**Scripture Reading:** Exodus 20:1-17 and Acts 13:1-13

**Singing:** 237:1-3 – 140:2-3 – 261:1-3 – 388:1-5 – 358:1-4

Intro: A picture of a vibrant church shows …

* God’s truth marches to unite all kinds of ethnic and racial groups
* God’s truth kindles mission burden with the unsaved
* God’s truth conquers despite the ‘gates of hell resisting

**The Smashing of the Gates of Hell**

I. What are these gates? II. How are these gates bolted?

III. What is used to smash these gates?

I. What are these gates?

A. The ‘natural’ condition of our heart since the fall in Paradise

 1. both *inability* and *unwillingness* now grip our heart

 2. consider Is. 30:15; Matt. 24:37; John 5:40; Job 21:14-15

B. Satan’s ideas/thoughts act like additional *locks or dead bolts*

 1. ‘Gates of hell’ are *defensive barriers* instead of *offensive weapons*

a. what is the main/only purpose: *to keep truth out and us in*

 2. The only hope: *God’s power to deliver us (John 6:44)*

 3. Expect where Gospel is preached, you meet Elymas’ opposition

a. he ***perverts right ways of the Lord***(10b)

b. he ***withstands* (vs. 8) with great subtlety**

**II. How are the gates bolted?**

A. Anything added to our depravity *are Satan’s deadbolts on our hearts*

 1. They are *mostly thoughts – ideas – prejudices* *- carnal thoughts!*

B. Examine most common dead-bolts

 1. There is enough time to get serious later

 2. To be religious is the end of all fun

 3. All religious stuff is non-sense – for the ignorant – unscientific

C. Examine subtler ‘religious’ dead-bolts (Matt. 23:13-14; Luke 11:52

 1. Salvation is only for the worthy *Luke 5:32; Luke 15:22*

 2. Salvation by faith in Christ only is too easy/simple Rom. 4:4-5

 3. Welcome to Savior only if you are *enough convicted* Matt. 11:28

 4. God hasn’t spoken personally to you: Matt. 13:9; 1 Thess. 2:13

 5. God only welcomes His people and you are not one Is. 45:22; 55:7

 6. You aren’t allowed to approach cross unless you have experienced *a*

 *total change of heart – humbled deeply – emptied* Acts 5:31; Ps. 81

 7. Don’t think it is for you: *many are called/few are chosen so better*

 *be safe not to be so easily deceived like others* Matt. 7:21-23

 8. Don’t believe the Gospel call: that is only for the elect and if we belong to the elect, then God will draw us one day – all we need to do is wait for that Prov. 1:22-23; Rom. 2:4-5

 9. You can’t convert yourself and therefore unless it be given from heaven, a man can do nothing Matt. 22:37

10. Be careful of those who *send you to Jesus* Heb. 2:3; 7:25

III. What is used to smash these gates of hell?

A. Holy Spirit uses the plain preaching/expounding of Law & Gospel

 1. Sergius Paulus was ***astonished*** *at ‘doctrine of Gospel of Lord’*

B. Place yourself therefore not only *under the preaching of God’s Word*

 1. But pray as Jerusalem congregation: Acts 4:29-31

 2. Bring therefore all your ***thoughts to the Word*** (2 Cor. 10:5; Is. 8:20-

 21)