

CALL TO DUTY

VOL. 3, ISSUE 1



THIS ISSUE'S THEME:

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:2



As each new year begins, many people tend to make resolutions. These resolutions might include losing weight, getting a better paying job, moving to a warmer climate, and the like. These resolutions are almost always oriented towards worldly things. They are also, unfortunately, often broken within weeks. We often pursue them on our own with no outside assistance.

As Christians we ought to resolve to focus on spiritual things. Resolve to study the bible more, participate in the ministries our congregation supports, teach bible school lessons, or lead others to Christ. As the scripture says, set our minds on things above and not on worldly things. It may not be easy but we have lots of help.



Our elders are there to help guide us (1 Peter 5:2 NKJ).

Our preachers help us understand the word of God (Romans 10:14-15).

Our deacons can help us plug into a ministry.

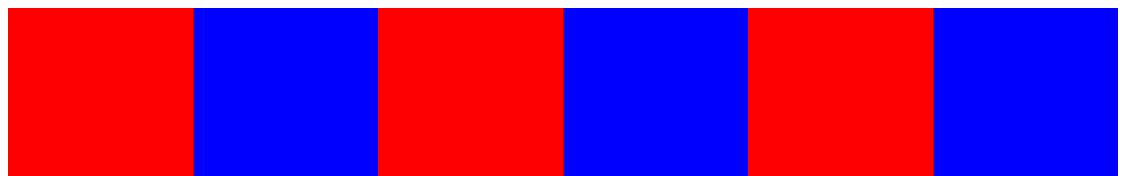
Our greatest help is in Christ. You can lean on him.



Jesus said, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Matt 11:28-30

Paul said “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13

So let us trust and rely on Christ as we strive to set out minds on things above and resolve to be more Christlike.



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House to House
Heart to Heart

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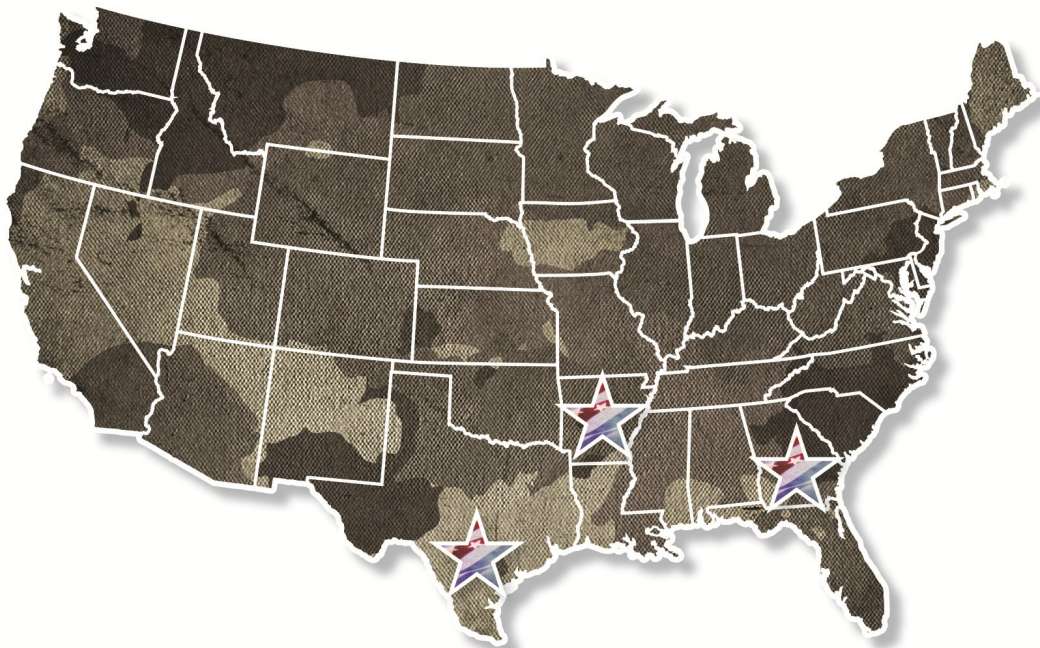
Deborah Rice, lovingly known as Ms. Deb, worked with House to House and Polishing the Pulpit for over 15 years. Her son is in the Army, and she was very patriotic. She loved America, and every year we celebrated Veterans Day and Memorial Day with her. In October 2021 she suffered a brain aneurysm. She fought for her life until February 4, 2022. To honor her, we have set up a donation fund to send out HTH to military bases in her honor. For every dollar given, at least three copies will be sent out around a military base, to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

You can donate here: housetohouse.com/mrs-deb-memorial-fund/.

As donations come in, we will send more HTH copies to additional bases across the continental United States (CONUS for military folks). As we send to new bases, we will add stars representing those areas.

"My parents we converted while serving in the USAF. Because of someone's diligence to spreading the gospel, my family are thankfully Christians. My parents both work for the church and I now work at House to House spreading the gospel."
—Ahren Steis

We are honored to have known Ms. Deb, and we are better for it.



SET YOUR MIND ON THINGS ABOVE

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.” Colossians 3:2 NKJV

What a wonderful reminder for those Christians in Colossi and it is also a wonderful reminder to all of us. In verse 1, we are reminded that IF we were raised with Christ, we should seek those things which are of Christ. Seek the spiritual things of God and not physical or the material things of the earth. When we were in the world and of the world, we lived for those material things. We lived for the almighty dollar, living for a large home and the next expensive car; and not thinking about anything else except for those things which we could grasp with our fingers. We might have even treated people poorly. Treating them as if they are in our way to success. During my military service I witnessed military members derail promotions or awards for others. Many times I have seen members backstab others for the next rank or better duty assignment. You will learn quickly who you can trust and who you cannot trust. As a Christian we know that we can always trust Christ. He will always look out for our spiritual well-being.

When we read and study the Bible to know what it takes to become a Christian, it is through the study that we realized the sacrifice Christ had made for us, for me! For those of us who choose to be raised with Christ in baptism, we have put on Christ. The first thing to change is our minds, thinking about those spiritual aspects of Christ. We change our lives to reflect His. As Paul wrote in Romans 2:12 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

As we transform our minds to be Christ's, we're setting our minds to have those characteristics of Christ. It's a life-long walk with God as we mature to be the Christian that He would have us to be. This is not an overnight transformation. We must be patient as God is patient with us. Patient and diligent. It will not be easy! We must make sacrifices that may cost us family and friends. Yes, we will trip and yes, we will fall. When we have the mind of Christ, we get back up and we continue pressing forward. We press forward to the prize that awaits every one of us. As Paul wrote in Philippians 3 “I

press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.” Philippians 3:14-16.

Let us all set our mind on Christ, to be unified with Christ in the same mind.

– Love Greg



Greg James grew up in the Air Force and lived in Utah, Louisiana, and South Dakota before entering the active-duty Air Force in 1991. He transferred to the Reserves as an Air Reserve Technician in 2001. Greg was in air operations with heavy and fighter aircraft deploying to Desert Storm, Iraq, and Afghanistan among other deployments and TDY's. He met and married his wife Tammy while she was active-duty Air Force, and she got out when their son was born. Greg retired from the Air Force Reserves in 2017 after 26 years of total service and graduated from Brown Trail School of preaching in 2016. Greg served as the associate minister for the Greenmount Rd congregation in Belleville, IL and served as the pulpit minister for the Briar congregation in Briar, Texas before relocating to Jackson, Tennessee. They are members of the Crosswinds church of Christ.

**Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth...
(Col. 3:2)**



When I enlisted in the United States Air Force (USAF) back in the late 1960's, I was promised to be trained as a jet engine mechanic. But unlike heaven's spiritual promises made by God, earth's physical promises made by man are all too often broken. For

example, once I had entered the USAF military service, the USAF powers that ruled back then broke their promise to me. Or put another way, those USAF powers drafted me into "munitions maintenance" (civilian meaning "explosives operator"). Thus, instead of letting my mind focus on things above (jet fighters), I was forced into setting my mind on things still on earth (munitions). This is contrary to what the above verse says. Over the years since then, I finally learned what it means to "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth" (Col. 3:2). In brief, it meant for me to set my mind on God in heaven above and not on Satan here on earth. This type of thinking made me enlist in God's army.

So, for comparison and learning reasons alone, from about AD 53-56, the apostle Paul carried out a three-year resident ministry in the ancient city of Ephesus (Acts 20:31). Like my four-year USAF active-duty enlistment served in various areas of the United States and world, Ephesus was located in the Roman province of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). Paul spent two of those years teaching the gospel of Christ in the school of Tyrannus so all the Greeks and Jews who lived in the province heard about it (Acts 19:9-10). One of those who obeyed the gospel when he heard about it was a man named Epaphras. As a citizen of Colossae which was located about one-hundred miles to the east of Ephesus, Epaphras then taught the gospel of Christ in the church there (Col. 1:7; 4:12). He taught what Paul had taught him that "Christ is all you need to be made complete" (Col. 1:1-4:18). Likewise, Epaphras taught Christ to the people in nearby Laodicea and Heirapolis (Col. 4:13-16).

As detailed above, what Epaphras taught the Christians in Colossae, Laodicea, and Heirapolis was exactly that

which he had learned from the apostle Paul who had learned it from God (Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit). Specifically, that according to the gospel of Christ as the word of truth, there is a hope of eternal life in heaven (Col. 1:5) above with Christ (Col. 3:3-4). This hope is for all of the people who are made alive (via baptism--complete immersion in water) together with Christ through forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14) and transgressions (Col. 2:13). Once forgiven, those early Christians were also taught to continue walking by faith in Christ just as they had received Him in accordance to the gospel (Col. 1:23; 2:6-7). That is what they would have to do to realize the hope of eternal life in heaven "above" with Christ. With Christ as the one and only article of their faith (Col. 1:4), if they fell away from the truth of His gospel, it is because their minds were set on the things of the earth "below." That is the way things have been and will be until Judgment Day.



Tom Wright served in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War Era. Following his military discharge, Tom graduated college and worked in Design Engineering for over two decades. In his middle forties, he left secular work and entered fulltime ministry. He holds degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Master of Biblical Studies, and Doctor of Ministry. Tom has spent about the past twenty-five years serving God as an evangelist, preacher, and teacher. He and his wife Carla live in the Colorado Springs area and worship with the Calhan

Think Right, Act Right



I was slightly peeved when the drill sergeant in charge of the range that day informed me that I had qualified as a sharpshooter. It was basic training, and qualifying was an event where I expected to excel. I had been proficient with weapons since I was a little boy, but I couldn't get the hang of the open sights on the M-16. So, I had to settle for 29 out of 40 if my memory serves me correctly. Enough to be a sharpshooter but not enough to be an expert. Six months later, when I was at my unit, they handed me an M-4 with an advance combat optic (ACOG) sight on top. The results were more what I wanted to see – 40 out of 40 (this time, I know memory serves me correctly!) I qualified as an expert. It is amazing how a different sight apparatus can change a man's skill from sharpshooter to expert!

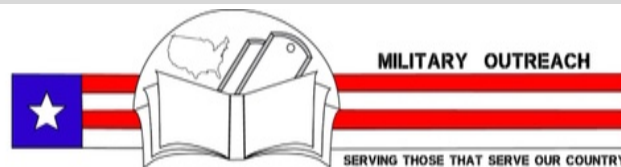
An underrated aspect of the Christian worldview is the power of biblical thinking. Paul often alludes to this in his writings. To the church in Colossae, he wrote, "Set your mind on things above, not on things that are on the earth" (Col.3:2 NASB). To the Roman church, he wrote something similar, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect" (Rom.12:2). Finally, to the Philippian brethren he wrote, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things" (Phil.4:8). Do you notice a common theme running through these verses? Each expects Christians to control their thinking to become more Christ-like.

Changing our thinking to become more like Christ requires significant effort. It is sobering to consider that Jesus' disciples spent so much time with Him, yet they still couldn't see and think clearly. In Mark 8, after Jesus had just fed the four thousand, Jesus challenged His disciples to beware of the leaven (teachings) of the Pharisees (Mk.8:15), but the disciples thought he was talking about physical bread. They didn't get it! Afterward, we read the unusual miracle of Jesus partially healing a blind man, then fully healing the man (Mk.8:22-26). Fi-

nally, He asks His disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" (Mk.8:27). He was testing them. He wanted to make sure they were THINKING and SEEING Him correctly. People are no different today. Some follow Christ, but their thinking and vision remain set on worldly things. We can't think like the world and get to heaven! Instead, we must fix our eyes on Jesus! (Heb.12:2). Someone once said, "Think right, act right; it is what you think and do that makes you what you are." Being a Christian means we are committed to thinking and acting like Jesus. If we are not, we need to change how we see things. ~Mike



Mike Green currently serves as the Dean of Students at the Southeast Institute of Biblical Studies in Knoxville, TN. He has spent the last two decades serving the church in various capacities to include church planting, preaching and youth ministry. Mike holds a B.B.S degree in Bible and an M.A in New Testament. Prior to entering ministry full-time Mike served five-years as a U.S. Army Ranger with the 75th Ranger Regiment. He and his wife Natalie have been married twenty-four years and have six children. They are members of the Karns Church of Christ in Knoxville.



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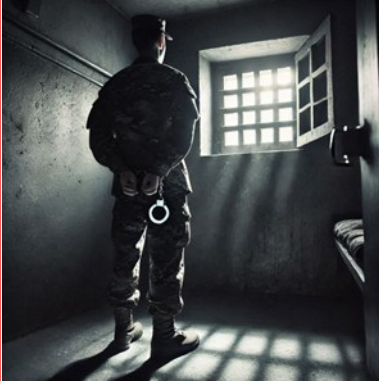
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Set Your Mind on Things Above



During the Viet Nam War, an already decorated naval aviator, then a Captain, James Stockdale, was shot down over North Viet Nam. He spent the next seven and one-half years in captivity as the ranking officer in the infamous “Hanoi Hilton”. His singular story of resolve in the face of unimaginable adversity and torture will forever live in the annals of

heroism. It is indelibly stamped in the minds of many who lived during that time and who remember his incredible story of will and survival. Four of those years were in the complete darkness of solitary confinement enduring the most inhumane torture imaginable. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service and leadership while a POW.

Can you imagine how his heart pounded and spirits leapt when he saw light for the first time in four years? He had an unwavering allegiance to his beliefs and would not compromise, no matter if it meant death.

Nineteen-hundred years before, Paul’s letter to the church at Colosse addressed hope and promise to Christians who faced a foe far worse than the North Vietnamese. They faced an adversary more brutal, more inhumane, more destructive and ruthless than any human could ever be. For their adversary, the devil, drew people astray through devices that were not physically violent: the persuasion of false teachers and philosophies, deceitful Judaizers, and the attraction of being of the world. The consequence of being captive to sin is eternal death. No torture on earth can come close.

That sounds a lot like our world today where we are bombarded and coaxed by false philosophies that preach, “Your life is about you and being your own ‘man’”. Today, some profess to follow Christ but preach a gospel other than what the apostles preached. They will reap what they sow. (Gal. 1:9) Many today will embrace almost any set of beliefs in order to achieve “harmony”. That is not what scripture teaches.



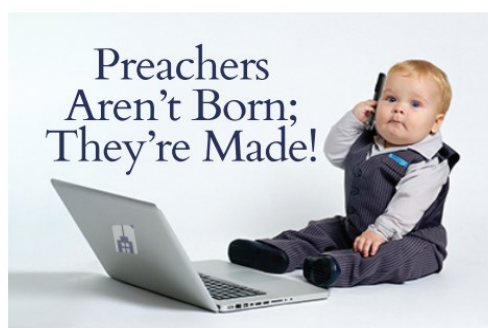
Our focus should be on the true Light from above rather than the “light” of earth that fails us. The promises of man-made philosophies, the attraction of “Christianity” that permits adherents to have free reign under the guise of “Christian liberty” really make no sense.

Every elite, championship level athlete understands the discipline and sacrifice necessary to attain success at a superior level of competition. Why, then, would anyone believe they can attain something great with no discipline or sacrifice? In scripture we are told to hold fast to: what is good, to the word, to our faith, to the pattern of sound words, to our confession, etc. We can’t do that successfully if we do not set our minds on things above. That necessitates that we commit, be resolved, and dedicated to the ways of our God and Father. Admiral Stockdale did it for his country which at some time will pass away. We should do it for our souls which will live eternally. ~Conrad



Conrad Slate enlisted in the Army Reserve while in college and later transferred to the Air National Guard. He went to Officer Training School and completed 31 years of service retiring as a colonel. He served a variety of positions starting as a Military Policeman. He served in the Security Police, in Public Affairs, in NBC warfare training, and a variety of staff positions, retiring as Deputy Chief of Staff for Support Services. He is a member of the Karns Church of Christ in Knoxville, TN where he is active in jail ministry

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“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”

Romans 10:14

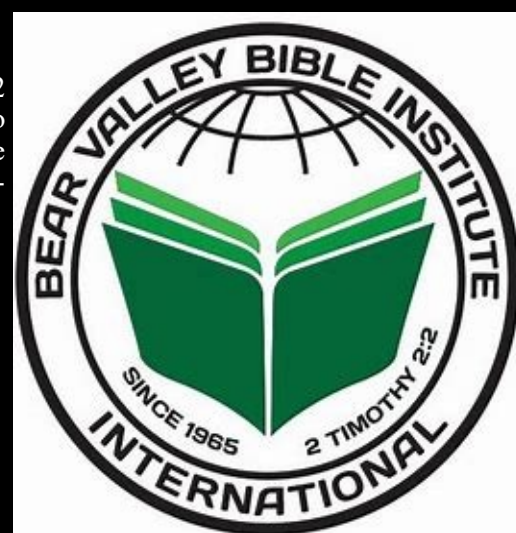
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Since 1965, Bear Valley has worked to accomplish the commission of 2 Timothy 2:2 - entrusting the pattern of sound teaching in the gospel to faithful men who will then in turn be equipped to teach others. While the scope of our work has expanded, we have never lost sight of that fundamental mission.

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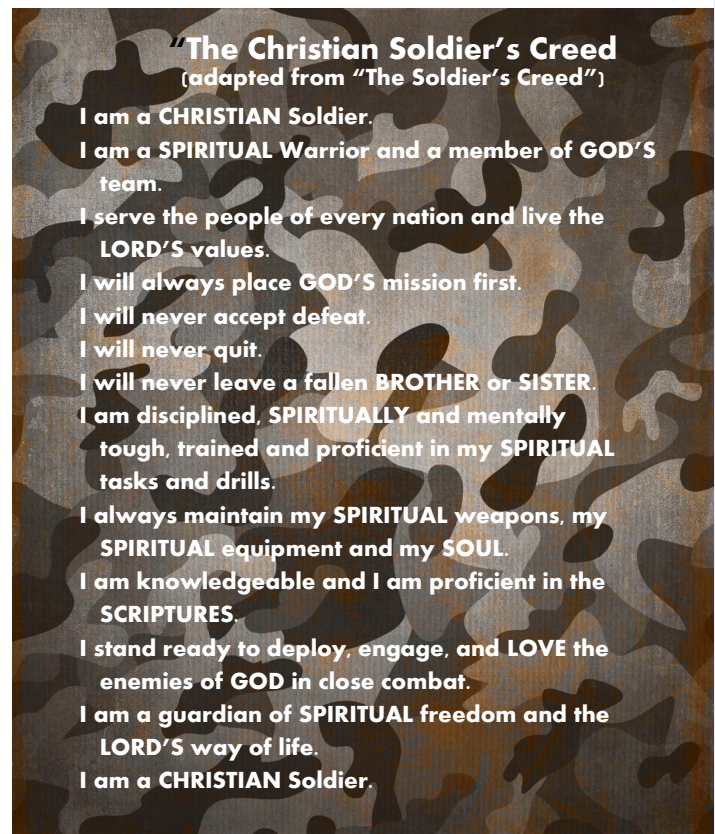
A worldwide ministry of the Manchester Church of Christ

OUR MISSION

- ♦ To support the spiritual growth of the members of the U.S. Armed Forces.
- ♦ Provide opportunities for Biblical knowledge, worship, fellowship, service and evangelism.
- ♦ Fulfill Jesus Christ's call to the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

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GOD'S ETERNAL PLAN FOR YOU

HEAR the word of God: Romans 10:9-14; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Revelation 2:7; 22:18-19

BELIEVE in Jesus as Savior of world: John 3:16; 14:6; 14:23

REPENT of your sins: Luke 13:3,5; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; Revelation 2:5, 16, 21,22; 3:3, 19

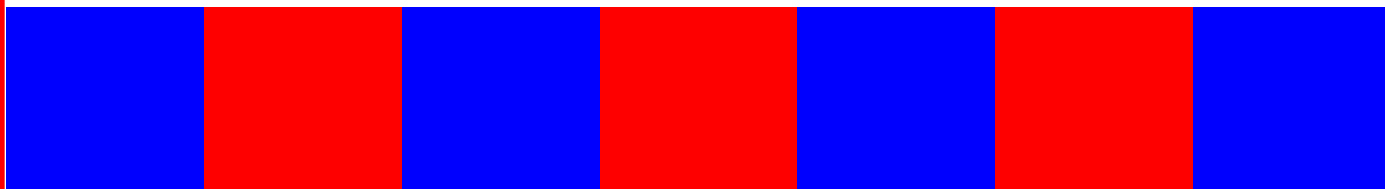
CONFESS Jesus before others: Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:8-11

BE IMMERSSED into Christ for forgiveness of your sins: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:36-47; 22:16; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Peter 3:18-22

CONTINUE to live faithful to God until you die or Christ comes again: 1 Corinthians 15:50-58; Revelation 2:10

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AFFIX STAMP



CALL TO DUTY
(BASE 2 BASE, HEART 2 HEART)

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House to House
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House To House, Heart To Heart is a monthly American magazine. **HTH** is a customizable, 8 page, color, Christian magazine that works exclusively with Churches of Christ. The publication is printed every month for a total of 12 issues a year and is directly mailed into homes. Each issue contains gospel lessons, and biblical stories. **HTH** is printed in English, French, and Spanish with other special translations such as Korean.

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