“Beware of the Little Foxes”
By General Pastor Peter F. Paine
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Little things can have big consequences; a small hole in a heart, a small nail in a heel, a small bullet in a lung, a small white lie, a small omission, taking a small thing that isn’t yours…

*Song of Solomon 2:15*  *Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*

God’s got a harvest for your life.

*Isaiah 5:1-4*  *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? …*

History has not recorded some of the greatest deeds ever done. Mothers have raised children to be faithful, and those children have gone on to do great things. What the mothers have said or done has been recorded in Heaven.

Most of us have figured out how to keep the big things in place; how to make ourselves look good, but the little foxes are chewing at the vines, and we don’t even pay attention. The little foxes sneak in, and they will rob you of your harvest. We need to be vigilant all the time.

Maybe I shouldn’t tell you this, but I started screaming in my sleep last night. I dreamt that I saw somebody take something off of Sister Davis’ porch, something that I knew was important to her, and I yelled at him to put it back, but he took off running with it. I chased after him, and when I caught up to him, I demanded that he give it to me. He said he would kill me, and I said, “Maybe so, but before you do, I’m going to take that and put it back,” and I started screaming at him. That’s when Debbie woke me up. I told her I wasn’t sure if I got it back, or whether I got killed. Don’t let the devil rob you; he wants to steal your harvest.

Some examples of little foxes:

First little fox—harmful thoughts. Harmful thoughts can be like an acorn that starts out small, but grows into a great oak. A simple idea, when it’s unopposed, can become gigantic. Some examples of harmful thoughts would be egotism, jealousy, dwelling on impure thoughts. Someone said that ‘ego’ stands for Edge God Out. Don’t misunderstand me, you should care about yourself. The Bible says to love thy neighbor as thyself (Matthew 22:37-39); you can’t very well do that if you don’t love yourself. But when what I want becomes more important than what God wants… Be careful, little foxes have big teeth.

*Matthew 6:9-10, 14*  *Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

You notice that as soon as Jesus taught the disciples to pray, he told them that we need to forgive. I wish I could say that, once you become a Christian, you never feel hate
or rage again. Have you ever seen two brothers in Christ express hate or rage for each other? It doesn’t look good, does it? We are supposed to fountains of sweet water, not bitter (James 3:11). The reality is that we need to beware of little foxes.

Do you remember that mother that was involved in planning a murder? Her daughter wanted to be on the high school cheerleading squad, but got edged out by another girl. The mother planned to kill the girl that did make the squad, so that her daughter could become a cheerleader. I’m sure that she didn’t start out planning a murder, but it built up to that. It’s easy for things to get out of control, once the fox chews through the root.

Galatians 5:26  Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

The second fox in harmful words. There was a poster in World War II that said, “Loose Lips Sink Ships.” Be careful what you say. I read somewhere that the average person speaks about 25,000 words per day. Some of us more than others. Harmful words may be criticisms, or gossip, or distortions of the truth.

James 3:8   But the tongue can no man tame...

Psalms 120:1-2  Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

Psalms 141:3  Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.

The third fox is wrong actions. Even small actions can kill. Actions speak louder than words. Do you know anyone who’s ever done anything wrong? If we’re honest, we’ll say, “Yeah, I know a guy like that, and his name’s on my Driver’s License.” One wrong action can leave your testimony of none effect.

There are some warning signs. By the way, small things are really big things in disguise. Are you guilty of repeating gossip? It’s not worth repeating. “Oh but it’s true!” Maybe so, but gossip is any unnecessary report. Are you guilty of stretching the truth? How about bragging? Continually thinking of someone you despise? Are you envious of what someone else has? Do you engage in sexual fantasies? Do you justify yourself, rather than own your transgression? Here are four ways to defeat foxes:

Remember that He is the vine, and that we can do nothing of ourselves.

John 15:1, 4   ...the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine...

Walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16   ...Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

How do you know if you’re walking in the Spirit? Well the fruit of the Spirit is...
**Galatians 5:22-23**  But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

**Galatians 6:8-10**  ...And let us not be weary in well doing...

Repetition is the mother of learning. Why do I have to repeat this? Well, repetition helps you learn. Don’t let it make you weary; you may be on the verge of a breakthrough. Your head, heart and conscience should form a straight line.

**Acts 5:1-11**  ...Ananias, with Sapphira his wife...

They were in this thing together. They agreed together to lie, because they wanted to look better to those in the church than they really were. Your life matters to Jesus. They agreed that what they were going to say sounded better than what they were going to do. They made a very generous gift to the church, but they lied about it. Peter even gave Sapphira an out, but she continued the lie, and she paid the price. We are all sinners saved by grace; you just don’t get any better than that. Don’t try to impress people; Jesus loves you and He knows what you are. You may have a tattoo where nobody can see it, but God sees it. There are doors on bathrooms because it’s private, not because it’s secret. Some things need to be kept private. If you have embarrassing secrets, then get rid of them. Ananias and Sapphira held back part of the price of the land; it was their money, they didn’t have to give all of it. If they had been honest about it, that would have been perfectly all right, but they lied; God cannot bless that. He can forgive mistakes. You know, Babe Ruth was known for his home runs—he hit more than any one else in his generation. He also struck out more times than any one else. What that tells me is that he kept getting up to bat.

If you have a secret, get it out of your life. Come clean to God.