

## Stuff About Things

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*Plain Talk reprint from Robert Turner*

It is the little things that get under one's skin that really trouble us in this life. Like "little foxes that spoil the vineyards" (S.S. 2:15), the effect is out of proportion to the initial cause. When we react in an exaggerated manner, our response cultivates the soil, waters and fertilizes the seed, and thus contributes to greater problems. And if some friend reminds us that scratching only increases the itch, we tell him to mind his own business, our blood-pressure increases, and so does the effect of "the little things that get under our skin."

I have seen grown men-strong in body and mind, capable of standing unflinchingly against brute force, personal abuse, financial reverses or doctrinal onslaughts of the Devil -- who will squirm and twist or stoop to degrading practices when some mites get next to them. We must continue to war against the "giants in the land," but surely there is reason to drop all pride and admit that we need a better defense against chiggers. (What did you think this was all about?)

The wise man said, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24b). The metaphor is a good one, but blackberry vines harbor something that gives friend or brother a real challenge. What about "closer than a chigger"? (I just itch to make my point.)

If there is anything closer, more powerful for his size, easier to acquire, harder to put off, or more democratic in his fleshly taste than a chigger, I do not want to know or have anything to do with it. One can rub down with turpentine, grandma's lye soap, and gobs of modern chigger medicine, only to make his flesh more inviting for the invisible red-bugs that are waiting, who knows where, for him to prepare the feast.

An Arkansas farmer told me the best remedy was "scratch him 'till ye brings the blood;" but how can I tell when a chigger is bleeding? I have resigned myself to kerosene, a good wife's sympathy, and the job of making some kind of point out of my misery. Oh, to get out of a chigger just a fraction of what it gets out of me!

So, if one must be philosophical about chiggers, just remember what I said at the first: It is the little things that get under one's skin that really trouble us in this life.

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