"Preach the Word!

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[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.!

It just really has been on my heart and in my mind.! I don't want that to be assumed. I want that to be stated.
I don't want that to be something that we take for granted. I want that to be something that collectively we say we understand biblically why this is the case.
I also want to be clear because in our church, Ephesians 4 tells us that all the body of Christ should be serving. That the role of the pastor teachers in Ephesians 4 is to train and equip the body to do the works of ministry.
That biblically, all of us who are members should be finding ways to use our gifts to encourage. All of us who are members should be faithful to worship the Lord through giving, to help our church do what we've been called to do.
[1:26] All of us should be a part of the sacrifice and the blessing of being a part of the church. But there are some things that you should expect from your pastors, from your leaders.

So in the New Testament, when it says, when it gives instructions, it'll use different terms. It'll address pastors or shepherds or elders or overseers.
These are all words synonymous with the men who are called by the Lord to serve and lead the flock. And when the Bible speaks to pastors, elders, shepherds, overseers of what they are to do, it's more than preaching, but never less than preaching.
And so I just want to kind of take the last three weeks of my life, what I've been doing, the doors God's opened for me to try to share and encourage others outside our church, along with just the core conviction of our church here, that the central thing we do when the church gathers is to faithfully preach the word.
And so I just want to take you to 2 Timothy 4. And in doing this, not only, I hope, be able to kind of get out from my heart to you, where I've been living these last three or four weeks, but also serve as a reminder of not just what we do, but biblically why we do this.
[3:03] And if you're new to our church or perhaps a guest of our church, which, by the way, if you're visiting a church for the first time on Time Change Sunday, you're the kind of people we need around here.

That's amazing. But I just want to be clear on who we are and why we do what we do. So we're going to look at 2 Timothy 4, and we're just going to get as far as time allows us.
And then next Sunday, we're going to begin our study in 2 Thessalonians, Lord willing. The well-known pastor W.A. Criswell once said this, When a man goes to church, he often hears a preacher in the pulpit rehash everything he has read in the editorials, the newspapers, and the magazines.
On the TV commentaries, he hears the same stuff over again, yawns, and goes out and plays golf on Sunday. But when a man comes to church, actually, what he is saying to the preacher is this, Preacher, I know what the TV commentator has to say, I hear him every day.
I know what the editorial writer has to say, I read it every day. I know what the magazines have to say, I read them every week. Preacher, what I want to know is, does God have anything to say?
[4:25] And if God has anything to say, please tell us what it is. That's the heart when the church gathers together.

It's not that we are ignorant or should be ignorant of what's going on in the world around us. It's not that we come into this place and pretend that we don't go to real jobs and schools and real life tomorrow.

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But the most important thing you can hear in this sanctuary, behind this pulpit, is not political commentary, and is not motivational speeches, and is certainly not my opinion on things in the world.
The most important thing we can say ever behind this pulpit is, yes, God has something to say, and this is what He has said. And it takes work.
It takes a lot of work to be able to do that. But as one man has put it, raking is easy, but all you get are leaves. Digging is hard, but you might find gold.
[5:37] For those of you who teach the Bible every week, and in your various ways that happen in this church, keep digging. It is hard work. But that's where the gold is.

So 2 Timothy 4, very familiar words that gives us the biblical mandate to preach the Word, but also explains to us why this is what we do.
2 Timothy 4, verse 1, I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing in His kingdom, preach the Word.
Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching.
I want to walk you through three main things from this brief text that I hope will serve as reminders for those of us who understand who we are and what we're to be about, that would serve as anchors for those in our church who are young, either young in age or young in the faith, or maybe new to our church, to help you to know why we do this.
[7:02] Because in one sense, this is a bit of a strange thing. It's Sunday morning. Many people are at home, watching TV, drinking coffee, surfing the internet, and on this day particularly, catching up on Miss Sleep, and yet, here you are.

And as many of you are as in the sanctuary, or as many who are currently in Sunday school classes, that in 45 minutes will be in here. It's a bit of a strange thing.
And you've come here, and we will talk to each other, and we will sing, and we will pray, and the bulk of our time in here is going to be you, with the Bible open on your lap, looking at me and listening to me, trying to explain what the Bible says.
And if you're new to our church, let me just kind of be transparent here, we don't preach short sermons. Now, there's nothing inherently good about a long sermon.
I've heard a lot of bad long sermons. I've preached my share of them. A bad sermon that's short is not made better because it's longer.
[8:26] So let's not confuse ourselves that long preaching equals good preaching. But it is true that to fully explain the context, the background, the doctrine, the implications from a text, it just takes time.

You can do interesting, inspiring, emotional talks and do that in short order.
But you cannot faithfully preach the word in short order. This is admittedly a bit of a strange thing that we do here.
And it's not only strange in the sense of what the world does, what we do is a bit strange even among church culture today. We love each other, we care for each other, we don't think church should be boring, we don't think church should be where you come in here and just get verbally beat up by any means.
But at the same time, we're not concerned first and foremost with our feelings, any of our feelings. We're concerned first and foremost with God. What does God say?
[9:44] What does God want from us? And sometimes the faithful preaching of God's word leaves us convicted. And leaves us leaving not laughing and smiling, but a bit broken and humbled.

This is good for all of us. But why would you spend Sunday getting up early when you could sleep in?
And even if you're going to go to church, why come to this one where your preaching is longer than 20 minutes? Why come to this one where you're going to hear sometimes hard truths from God's word?
Why come to this one where you're going to leave this and then go to a Bible study class and you're going to hear the word taught again? Well, the reason is because the mandate from God's people is to preach the word.
That's the mandate of God's people. So the first thing I want you to see, we'll call this first part the warning to the preacher. The warning to the preacher. Verse 1, I charge you in the presence of God

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and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead.
[11:01] This is a serious charge. I mean, just notice the emphasis, the urgency, the seriousness of what he's about to say. I charge you and this is in the presence of God, of the Lord Jesus Christ and be reminded He is the one who is going to judge the living and the dead.

This is the most serious, urgent warning that he could give. The apostle here by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is summoning all of the might and the strength that he can lay upon the preacher here to say this is so important.
Be reminded this is the words of the Holy Spirit. This is from the authority of God the Father. This is in the presence of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And be reminded the one who gives this commission is the one whom you will give an account of your life and your ministry to.
He will judge the living and the dead. So whatever this is about to be said is as serious as it could possibly be.
It might be a good place to stop and remind ourselves that one of the reasons we should have joy in this place.
[12:21] We do have joy in this place. We have wonderful fellowship together. We love gathering for worship. But there is no apology here for the fact that our worship while it should be joyful and life-giving and invigorating, there is no apology here that what we do on the Lord's Day is not light or silly.

There's no apology for that. Because you could not read 2 Timothy 4 verse 1 and say, I bet what's about to be said is I charge you in the presence of God to entertain the people.
No. it's to preach the Word. So the warning to preachers comes in a couple of categories. First, what to preach.
He says, preach the Word. This isn't just a mandate to have a preacher. This is a mandate to preach the Word. And this is one of the things where you need to expect certain things.
and if you're a high school student and you're moving away to college next year or if you're a college student and you're going to be taking a job out of town or in a different state or for some of you that are here the Lord moves you to a different place, a different city, a different state one day, there's some things you should expect.
[13:47] It's not enough that a church just has a man called the preacher. It's not enough that a man just stands up and opens a Bible. You should expect that what he preaches is very clear and it comes right here in verse 2 preach the Word.

If you don't need a Bible to keep up with what the preacher is saying that man is not doing what he was charged by God to do. This is not a biblical mandate to fill half an hour of a worship service. This is a biblical mandate to preach the Word. What are we to preach? We preach the Bible. And one of the realities if a pastor is going to faithfully preach the Word is there's got to be time invested in that.
That you're not just getting someone who gets up week after week and wings it. There's study. There's labor. There's hard work involved.
And this is part of the challenge of being a shepherd of God's people because for most pastors I mean there would be some bad examples that aren't worth mentioning. In most cases though the challenge that pastors face in a weekly basis is not between studying and doing something that's bad.
[15:16] The challenge is between prioritizing your time. because there's always other good things to do. There's always other meetings to have and other people to talk to and other phone calls to make and another meeting to attend or any number of things that you could do.

The temptation is not to spend your time doing irrelevant things that the struggle is can you prioritize the most important thing.
Now it's not that a faithful pastor's only job is just preaching. 1 Peter 5 is crystal clear. Shepherd the flock of God among you. You've got to be among the people.
If you don't ever see your pastors if you don't ever get to talk to them if you don't know them something's amiss. So it's not that preaching is all of it but it would be impossible to faithfully shepherd lead and disciple you without the faithful preaching of God's word.
So there are other ways where myself and our other leaders there's other ways that we try to serve and minister during the week but please understand the first and primary way that I try to serve and disciple and even do counseling with you is through the faithful preaching of God's word.

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[16:35] That's not to say there's not a place for follow-up meetings or follow-up counseling or follow-up discipleship there of course is but the primary way that that is done is through the faithful preaching of the Bible and so look at the language again this is a charge with the witness of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit because that's who's inspiring the very text and by his appearing and his kingdom this is the Lord who reigns the Lord who judges the Lord who is returning the Lord whose kingdom will have no end with all of that authority what does the man of God do preach the word and understand that for it to be worship there's not just truth there is devotion and love you know the text the Lord said they will know you are my disciples by your love you understand that according to the book of James even the demons believe there is one God their theology is there but it's been said rightly so a demon can't rightly preach because a demon does not love

God biblical preaching biblical worship for all of us is truth but it's more than truth it's loving the God of the truth so one of the things biblical preaching should do is not only train our minds and inform us it should cause our hearts to grow in an ever expanding love of the God who has revealed himself through his word I don't want us to ever be theological robots here we do a lot of training we do a lot of equipping but that training and equipping is intended to lead us to a deeper love relationship with the Lord not just to be intelligent not just to be well schooled not just to be able to know answers to questions but to know
God and to love him we are to preach the word that's what we preach the second warning to the preacher is when to preach and that's in verse two be ready in season and out of season the very language that's used here in this verse carries the idea of of a general being ready to lead troops to battle in a moment's notice be ready in season out of season be ready at all time if you think of an NFL player when the season ends in February and they've got some down time they might take a little bit of time to not lift weights as much it might take some time to not run as much it might take some time to indulge in their nutrition and they kind of let their bodies get a little bit out of shape and they just kind of let their mental guard down a bit because they need a break and then as you start off season training you ramp it up a little bit preseason training you ramp it up a little bit now it's game day it's the season started and you're ready to go to battle and when that season ends you pull back again and if you were to get
NFL teams say in April and have a game it wouldn't look real good because those guys aren't in the kind of condition it takes to compete at that level it's their off season now that's okay in sports but that can't be for God's people we preach the word in season and out of season when it's popular and when it's not when it's accepted and when it's not when there's visible tangible results and when there are not and this also reminds us as we preach the word that we've got to understand while there is no off season for us there is a sense in which the faithful preaching of the word at times will seem to be out of season meaning that while we must always be ready to go to battle there will be times where it's going to feel like you are working and laboring and doing the work of preaching
God's word and you're not going to see fruit it's out of season what do you do when it's out of season preach the word what do you preach the word when do you preach all the time all the time there is never a Lord's day that will come that the sweetest thing for your soul will be anything less than hearing the faithful proclamation of God's word in season out of season whether it's Easter Sunday when churches are filled or whether it's a holiday that's raining when people are out of town preach the word whether your church is growing and adding new members or whether you preach the same people week after week after week preach the word whether people esteem you and affirm you and appreciate you or whether you feel like no one cares what you're doing preach the word whether you get 3,000 converts like
[22:50] Peter or rocks hurled at your head like Stephen preach the word in season and out of season the warning to the preacher is that what he is to preach is the word of God and when he is to do it is all the time some of you been around a long time have heard this this was many years ago but a very sweet family began visiting our church and they didn't join but they were coming all the time every Sunday morning every Sunday night Wednesday night they were here all the time very sweet people and very plugged in and surprisingly called me one Monday after attending for about seven or eight weeks and said Michael I just want you to know your church has been very sweet your people have been very!

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beginning and never missed and I said well do you mind me asking why that is and he said yes he said I just feel like this church is a bit too word centered and I said thank you I appreciate that I appreciate that if you're going to leave us that at least you're honest enough to say there's just too much Bible here I'll take that criticism any day of week it never dawned on me to say well could we dial it down a little bit would that help you stay if we went maybe a little more politics less Bible would that I mean that's not even a thought I was sad I was disappointed they were sweet people I liked them I was building relationship with them it grieved me that they left but it heartened me to know that if in season out of season there are people who join our church because of the word and there are people who

I have just told you about that leave the church because of the word in season out of season if there's one thing you never have to wonder about here is is the word of God going to be central preach the word in season and out of!

that's the warning to the preacher a second thing I want you to see is the work of the word look at what this does verse 2 preach the word be ready in season out of season and then it gives us three things the word does reprove rebuke and exhort reprove rebuke and exhort now this is the work that the Bible does the power of the!

Holy Spirit as the word is preached in season and out of season and I want to just let's write those three terms down because I want you to understand the nuance of what's happening when the Bible is proclaimed number one reprove and you can just put beside that the word correct it's what it means to reprove it's to correct sound doctrine and faithful preaching corrects errors in our thinking corrects errors in our living so there may be things you don't know or that you have assumed incorrectly or that you've been taught that do not line up with the Bible and when the word is faithfully preached there is reproving going on there is correcting going on your wrong thinking is corrected your wrong living is corrected!

[26:30] And then we go a step deeper from reprove to rebuke and you can write down the word confront so if reproving is teaching the word and correcting!

error rebuke is a bit stronger and we go from correcting to confronting! This is where someone has received the teaching of God's word but they continue to live in sin or they continue to teach error and it's no longer because they haven't been taught it's because they refuse to refuse!

to obey! So sometimes the preaching of the word is correcting and sometimes the scripture is used to confront when somebody refuses to obey they no!

longer need simply correcting but confronting and this happens when you preach all of the Bible that's why we preach typically verse by verse and that's why it's called sequential exposition because we want to correct and we want to confront where there is error we want to correct it where there's refusal to obey!

we want to confront it and there's a third work that the word does reprove rebuke! your third term here is exhort! and you can write down the word comfort!

[28:09] this carries the idea of encouragement that we're coming alongside people to exhort them in the word to encourage them in the word to put our arm around them and push them forward forward this isn't so much a push in the back as it is an arm around the shoulder and saying let's walk together let's obey together let's serve together let's worship together so the work of the word when the preacher does what he's been warned and commissioned and charged to do is correcting our errors and our thinking and behavior is confronting us where there's refusal to obey and there's also this comfort this encouragement this exhortation this compelling to let's walk together to honor and follow the Lord and for those of us who preach this is a very helpful thing and for those of you who teach in Sunday school class this is a very helpful thing because biblically we need all of these different voices in order to preach the whole counsel of

God's word you need the voice to correct you need a different voice to confront and you need the voice to be able to comfort and encourage and a preacher who's only willing to confront and never encourage is going to run over his people but the pastor who loves to encourage but doesn't have the guts to confront is someone who's striving to be a people pleaser and he's doing a horrible injustice to his people there's times to correct there's times to confront there's times to comfort we understand this because if you know the metaphor used in scripture for the pastor is shepherd to sheep very often shepherd the flock of God among you first Peter five you understand that those of us who have had kids at home we understand that in that direction too that you shepherd your children and there's times you correct them and there's times you confront them and there's times

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you comfort them and if you're going to be a faithful parent you better be able to speak in all three voices if you're only sugary sweet to your kids and your kids on their bicycle and they disobey you and they take off out of the driveway and they're going into a street where there's cars coming and you simply say sweetheart remember the rules we don't ride in the street doesn't work that way there's a different voice for that

I told you not to do that not because I'm trying to yell at you because I need to make sure you hear me over the cars you are passing by because it's that urgent and when your child comes home 17 years old and your little girl is crying and heart broken because her boyfriend broke up with her and your only voice is a voice of confronting and you don't have any compassion you don't have any heart and your response to your broken hearted daughter is just to lecture you're going to miss the point there's times you correct your children they didn't do the right thing they didn't know the right thing you correct them you don't let them continue in error but you correct them and if they get defiant and they refuse to respond you have to confront them and there's times you put your arm around them and you say what my child needs today is not a lecture any encouragement you've got to have the wisdom to know as a parent what does my child need today and there's some parents who are so stern and so disciplinary in mindset that they never connect with the heart of their child there's other parents who are so afraid of their child's tears that they are their body instead of their parent and you've got to avoid both extremes there's times you correct and there's times you confront and there's times you comfort and the great example of that is as we preach the word every part of it verse by verse word by word and let the word do its work the warning to the preacher is to preach the word and do it at all times the work of the word is to reprove rebuke and exhort to correct to confront and to comfort let me give you one last part here and that's the wisdom of faithful preaching the wisdom of faithful preaching the very end of verse two reprove rebuke and exhort with complete patience and teaching this is the wisdom of faithful preaching you do this with patience you don't just say one thing and get frustrated if you ever have to say it again there's patience the faithful preacher understands that the congregation is filled with people of all different phases in their spiritual journey some of you here aren't believers and you know you're not believers some of you here aren't believers and you're pretending that you are others of you are believers but you're brand new in the faith others you are believers but you've never been trained equipped and discipled!

and you! You grown much others of you are believers and you're strong in the faith you know the word you've been well equipped and we've got all of those in this sanctuary on every single Lord's day and we've got to preach and proclaim with patience not anger not arrogance but with complete patience knowing it takes pozw pozw people to learn it takes time for people to change it takes time for people to apply we've got to proclaim the word all the time but do it with complete patience it's very important that pastors who are impatient don't usually last because they tend to see church members as pawns on an organization chart and you're just moving pieces around and systems around in order to build this idea in your mind how you want it to be but you've got to preach the word at all times with complete patience keep teaching keep correcting!

keep confronting keep comforting over and over and over and over and over in fact look look over chapter 2 for just a brief moment verse 24 says in the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone able to teach patiently enduring evil correcting his opponents with gentleness the man of God should be bold but he doesn't need to be mean the man of God should be courageous he doesn't need to be ugly preach with conviction preach with clarity yes but do so patiently do so knowing that all of us are growing and learning at a little different pace a little different level keep the standard of righteousness high and be gracious with

[37:23] God's people as they are living their Christian life you don't lower the standard the standard is the standard but you patiently lead and serve people as they follow the Lord and the wisdom of faithful preaching is not just patience complete patience and teaching you don't just yell at them you teach them there's the old preacher joke in your notes when you don't it says like weak!

point yell here I don't really understand what this text says if I just kind of yell and say it loud people think I'm strong I haven't said anything or others who have rightly said that it's easy to sound smart and over the people's heads just don't know what you're talking about if you're confused they'll be confused and they may just credit to all that preacher so smart I didn't understand anything he said well it may not be that he's so smart he may not understand himself so we teach with complete patience and teaching teaching this is a good word for parents don't just yell at your kids don't just

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send them to the room don't just take their car keys teach them now there's some households where it would be good for teenagers to lose their car keys and there's some times where families would do well for mom and dad to not be afraid of their child's tears but teach them part of discipline is punishment but part of discipline is teaching so preach the word but do so with complete patience and teaching so to sum up with these two words there are expectations and there's encouragement that's true in the family that's true in the family of
God there's expectations here and there's encouragement our family when we were raising our kids we weren't perfect nothing about our parenting was perfect nothing about our family was perfect nothing about our children were perfect nothing about it was perfect but there were expectations there are some things if you're a son of mine you do now their dad was imperfect my kids were imperfect their mom was imperfect but there's some expectations here there's some things you do if you're part of my family there's ways you live there's ways you treat people when my boys were little at the end of soccer practice in a flag football practice in a basketball practice if you were one of my sons you went to your coach after every practice you looked your coach in the eye you shook his hand and he said thank you and they would say dad none of my other players do that and
I would say I know that if you don't thank your coach no one's going to I know how parents in the stand sound I've been the coach too there's some expectations there's some expectations of how you're going to perform in school my sons!
have a brilliant mom and an average dad eat flat out you get what you get but you're going to work hard in school and they're not going to be confused over who's in charge of the household there's some expectations but I hope by God's grace there is encouragement because sometimes they fell short and sometimes their dad fell short and more times than I wish I had to apologize to my kids and more times than I did I should have and when I messed up and I wasn't the dad I should be or I wasn't the example I should be the expectations didn't change but I was grateful for their encouragement I was grateful for Marcy's encouragement same thing's true in the church there's expectations of how we live and it's not set by a pastor or a group of pastors it's set by the [42:15] Bible we preach the word and we're going to reprove and we're going to rebuke and we're going to exhort the expectations are set in scripture but we live these things out according to the Bible with complete patience and teaching so there's encouragement there there's forgiveness there there's grace there some of you come from churches where no one would ever confront you no one would ever correct you and it hurts your feelings if somebody says something from the Bible that steps on your toes others of you come from backgrounds where the preaching was so harsh and so critical that you never felt loved at all I don't pretend that we do this perfectly here I don't pretend that we've got the exact perfect balance of this because we're imperfect doing it I will tell you that the biblical mandate is clear and the warning of the preacher is to preach the word and to preach at all times and the work of the word is that it corrects it confronts and it comforts and the wisdom that comes from biblical preaching is you do this with patience and you do this with faithfully teaching

God's people with biblical expectations and loving encouragement as we all strive to walk with the Lord so those things have been in my heart the last three or four weeks and I've had the chance and privilege to try to encourage people outside of our church walls and those things these are the things that drive us these are the things that unite us and I just really felt compelled to again be clear on not just what we do but why we do it and let me say to you in closing that if you're looking for a perfect church you haven't found it this is not a perfect place there are no perfect leaders here no perfect people here and if you're looking for a place that will be light entertaining you've not found it I just can't read 2nd Timothy 4 verse 1 and be compelled!
to say how can we entertain the people but if you're looking for a church that takes seriously the teaching of God's word and will strive with all we have to love you and help you and support you I believe God in this kindness has brought you to the right congregation imperfect for sure but a place where we will strive together to preach the word in season and out of season to reprove rebuke and exhort with complete patience in teaching so if you're a fifth grader and you wonder why do we go to church every Sunday that's why and if you're a third grader and you say why does the preacher talk so long looking at all these verses every week that's why and if you're a long time member and you say why does our church take preaching so seriously all the time that's why and if you're a guest and you say

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I hear about first Mustang and why do they take training and equipping so seriously that's why because by the presence of the father the son the holy spirit who will judge the living and the dead he has left us the biblical mandate to preach the word and to be ready in season and out of season may God be pleased as our imperfect church strives to do what he's given us to do for our good and for the glory of his name our father we do express our love for you and our love for your word I thank you for the privilege of being a member of a church that loves these things and I pray Lord that even today we would be more committed to preach and proclaim your word faithfully in the name of son we pray amen love you church family back tonight evening service five o'clock hope to see you there
God bless you you're dismissed thank you so much for joining us via live stream this morning if you have any questions whatsoever about our church or the ministries that our church provides please visit us at fbcmustang.org we would love to follow up with you and get to know you better as always we try to emphasize if at all possible if you could be here physically present with us we would love that and that be a joy to serve you in that way but thank you again for joining us via live stream today have a great day!
[48:14] and that you to see you in a! you have pozw you you have you can have that r have in have that have that have in me have fathers fathers fathers know fathers don't know when they there can't who they can't those up there can't going they or they not just who they D record other fathers fathers fathers would fathers fathers Can't fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers incredibly fathersysis fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers fathers Find chains

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