.**
- 10 For my enemies speak against me;
those who wait to kill me conspire together.**
- 11 They say, "God has forsaken him;
pursue him and seize him,
for no one will rescue him."**
- 12 Be not far from me, O God;
come quickly, O my God, to help me.**
- 13 May my accusers perish in shame;
may those who want to harm me
be covered with scorn and disgrace.**
- 14 But as for me, I will always have hope;
I will praise you more and more.**
- 15 My mouth will tell of your righteousness,
of your salvation all day long,
though I know not its measure.**
- 16 I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign
Lord;
I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone.**
- 17 Since my youth, O God, you have taught me,
and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds.**
- 18 Even when I am old and gray,
do not forsake me, O God,
till I declare your power to the next generation,
your might to all who are to come. (NIV 84)**

Theme: Rescue and Deliver me in your Righteousness

We don't exactly know who wrote this Psalm, why he wrote it or when. But this psalm does have similar themes and thoughts as Psalm 70, which is written by David. This psalm also shares a lot of phrases very similar to other psalms of David. It seems as if this psalm was written toward the end of someone's life since there are reverences to growing old, weak, and gray; and since Psalm 72 was written by David's Son, Solomon, many believe that this psalm was written by David toward the end of his life.

This psalm, then, is an appropriate prayer for Christians who are getting up there in age. But don't limit this psalm. It is really a great prayer for Christians of all ages because the focus is on God's mighty acts and marvelous deeds—on our rescue and deliverance by his righteousness.

Have you ever been falsely accused of committing a crime? I've never been in such a situation; but I can surmise that it is scary to say the least. All sorts of thoughts must be going through your head at that time—why would someone accuse you of doing such a thing? What will people think of you? What if you get arrested and thrown in jail? What if you are found guilty—what would happen to you and your family? Even if you are innocent, that thought of being found guilty still enters your mind.

But what if you were guilty? What if you actually did commit the crime that you were accused of committing? Then you are even more scared. You might think about hiring a good lawyer or coming up with some loophole that will get you off the hook.

David, assuming that David wrote this Psalm, is accused by his enemies in this psalm. Perhaps this Psalm was written when David's son, Adonijah and others conspired against him to take his kingdom from his son, Solomon, whom David had named as his replacement. This is recorded in 1 Kings 1. Adonijah was the oldest living child of David, who had grown weak and feeble; the conspirators had every reason to expect that the coups would be successful.

When Adonijah and his people saw David growing weak and feeble and they assumed that God had left him, that God had rejected David and was no longer protecting him. Perhaps it was because of some sin

he was committing, or had committed. And since God wasn't on his side, they were free to overtake him.

We may not have people accusing us of certain things—and our children are probably not conspiring against us. We may not have many physical, earthly enemies; but we all have a spiritual enemy: the devil. That name, devil, means “liar, accuser, or slanderer.” That is what the devil does—he accuses of sin; he points out all the horrible things we have done in our lives—he sticks the dagger in our side and keeps on twisting it. He tells us that we are so horrible and what we have done is so disgusting that God can't possibly forgive us. The devil condemns us again and again, trying to lead us into despair and unbelief. Satan, the other common name for the devil, means enemy or adversary—for that is what our accuser is, he is our enemy. When his enemies came after David, where did he go? To his refuge. When he was younger David relied on the Lord when a bear and a lion attacked his flock; the same Lord gave him a victory over the war giant, Goliath; the Lord rescued David from king Saul who sought to kill him; and he gave David victory after victory over all the enemies he faced in war. The Lord had always protected David, why would it be any different at the end of his life? So David wrote, **In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame...Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go...Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and cruel men.** In the same way, we are able to turn to God again and again. In the Lord we have our rock and our refuge. We have one who loves us and promises to guard and protect us against all our enemies—both physical and spiritual. He has never let us down throughout our lives, so why would he do so now? Like David, no matter what happens in our lives, we can turn to the Lord, our refuge and strength.

In the verses of our Psalm that I just quoted I skipped verse two. There we read, **Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me.** We know we are guilty of many sins and each and every sin deserves condemnation. We know we are helpless to save ourselves, nothing we can do can deliver ourselves from the guilt of all our sins. So we cry out to the Lord for help for he alone is able to help us and he alone does help us. He rescues us from the fires of hell, like a firefighter runs into a burning building to save a helpless baby, so the Lord rescued us by

suffering through the pain and agony of hell while he suffered on the cross. He delivers us from death and takes us to eternal home of heaven, where we will live with him forever.

The Lord alone saves us. And he does this by his righteousness. The Lord alone is perfect and holy, the Lord alone is without sin. No one in good conscious could accuse Jesus of sin—they tried to lie about him, but even that testimony didn't agree. Jesus had no sin—he was perfect and holy. But as Paul says in 1 Corinthians, **God made him who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.** Christ took our sins upon himself and gave us his perfect life. He made us righteous in God's eyes by crediting us with his righteousness!

It is his righteousness, not ours, that he gives to us and by which we are saved. In the same way it is his salvation by which we are saved and have eternal life! Our sins need not weigh heavily upon us; we need not fall into despair because of the devil's accusations. Our Lord and Savior is our judge, and in his love he gives us his righteousness and graciously saves us. The attacks and accusations from our enemy and accuser, the devil, don't hold up against the acquittal of the Lord. David knew this; he experienced the Lord's love and grace again and again—time and time again the Lord had rescued and delivered him; not just from his physical enemies but also from doubt and despair, which he fell into after his sin with Bathsheba and the attempted cover-up. He knew the love of the Lord throughout his life. And he longed to experience God's grace and salvation once again—just as we do as we wait his coming.

So in his old age, what did David do? He sang the praises of the Lord. As his life was going to its close, he wasn't interested in what he had accomplished; he wasn't concerned about how people would look at him or what his legacy would be. He was concerned about telling others about the power, might, and salvation of the Lord. He wanted to live longer not so that he could do more things for himself; but so that he could tell others about the great things the Lord has done! He writes, **I will praise you more and more. My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure. I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign Lord; I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone.**

It doesn't matter what station in life you currently are in, it doesn't matter how old you are, what you are capable of doing and not

doing—all of us here this evening are able to speak, we are able to tell others about Christ.

So let us follow the example of our Psalm for today. Let us spend the rest of our days—no matter how many of our days on this earth are left, telling others about their one and only Savior. We are only one generation away from losing the gospel; and no one can be saved without hearing the gospel. There is only one Savior from our enemies—the Lord rescues and delivers us in his righteousness. So let us tell the next generation of his righteousness and his salvation to all who will listen. So they may believe and be rescued and delivered by our Lord as well. Amen.