

(Most of the content of this Report is from the issue of January 10, 2010)

"Be willing to see the worst of thy condition. It is better to see it here than in hell; for thou must see thy misery here or there." - John Bunyan

The Baptist Catechism (Keach's Catechism)

1677

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)

Q. 98. How do Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper become effectual means of salvation, not from any virtue in them or in him that administers them, but only by the blessing of Christ and the working of His Spirit in them that by faith receive them.

(1 Peter 3:21; 1 Cor. 3:6-7; 1 Cor. 12:13)

Q. 99. Wherein do Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God?

A. Baptism and the Lord's Supper differ from the other ordinances of God in that they were specially instituted by Christ to represent and apply to believers the benefits of the new covenant by visible and outward signs.

(Matt. 28:19; Acts 22:16; Matt. 26:26-28; Rom. 6:4)

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Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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THE LITTLE FOXES

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

The Song of Solomon is a most beautiful love story. The relationship between a man and his bride is used to picture the relationship of Christ to His people. The tender relationships shown in this account are easily understood in the union and communion of Christ with His people and we do well to look to them and learn.

Both teaching and experience reveal that our communion with the Lord may be disturbed. We must know that there are elements in the world that strive to disrupt any spiritual activity that honors God. It is of these things that we are warned in this text. We would be reminded that the relationships of the Lord and His Bride are the theme in this book. Thus, we are dealing with matters that are of the utmost importance to those who would honor God in their lives.

Most commentators agree that the vines here are a picture of believers and the tender grapes are the fruits produced by the Spirit in the regenerate heart and life. The tenderness of the grapes suggests two things. First is that they are choice and are to be desired by the owner of the vineyard. Secondly it suggests that they are delicate and need proper care and cultivation to remain. Thus, we are to take care that they are not harmed.

The reason that the “little foxes” were such a threat was that they would gnaw around the base of the vines. Since they could not reach the grapes they would eat what they could reach. The picture is obvious. By such action they spoil

the vines which supply the needs of the tender grapes.

Again, the picture is clear that those things produced in the life of the believer are dependent on the spiritual wellbeing of true believers. Several thoughts come to mind as to the tender things that are the fruit of the Spirit. These things are of great value in glorifying God and they are essential to blessed union and communion with the Lord.

Such things as true repentance and faith do not honor God if they are not born out of a true consciousness of sin and a humble dependence on the Lord. The exercise of devoted faith in the life of a believer is precious indeed, but it is subject to interference from those untoward elements of the world. How often do we find ourselves going for long periods of time without praying in a truly God-honoring way? Upon close examination we often find that we have allowed things to hinder and interrupt this true fellowship with God. One of the most characteristic things in the life of true believers is the desire to know God better, to learn of Him and to serve without hindrance. If indeed we find that these things are dull and lacking at the best, we find that the “little foxes” have gone unnoticed.

There are false teachers everywhere and, in many cases, they spy out the liberty in the life of God in us. They present us with everything from outright heresy to weakened and polluted forms

of true Bible doctrine. Sometimes these things catch our attention for a while, or we see them and fail to take them to the Lord to be dealt with in the light of scripture. In any event these do not want the tender grapes to prosper in us and they do not want God to be honored in us. They are often found to promote human ability in the place of Grace and mercy.

Our flesh often causes pride to raise its ugly head even to the point of self-produced religion and works. We must be reminded that God is a jealous God and that He will not share His glory with another. If we know any glory it will be in the cross of Christ. Pride then leads us to being subject to flattery. How easily the world will brag about that which is produced by the flesh and downplay the fruit of the Spirit. A lady once said to a well-known preacher, "Sir, I just wanted to tell you that was a great message you

just preached." He quickly replied, "You are too late, the devil had already told me that." The point was that the devil wanted him to take credit for something God had done.

There is a tendency to substitute human wisdom for divine revelation. How easily do we form opinions rather than search out the wisdom of God as it is recorded in His Word?

These are but a few of the things that might sap the energy away from the fruit of the Spirit in us. There are many more. And we must be advised that these are "little foxes." It is the little things left unattended that do great damage. We are to be constantly on guard. Anything that weakens, undermines, or compromises our relationship to Christ is to be resisted. The "little foxes" must be taken away.

bhs

From John MacArthur

"I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation" (Heb. 13:22). Hell is undoubtedly full of people who did not actively oppose Jesus Christ, but simply drifted into damnation by neglecting to respond to the gospel. These are the kinds of people the writer challenges in Hebrews 2:1-4. They were aware of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, but weren't willing to commit their lives to Him. As a result, they were drifting past the call of God into eternal disaster. The Word of God always demands a response. Any effective teacher of it must do more than just dispense facts; he must warn, exhort, and extend an invitation. He may have impressive knowledge of the truth, but if he doesn't have a passionate concern for how people react to it, he is not a worthy representative of Jesus Christ. Jesus had that kind of compassion. Despite the rejection of His own people, He ached for their salvation: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen ushers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling" (Matt. 23:37). You can feel His heart go out to the people. Paul had similar compassion: "I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of My brethren, my kinsman according to the flesh" (Rom. 9:2-3). A true teacher is interested in more than just academics; he is concerned that people respond rightly to what is taught. Just as the writer of Hebrews had to warn and exhort his readers, at times it becomes necessary for us to warn those we are witnessing to. If you want to see unbelieving

friends, relatives, or associates come to Christ, warn them. Let them see the passion in your heart and your love for them. Please don't allow anyone to slip into eternal destruction without being warned sufficiently.

“IF I BELIEVED” (by anonymous atheist)

If I firmly believed, as millions say they do, that the knowledge and practice of religion in this life influences destiny in another life, then religion would mean to me everything. I would cast away earthly enjoyments as dross, earthly cares as folly, and earthly thoughts and feelings as vanity. God would be my first waking thought and my last image before falling asleep. I would labor in his cause alone. I would hardly stop thinking of my future eternity. I would regard the saving of one soul worth a life of suffering; earthly consequences would never prevent me from acting or speaking out to accomplish this. The griefs of life would occupy hardly a moment of my thoughts. I would go forth to the world and preach this message in season and out of season, and my scripture text would be: “What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” All of this would overwhelmingly preoccupy me, that is, if I believed!

Proverb 11:5 --The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright,
But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.

1. The “blameless” are those who confess that “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love” (Ephesians 1:4) and were “justified by the faith of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 2:16f).
2. The “righteousness of the blameless” is Jesus Christ, because He is to them “Jehovah our Righteousness” (Jeremiah 23:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30) and therefore “the righteousness of the upright” (Proverb 11:6).
3. “The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright” because, as each of them confesses, “He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake” (Psalm 23:3).
4. “But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness” because, in consequence of having rejected “the righteousness of the upright” and choosing instead to follow his own way, “the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them” (11:3). We therefore read of them: “The nations have sunk down in the pit which they made; in the net which they hid, their own foot is caught. ... the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands” (Psalm 9:15f). For example, wicked Haman was hanged on the gallows he had erected for the hanging of a blameless man (Esther 7:9f).

– Daniel E. Parks