

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2007**

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE BELIEVERS

Message Fourteen

**Their Symbols—
Workman in Carpentry, Nursing Mother,
Father, Captives of Christ in His Triumphal Procession,
Incense-bearers, and Ambassadors**

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Thes. 2:7, 11; 2 Cor. 2:12-17; 5:20; Eph. 6:20

- I. The Lord needs many who, as a workman in carpentry, cut straight the word of the truth, unfolding the word of God in its various parts rightly and straightly without distortion—2 Tim. 2:15.**
- II. The apostles were nursing mothers and exhorting fathers; in cherishing the believers as their own children, the apostles considered themselves a nursing mother, and in exhorting them, they considered themselves a father—1 Thes. 2:7, 11.**
- III. The believers are captives of Christ in His triumphal procession for the celebration of Christ's victory—2 Cor. 2:12-14a:**
 - A. Paul uses the metaphor of a procession held in honor of the victory of a Roman general to illustrate what he was in the ministry—v. 14a.
 - B. Paul and his co-workers had been conquered by Christ and had become His captives in the train of His triumph, celebrating His victory; therefore, Paul's ministry was a triumphal procession of the victorious General, the Lord Jesus, leading many captives—Eph. 4:8; Col. 1:18b.
 - C. As such captives, we are witnesses that formerly we were enemies of Christ, but we have been defeated, subdued, captured, and made submissive to Him:
 1. In our experience much of the time we must admit that instead of being captives to Christ, Christ is a captive to us—cf. Acts 26:14.
 2. A captive of Christ is daily conquered, defeated, and captured by Christ; for this we should pray, "Lord, defeat me and make me Your captive."
 3. A captive of Christ lives and serves in the spirit—2 Cor. 2:13; Rom. 1:9:
 - a. A captive of Christ cares for the rest in his spirit, not for the outward circumstances or environment—2 Cor. 2:12-13; cf. 7:5-6.
 - b. A captive of Christ exercises his spirit of faith—4:13.
- IV. The believers are incense-bearers scattering the fragrance of Christ—2:14b-17:**
 - A. As captives of Christ in Christ's triumphal procession, we are simultaneously incense-bearers; through us God manifests the savor of the knowledge of Christ in every place—v. 14b.

- B. Actually, to scatter the incense of Christ is to live Christ—Phil. 1:19-21a.
 - C. Because we have been captured, subdued, possessed, and gained by Christ, He has the liberty to saturate us to make us a fragrance of Christ—2 Cor. 2:15.
 - D. The ministers of Christ, the lovers of Christ, are prepared to give forth Christ's fragrance in all circumstances and in any kind of environment—S. S. 4:10-16:
 - 1. All problems come from within, not from without.
 - 2. If there is a fragrance inside, outward circumstances will only serve to bring out the smell of the fragrance—Phil. 4:11-12.
 - E. The scattering of Christ as fragrant incense has an effect; it is a matter of life or of death—2 Cor. 2:16.
 - F. Those who scatter the fragrance of Christ are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but they speak out of sincerity, out of God, before God, and in Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ—v. 17; cf. 13:3.
- V. Like the apostle Paul, the believers may be ambassadors of Christ—5:20; Eph. 6:20:**
- A. An ambassador of Christ is one who represents God, the highest authority in the universe:
 - 1. God has given all authority to Christ, who is the Lord of all, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords—Matt. 28:18; Rev. 19:16.
 - 2. The Lord needs some ambassadors on earth who are qualified to represent Him—Matt. 28:19.
 - 3. A new covenant minister is one who has been authorized with the heavenly authority to represent the highest authority—2 Cor. 3:6; 5:20:
 - a. The apostles were commissioned to represent Christ to accomplish God's purpose—Matt. 10:40; John 13:20; Gal. 4:14b.
 - b. All the members of the Body are representatives of the Head, His ambassadors—Acts 9:6, 10-17; 22:12-16.
 - B. As an ambassador of Christ, Paul was "the acting God"—2 Cor. 1:3-4, 12, 15-16; 2:10; 10:1; 11:2:
 - 1. Paul was one with Christ to be the acting God in comforting the believers—1:3-4.
 - 2. Paul conducted himself in the singleness of God, for he was an imitator of the simple God and he lived God—v. 12.
 - 3. Paul's coming to the Corinthians was the coming of God as grace—vv. 15-16.
 - 4. Paul forgave a particular matter in the person of Christ—2:10.
 - 5. Paul entreated the believers through the meekness and gentleness of Christ—10:1.
 - 6. Paul was jealous over the saints with the jealousy of God—11:2.
 - C. As ambassadors of Christ, we carry out the ministry of reconciliation, representing Him to bring sinners back to God and to bring believers absolutely into God and to make them absolutely one with Him—5:18-20.