

## “The Foxes, The Little Foxes, That Spoil the Vines”

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In Song of Solomon the time the lovers enjoy is so precious to them that they do not want to waste it attending to those annoying little things that distract them from each other, so the reference to “the little foxes, that spoil the vines” (Song of Solomon 2:15) is the plea that they be taken away so as not to disturb the lovers. We must identify “The Foxes, The Little Foxes, That Spoil the Vines” in our marriages.

First, the little fox of a *flawed foundation* upon which the relationship rests. There are three categories of people who have a God-given right to marry. (1) Those who have never married (Heb. 13:4), (2) Those who have a deceased spouse (Rom. 7:1-3), and (3) Those who have put away a spouse who was guilty of fornication while they remained pure (Mt. 19:9). The union is not to be entered into lightly but demands both parties to be mature and responsible bringing their very best into the relationship (Mt. 19:10-12). A marriage contracted on unscriptural grounds comes with built in problems before God and man; it has a flawed foundation.

Second, the little fox of *fanciful flirtation* with others. Malachi is an authority on this subject, “Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. **And did not he make one?** Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth” (Mal. 2:14-15).

Third, the little fox of *full faculties* leaves no room for thoughts of love. Many are unhappy in their marriages because they do not sacrifice the luxury of time spent with others and in activities, recreational and occupational, to be with their mates quietly meditating on chaste romantic sentiments that may be gleaned from the inspired word of God in the book of Song of Solomon. Far too often the story of divorce begins with forsaking the time and energy initially spent during the courtship to win the lover’s favor and redirecting it to personal pursuits.

Fourth, the little fox of *family functions* that have a maximum of time allotted to the children or even the couples’ own parents. The old joke, “Why are you two getting a divorce at ninety years old

when you’ve been married for seventy years?” and the reply comes, “Well, we were just waiting on the children to die!” has application here.

Fifth, the little fox of *fragile finances* that demands more time on the job or at home wringing the hands. Our high standard of living urges especially younger married couples to live above, way above, their means. Jesus taught, “Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Lk. 12:15).

Sixth, the little fox of *foul friends*. A pivotal factor in the eternal destiny of men is the friends they choose. King David’s son “Anmon had a friend” who provided him with just enough motivation to push him over the edge into sin (II Sam. 13:3). The careful study of II Samuel 13-18 by couples longing for a godly union together will indelibly affix the impression foul friends may have on their lives and the lives of those they love. Just as “evil companionships corrupt good morals,” “there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother” (I Cor. 15:33, ASV; Prov. 18:24b). Wisdom is required to distinguish the difference between these choices and to prefer the latter over the former.

Seventh, the little fox of *failing faith*. Since “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” a good question is “how much time do we devote each day to reading, studying, and meditating on the word of God?” The Bible says, “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright” (Heb. 12:14-16).

Eighth, the little fox of a *frustrated future*. The Lord taught, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Mt. 6:33-34). The establishment of proper priorities in life with the kingdom of God in first place insures a fantastic future. Those unwilling to “set your affection on things above, not on things on

the earth" are sure to set unrealistic goals for the future (Col. 3:2). Many want to live in a big house and seldom if ever darken the door of the church house!

Clearly, we must identify "The Foxes, The Little Foxes, That Spoil the Vines" in our marriages.