

“Testimony of Trevor Jenke” Mk 11:22-24

And Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God. ²³ Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. ²⁴ Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

These words of Jesus which we heard today were not chosen accidentally. They were very important to Trevor during this last year. These words, you can say, changed the way Trevor saw this world and his life.

In these words Jesus is speaking about trust to God and prayer, about the power of faith and prayer. Jesus illustrates it by portraying quite a shocking picture “I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him”, that is - if only we have trust to God then things that otherwise seem impossible, may really happen.

These words of Jesus, we could say, moved a mountain in Trevor’s life. I’ll explain it in a minute. But first, let me ask, do you know what is our greatest, our ultimate enemy? Think for a while! It is not a tricky question.

Yes, our ultimate enemy is - death. And it comes to us in so many forms through the brokenness of creation. It may come to us as poverty. As not having what we need for our daily bread.

It may come to us as injustice, as not having protection and safety, living under threats for our health and lives. It may come as sickness when our lives literally are taken away from us piece, by piece.

Ultimately comes death itself, when everything we have and everything we are is taken away from us. We can’t resist this enemy. We can’t escape it. We are helpless. And we never know when it will come.

We may not think about it this way too often, but, in fact, almost all activities in our lives are directed to fight this enemy. We spend our lives in fear of death. Consciously or unconsciously.

That’s why we need to have more, to feel more protected, to feel more in control over our lives and surroundings, that’s why we care so much about our health and safety, just not to let death come too close to us, to keep it in a distance.

If we have enough of everything, and are blessed with good health, we tend to persuade ourselves that we are masters of our lives. Really? Really? One day we all have to wake up and realize that it’s not true. Our enemy is here waiting for us. It is here. Time works for him, not for us.

When we are faced with this reality we may look for a help, for someone who could protect us, to rescue us from death. Then prayer can become a tool to fight this

enemy. For Jesus himself said that if we believe, our prayer can make impossible possible.

It is what happened with Trevor. Impossible was made possible. Not in a way we would think. Not in a way he initially thought. In the beginning Trevor trusted that by means of prayer we can get what we deem to be necessary. You just need to believe, pray, and if you believe and don't doubt, you will get it. Jesus said it.

It could be a comforting thought is a sense that there is some kind of powerful lever you can use to get your will to happen. But if you think for a while, what difference it really makes? It is just one more tool to fight your fear of death. You are still fighting the same enemy.

Trevor received what he was looking for. What we all deep inside are longing for. He didn't receive a help fighting his sickness, but he received something much more precious. His prayers really moved a mountain. They did what otherwise would be impossible.

They gave him freedom. Freedom from the fear of death. This is how he related it to me. "I thought that I had to pray fervently to get my will to happen. But what I actually needed was ability to say with sincerity: "Lord, let your will be done!" 2x

It made for him the whole difference in the world. It always does. When you realize that our Father in heaven cares for you, that Jesus has won death for you, and that He has promised to you eternal life, restored perfect bodies and life on renewed earth and renewed heaven, you are freed from the fear of death.

You can have the peace and joy that comes from the Lord, not from conditions in your life. Nothing can take this peace away from you. Nothing. That is your bond with the Lord.

People sometimes wonder – is there a life after death? It's easy to answer, yes, of course. We know it intuitively. But the more profound question is - is there for you a life before death? If we only spend our days fighting our ultimate enemy, consciously or unconsciously, what a life then it is? Life in fear, insecurity, trembling for our existence. It is not a life. It is death. Slavery to death.

Our trust in Triune God can do impossible things. It can free us to live lives without the fear. In freedom. Lives full of peace and joy that comes from our Creator and Redeemer. He has won our enemy. It's done. In Baptism He gives you a new life, the life in renewed creation. True life in His presence. Nothing and no one can take it away.

Only when you know what a glorious life awaits you after death, only then you can have a glorious life before death. I pray today, that as Trevor receive this gift of God, true freedom and true peace, that you all would also have a life in freedom here and glorious future in age to come.

Amen.