**Scripture:** 2 Thessalonians 1

**Singing:** 392:1, 2, 6 – 67:1-5 – 92:1. 3, 8 – 242:1-4

**Take Heed!**

Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him.

Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him. (Is. 3:10,11)

**Keys of God’s Kingdom (2)**

I.What is meant with keys? II. Who owns keys?

III. Who are called to use these keys? IV. How are these keys to be used?

**III. How are these keys to be used?**

A. They used *publicly in preaching and public church discipline*

B. How does the key of public preaching open the Kingdom of heaven?

 1. Preaching opens or closes *access* the treasures of the Kingdom

 a. preaching is *to herald Jesus Christ*

 b. preaching is also *to define the believer for whom Christ died*

 2. Scripture defines clearly to *whom promised goods of God’s grace belong!*

 a. Not all those who are faithful in coming to church

 b. But all those who receive the promise of Gospel by true faith

 3. What is the *receiving the promise by a true faith?*

 a. true faith is more than *historical faith in Bible truths*

b. true faith as fruit of Spirit’s gift is ***exercised*** with Jesus Christ

 ● without His saving work, Jesus is of *no interest!*

● saving faith isn’t measured in *how serious – committed –*

 *missing but in how exercised you are with the Savior*

 c. true faith *receives* the promise of Gospel

 4. If you can’t deny these ***exercises*** of your soul, then drink freely of the

 Gospel cup!

C. How does public preaching close the Kingdom of heaven!

 1. It declares that Christ’s treasures are off-limits to the *unbelievers and*

 *insincere*

a. what is unbelief?

● most serious form of disobedience: John 3:36; 1 John 3:23

 ● no Scriptural truth can be appealed to excuse lack of faith!

b. listen unbiased to Jesus: *Repent and believe the Gospel* Mark 1:15

● Hebrews 3:12-13, 15

 *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil*

*heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. While it is said, Today if ye* ***will*** *hear His voice, harden not your heart.*

● Matthew 22:1-12: *You are bidden to join the marriage feast!*

 2. How solemn is God’s testimony: *if no exercises of faith with Jesus, you*

 *abide under the wrath of God and His eternal condemnation!*

 a. Who can measure the fullness of God’s wrath in the eternity of hell?

**Take Heed …**

A. Woe to you if you continue to live in unbelief and disobedience

 1. Any appeal to your inability is *vain*

 2. Instead, acknowledge your sins and hasten to Jesus’ feet

 a. don’t linger like Lot’s wife

 b. don’t poison the Gospel call with conditions you need to meet

c. don’t fail to hear His *promising command (!)*

● Come now, and let us reason together, **saith the LORD,**

**though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool**

d. don’t forget that no disobedience is greater than unbelief

 e. let the ‘vice-grip’ of *your inability to obey* and God’s *unflinching*

 *demand to obey* bring you at Jesus’ feet

 ● He is able and willing to save sinners