**READING:** Deuteronomy 5: 1 – 21; Acts 5: 12 – 33

**SINGING:** 345:1,2; 417:1; 249:1,3,6; 387:4,5,6; 385:2,3

 **THE PERSECUTED CHURCH**

*By the late Rev. H. Paul*

Text: Acts 5: 19 – 20

*“But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors,*

*and brought them forth, and said,*

*Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the*

*words of this life.”*

**The raging of the enemy**

* The heavenly Bridegroom Christ thus compares His

bride, the Church, to a lily.

* It has been this way throughout history and it is still

like this today.

* Thus he called to repentance; it was a sermon which

proclaimed sin and grace.

* We can see how Satan was promoting deceit in the

church. Deceit is like one of those viruses that attack

the lily.

* Satan’s plan seemed to be successful because all the

apostles were locked in prison.

But the Lord will deliver.

* There is only one weapon that will prevail: prayer –

the prayer that the Lord Who alone reigns will display

His might.

* The Lord has indicated that He leads His Church in

the way of suffering.

**The deliverance through God’s hand**

* Therefore Satan will be defeated. The Lord defends

His church.

* The apostles were not able to deliver themselves.

It was impossible for them to open the prison doors.

* We wilfully brought ourselves into the bonds of prison

of sin, but God was pleased to send His Son into this

world.

* We are in the prison, but the door has been opened

and the invitation is sent out.

* Congregation, that is contrary to God’s Word.

We do not have that ability.

**The mandate to preach**

* “Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people

all the words of this life.”

* The same message came to all the people, just as

our confession speaks of this.

* Summarized, that would be: the complete gospel of

the suffering and death of Christ, of His resurrection

from the dead.

* When that life is worked in us, we need the Word more

and more and feel its essential meaning.

We gladly go to church.

* You need that, otherwise death will prevail.

Therefore, be active with His Word.