

God's Truth About Alliances (Part 2)

by Russell Kelfer

Christians should not compromise God's principle of separation in order to achieve God's purpose, but rather stand alone and be willing to face the consequences of unequal yoking.

Duration: 36:27

Scripture: Exodus 23:32-33, Amos 3:3, John 15:16, 1 Corinthians 6:17 - 7:1, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10, 2 Timothy 3:1-5

Topics: "Alliance"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the consequences of being unequally yoked with the world. He uses the story of Lot from the book of Genesis as an example. Lot had moved in with the world and his family was affected by it. The speaker emphasizes the importance of separating oneself from the world and standing by God's principles. He also encourages the audience to stand by Israel and pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Transcript

The lesson you're about to hear is designed to help you in your spiritual pilgrimage. We pray that this will be a blessing in your life. Our teacher is Russell Kelfer of the Into His Likeness radio broadcast.

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We also invite you to visit us anytime on the World Wide Web. Our Internet address is simply www.dtm.org. We pray God's richest blessing may be yours as He continues to live His life in you. We return to our study of Satan's lies and God's truth.

Last Sunday we began a look at the last of nine areas of conflict the Christian has with the philosophies of the world. That area involves Satan's lies about alliances and relationships. It involves very simply the concepts of separation and unequal yoking.

The Christian, you know, is called to live in the world, to minister to the world, without conforming to the world or becoming of the world. The balance between those two has been a difficult one for the Church to achieve throughout the generations. Churches have come and gone, denominations have come and gone

because they have drifted to extremes in these areas.

It is a choice tactic in Satan's bag of tricks. One group sees the need to remain separate from the world, becomes inbred, loses its heart for evangelism, drifts into extreme doctrines, becomes condescending and critical toward others even in the body of Christ with slightly different stance. Their gospel becomes self-serving until they strangle slowly on their inbred spirit of separatism and Satan loves it.

On the other hand, there are those others who see this and are offended at the exclusivism, the absence of outreach, and they begin to reach out to other groups, but they mistake cooperation in ministry for alliance or yoking and compromise the basic doctrines to make their message more palatable to more people. They adopt the ways of the world, the organization of the world, until gradually conforming to the world, to attract the money of the world in order to reach the world, they no longer can be seen by the world, and Satan loves it. But in between those two extremes lies God's desire for His Church.

As Jesus prayed in John 17, verses 15 and 17, I am not asking you, Father, He said, to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from Satan's power. They're not part of this world any more than I am, Jesus said, but, Father, make them pure and holy through the teaching of your words of truth. And while Satan has attracted God's people from one end of the spectrum to the other, I believe that we're not too much in danger in very many areas of the problem of becoming exclusive and separated as a church.

The church, by and large, has rather fallen victim to Satan's lies about alliances. And I believe the Christian community needs to reawaken to the reality that you can't whip them by joining them, that God's people, to achieve God's purpose, must not compromise God's principle of separation. Now last week we gave you three definitions.

There isn't time to go into them again except to remember that there are basically three categories, and understanding these three categories of relationships will help us not to misuse the concept of unequal yoking. There are peer relationships, such as employees who work together, citizens who live in the same country, members of the same organization, neighbors who live on the same street. Then there are authority relationships where a boss is over an employee, the government is over a citizen, a parent is over a child.

God becomes responsible for the actions of the authority as the Christian becomes responsible for his response to the authority. But thirdly, there are alliance relationships where two or more people, by an act of the will, join together in union to share common responsibility and authority. Marriage, dating, business partnerships, treaties between two nations, church alliances, these are called alliance relationships.

They have to have common objectives, they assume harmony, they must have mutual commitment and a common bond. Now basically, we also discussed last week that Christians don't fare too well in alliance relationships with non-Christians. And we asked why.

Greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. But we answered it with these two illustrations. Number one, the Christian is filled with power when he is in the will of God.

But when he becomes unequally yoked together with unbelievers, he leaves the will of God and thus leaves the sphere of power that God gave him to allow him to have victory over the enemy. The second illustration is even more easily understood, I believe, and that is that the Christian has two magnets pulling at him, one from the word and one from the world. The unbeliever, meanwhile, has only one magnet

drawing him toward the world.

Now it doesn't take very much arithmetic or very much of an understanding of the law of gravity to figure out that if you take person A and join him to person B, which pull will be the stronger. And so for these two reasons, Christians basically do not normally fare too well, contrary to Satan's lies, in relationships of alliance with unbelievers. So last week we began by examining the basic principles in scripture concerning alliances or yoking.

We covered two. The first one is that God is a jealous God where relationships are concerned. We looked at Exodus 34 and realized in the context of that passage that Israel was violating the word of God, allowing unbelievers to become friends, then have fellowship, then intermarry, and then God's men began to unconsciously walk the ways of the world and worship the gods of the world.

But God is a jealous God, he says, not the kind of jealous God that doesn't want what's best for you, wants to keep you for himself, but the kind of a jealous God whose goal is because he loves you so much to be jealous over your welfare. The second principle goes one step further. Our God, being jealous for our welfare, demands that we make no alliances with the enemy, with the unbelievers.

And last week we looked at three passages of many. Deuteronomy chapter 7, the commandment was very clear, make no treaties or compromises with the enemy, we were told in Deuteronomy 7. And then in Amos chapter 3, verse 3, the question was asked, how can two walk together except they be agreed? And the answer we found was in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, verses 17 through 21. They can't.

Because Paul said, two can't walk together without being agreed any more than you can merge darkness with light, any more than you can unite lawlessness with righteousness, any more than you can place idols, Paul said, in the temple of God and not affect the program of God, or any more, he said, than you can take and marry Satan to God. You can't do it, and we are commanded not to do it. Well there's where we left off last Sunday, and we begin with the third principle this morning, which naturally follows.

And the principle is this, God, once again, clearly defines the consequences of unequal yoking. What are the consequences? Now listen carefully, because I believe the scripture is very clear. If you have a child that wants to date or marry an unbeliever, if you're tempted to go into business partnership with a non-Christian, if you want to better understand the principles of our national alliances and why they fail, try to listen to the consequences that God said would happen.

And we'll give you a little project at the end of the lesson to do on your own this week. Joshua 23, verses 6 through 13. Now this is Joshua's farewell address to the nation.

He's about to die, and he says this, Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law. Turn not aside to the right, turn not aside to the left. That ye come not among these nations that remain among you, neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them, but cleave to the Lord your God.

For the Lord hath driven out from before you nations great and strong, and as for you no man has been able to stand before you unto this day. One man of you shall chase a thousand, for the Lord your God, he it is that fights for you, just like you promised. Take good heed therefore unto yourselves that ye love the Lord your God, else if you do in any wise go back, now listen Christian, if you do in any wise go back and cleave unto the remnant of these nations, even these that remain among you, and make marriages with

them, and go in unto them and they unto you, know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive any of these nations from before you.

They will be snares and traps unto you, scourges or pain in your sides, thorns in your eyes until you perish from off the good land which the Lord thy God hath given you. Joshua said the choice is yours. You either don't yoke yourself to them, and no man will be able to stand before you, or you join in alliances with them and compromise, and these things will happen to you.

He said first of all there will be a snare and a trap. Now how many of you have ever been walking out in the field, and just enjoying the sunshine and the beauty of the whole landscape, and all of a sudden you look down and realize your leg was caught in a trap? You didn't the slightest idea there was even a trap there, but there was a snare, and all of a sudden you looked up and it affected your walk considerably. Well that's what he said will happen when you align yourself together with unbelievers.

It will be a snare and a trap. Secondly, he said it will be pain in your sides. How many of you have been just driving along one day? I know some of you have.

Just driving along and all of a sudden you had a pain in your side, or a pain in your back that you thought somebody had just stabbed you from the back seat, and you didn't know what to do. You just cried out and hollered, or hit the steering wheel, or did something if you were driving, maybe hit a telephone pole or something, but the whole idea was that this pain was so excruciating that it drops you to your knees, it permeates your thought, the sun stops shining as far as you're concerned, and nothing else matters. And he said it will be like thorns in your eyes.

How many of you have been shampooing your hair? Let's say it's set times, every six months you shampoo your hair whether it needs it or not. And there you are shampooing your hair, and the shampoo runs down in your eyes, and it begins to burn and you can't see anymore. Or you're standing outside and the dust blows in your eyes and you can't see anymore, and it affects your vision, it hurts, you lose perspective, you forget about everything.

Now Joshua said that's what's going to happen, it's going to affect your walk, it's going to affect your joy, it's going to affect your vision. It'll be like snares, it'll be like pain, it'll be like thorns in your eyes. The lives of young people in particular who have violated this principle, Christian girls who have dated non-Christian guys only to get involved and perhaps to get married and only to see just grief after grief after grief.

And they understand what you're saying, you'll be walking along and all of a sudden to realize it's a trap. All of a sudden to realize you can't have the walk you had before. Then there's this kind of pain that takes over and you realize you don't have the joy you had before.

And then you realize you've lost your perspective of your vision because how can two walk together except they be aggrieved? The second consequence is it not only affects your spiritual growth, it affects your power or absence of power over the enemy. Judges chapter 2, verses 10 through 15, And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers, and there arose another generation which knew not the Lord nor the works he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they served Balaam and forsook the Lord God of their fathers, and bowed down to the other gods and provoked the Lord to anger, and they served these gods.

And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies so that they could no longer stand before their enemies. Wherever they went, the hand of the Lord was against them, as the Lord had said, and the Lord had sworn unto them, and they were greatly disgraced. They didn't go far.

Their power was gone. You remember the illustration earlier, they were outside that realm of power. Because of their wrong relations, the enemy came, and they thought nothing had changed, so they pulled their swords and they said, Come after me, enemy, we'll get you.

But something had happened. No longer, they had not chased the enemy from their camp, they had made alliances with them, they had joined ranks with them, and their power was gone. And I think many of us can relate to this and understand experientially what that means.

The third consequence, it'll affect God's umbrella of protection over you. We won't read Numbers 33, but you just relate it, if you will, to the children of Israel and the plagues in Egypt. Plague after plague came, but the children of Israel were like under an umbrella of protection.

They experienced the problems, but the problems could not overtake them, so long as they remained separate unto the Lord. And this is a serious principle, it has a lot of practical ramifications. The fourth consequence is your children will be affected.

Now, there are many illustrations of this, and many of us could give personal illustrations, but you can just turn the TV set of your mind and flip it over to Genesis channel 19, and remember the program, here's Lot, Lot is the star, and the program is as the world turns. Lot had moved in with the world, he was no doubt going to be a witness to the world, but the world's witness had engulfed him so that he could no longer see what was happening. And then God sends a messenger to deliver Lot and his family, but Lot tells his family, God's going to judge the nations and we can get out.

And the scripture says, he went to his children and says, let's leave, and they laughed at him. They said, you've got to be kidding, listen to Bob Hope over here, God's going to judge the nation. These are our friends.

These are our husbands. Now, the parallel is so real. The fifth area is, the fifth result or consequence of unequal yoking is real communication becomes impossible.

The natural mind receiveth not the things of the spirit, neither indeed can he, because they are spiritually discerned. The Living Bible, if you want to read it sometime, gives the most beautiful explanation of that passage. But what it says is, here's a transmitter over here, station WORD, and it's transmitting truth.

And over here in the first house that you see up there lives Susie Smith, and she's made the Calvary connection. She's got the little box that attaches to her TV that unscrambles the signal. And when truth is broadcast into her life, she can receive it.

And then in the next house, there's old Jimmy Jones. He has never received Christ as his Savior, has not received the Holy Spirit. He turns on his TV set when truth is being broadcast, and he gets a bunch of snow and wiggly lines, and he gets confused and frustrated.

Now, the third house is where Susie Smith and Jimmy Jones live now that they've gotten married. And there you see them holding hands, joined together as one. And here comes truth, and they have issues to

be resolved where they need God's perspective.

And Susie has a receiver, and Jimmy doesn't. The result is confusion, compromise, and disharmony. There cannot be communication, for these are some of the results or the consequences of unequal yoking.

The fourth principle is, when the multitude desires to do evil, the Christian is to stand alone. I wonder how clearly our children understand that principle in school. Exodus 23, verses 1 and 2 you can read when you get home if you'd like.

But I wonder, do our children understand that Christianity is a minority rule? You will not, in the world, be among the majority when decisions are being made. You must learn to be gracious, never condescending, but be willing to stand alone. And do not think your stance is wrong, because the crowd doesn't understand.

Teach your children the story of Joshua and Caleb, and how God honored the minority who believed rather than the majority who didn't. The fifth principle is that the believer is not going to win a popularity contest with the world. Now, in this age where we have misinterpreted and many times misused the basic principles of Scripture in this area, I believe that this is an unpopular thing to talk about.

And it is true that they're not to hate your attitude or the way you live, you're not to be a stumbling block, you're to be blameless and harmless, but you're also to be spotless. John, chapter 15, verse 16, you didn't choose me, Jesus said, I chose you, I appointed you to go and produce fruit, so that no matter what you ask for from the Father, using my name, He'll give it to you. I demand that you love each other, for if you get enough hate from the world.

But then it hated me before it hated you. The world would love you if you belonged to it, but you don't, for I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. Do you remember what I told you? A slave isn't greater than his master.

Since they persecuted me, they will persecute you. If they had listened to me, they would listen to you. The people of the world will persecute you because you belong to me, for they don't know the God who sent me.

Now I realize that we can really bend that out of shape if we're not careful. But oh, the truth that's there that our children need to understand. The second passage is 1 Peter 4, 3-6, and we won't take the time to read it, but what it literally says, and our children need to understand, if they become Christians, their former friends will be their biggest offenders.

Because it says in 1 Peter 4 that when you refuse to go to places and do the things that you did before, they don't understand. And they will be angry, and they will be offended. And the Scripture says you respond graciously, and it's their problem.

But we must not compromise to keep from offending them. The sixth principle is the believer will become just like whoever he aligns himself with. This is a familiar principle, 1 Corinthians 15-33, don't be misled.

Bad associations corrupt good morals. Proverbs 13-20, be with wise men and become wise. Be with evil men and you'll become evil.

Proverbs 14-7, if you're looking for advice, stay away from fools. The seventh principle, the believer need not entertain their faith to show them he is. You read Deuteronomy 12, 29-32 sometime.

You don't need to go into their temples to examine their idols in order to understand their motivations. You've met their God, His name is Satan, that's all you need to know. Flee from Him.

It's a prevalent lie on Christian college campuses today, and it's not true. Number eight, God's enemies are to be our enemies. You read Psalm 139, verses 19-24, this is just one of a number of passages that talk about this.

This is again a touchy thing because the difference between loving the sinner and hating the sin. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God, depart from me, thee bloody men, for they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred.

I count them my enemies. Search me, O God, and know my thoughts. Try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the path everlasting.

We don't hate them, but we do hate Satan in them. We love what they could become in Christ. And this principle has been violated nationally, personally, and spiritually.

The ninth principle is that even in the body of Christ, we are to withdraw close fellowship from four groups of people. Those who are divisive, Romans 16, 17, and 18, it says, stay away from those who cause divisions and are upsetting people's faith, teaching things about Christ that are contrary to what you've been taught. In other words, don't line up with malcontents in the body of Christ.

The second group that you're to withdraw close fellowship from are those who are not willing to repent of immorality. 1 Corinthians 5, 6-10, or 6-13. Read that in the Living Bible when you go home, and I think you'll get the picture.

The third group are those who don't want to work. Lazy. Those in the body of Christ who are given opportunity and don't want to work.

Paul says, withdraw yourself from fellowship with them so that you will encourage them to understand that those that don't work shouldn't eat. You find that in 2 Thessalonians 3, verses 6-10, and you read that in both the King James and the Living Bible, you'll get the picture. And then lastly, we're to not have close fellowship with known deceivers, 2 Timothy 3, 1-5.

Those in the body of Christ with wrong motivations. Principle number 10, treaties with heathen nations are a no-no. Exodus chapter 23, verses 32 and 33, but we'll skip that one.

You can read it at home and turn to 2 Chronicles chapter 20. I don't think this is a popular concept today. But at the close of his life, Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, went into partnership with Ahaziah, king of Israel, who was a very wicked man.

They made ships to sail to Tarshish. Then Eliezer, son of Dodavahu, from Marashah, prophesied against Jehoshaphat, telling him, You can read Exodus 34, 12, Exodus 23, 32, Judges 3, 1-12, same principle. Treaties with heathen nations will not work.

And then lastly, seeking aid from heathen nations is never God's plan. You can read Hosea 12, 1, Isaiah 31, 1 says this, God's people don't need the world's methods, the world's men, or the world's money. They need the God whose ways are higher than theirs.

God's nations, if they're to honor God, don't need the world's armies, the world's energy, or the world's intelligence. They need God who's never had a power shortage. And I think we need to understand basic national principle that America, though it is not a Christian nation, is one nation under God.

And a nation under God that represents itself to be a mission-sending nation to the world has nothing in common with the enemies of God. Red China, Cuba, or Iran. Now you answer for me how two nations of those persuasions can join together and find common objectives.

One's desire is to exalt the principles of God. One's is to destroy godly principles. How can they have common identity? How can they have common values? How can they even have communication? There is no basis for real communication, for the enemy cannot speak the truth or even understand the truth.

So your basis for a mutual treaty between the two scripturally is zero. Satan's desire is to make us forget who the enemy is and to believe the enemy really wants the same things we do, peace. It's not true.

If we are then to arm ourselves, or not to join forces with God's enemy for security, what then would be God's program for national security? I'm going to give you eight things. Some of you may not agree with all of this, but what we've done is to take God's instructions to Israel nationally and the Church's instructions spiritually where spiritual warfare is concerned. Because you know the spiritual switch works both ways.

And we're going to try to find these eight principles in closing this morning that a nation like America can use in building national security and purpose. Number one, you arm yourself to protect yourself. You see, Satan's goal is to get the people of God to disarm spiritually and militarily.

We're all friends, he says. We all want the same thing. We all want peace.

Ephesians 6, 11, and 13, that's why we're told to put on as Christians the whole armor of God so that we might be able to stand against the enemy's attack. In the same principle, the child of God, the nations of God must be armed for the battle of God. Sometimes you do a study and take Ephesians chapter 6 and study the pieces of the armor with national purpose in mind.

And you'll be amazed. Principle number two, acquaint yourself with the tactics of the enemy. We're told to do this spiritually.

Ephesians 6, 11 goes on to say that you might be able to stand against the methodea, the wiles of the devil, the tactics that he has devised to destroy you. First Peter 5, 8, because like a roaring lion, he is roaring around seeking whom he may devour. The whole problem is that the tactics of the enemy need to be understood.

Now, spying, for instance, is not an unscriptural principle. If it were, then Joshua and Caleb would be unscriptural. Granting asylum for protecting spies is not a new principle, or else Rahab would never have been granted asylum.

You see, the whole principle is Satan says, that's not nice. But you see, he's spying night and day on the children of men. You read that in Job, you read it in First Peter.

Nothing wrong with having an intelligence program, spiritually or nationally. Principle number three, remember who the real enemy is. Ephesians 6 goes on to say, for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

America's enemy is not Red China. It is the godless ideology that they want to spread to the world. If they want peace, it's because they need our friendship at this time in history in order to lull us to sleep so they can ultimately destroy us.

That is their stated goal. That's Satan's plan personally, that's Satan's plan spiritually, and that's Satan's plan nationally. There is a conflict in this world, a deep cosmic conflict between God and Satan, between his forces and the forces of evil, and he has always used the nations as a magnifying glass to bring to light this conflict.

And what he wants to do nationally and personally and spiritually is to lull us into believing we don't have an enemy, we're all friends. But the man that denies the existence of Jehovah God and the nation that says Jesus Christ is not God is not our friend. The fourth principle is, be prepared to take a stand.

Ephesians 6, 11 through 14 goes on to say, stand therefore, and having done all, stand. First Peter 5, 9 goes on to say the same thing. The Christian is given no offensive weapon to start the fight, but he's given everything you'll ever need to finish it.

This Christian is to stand. Now you think about it. Why as a nation are we in the fix we're in today? He is to stand, and he's not to give an inch.

To give, there's a word for that, it's called retreat. He's to stand, he's not to take the offensive, but when the enemy approaches, he is to stand, and he is to wield the defensive tools God has given him spiritually and nationally. The fifth principle is, you defend yourself in order to protect what you stand for, or you stand to lose what you stand for.

Ephesians 6, 14 through 17, why we were given the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. And then six, the goal of warfare is victory, spiritually, nationally. In Matthew chapter 4, Jesus stayed and was tempted in the wilderness.

He underwent the onslaught of the enemy until the enemy gave up and crawled off into the sunset, until the battle was over. In James chapter 4, verse 7, it says, resist the devil and eventually he will, what? Flee from you. Wars were meant to be won, scripturally, or else the loss of life would not be worth it.

So war, spiritual war was meant to be won, or the loss of the life of the Son of God would not be worth it. Just ask yourself this question, how could tiny little Israel actually be feared by everyone around them in the Middle East? Why does the whole world stand up and shake when Israel moves? I believe it is because they use the principles of scripture where warfare are concerned. At least they have in the past.

You examine sometime, go back and examine the brief military history of Israel since it's been back in the land, and you'll be amazed. The whole world is afraid of them because they utilize the principles of God in warfare. Number seven, know who your friends are.

Stand by them and expect them to stand by you. Ecclesiastes 4, 8, and 9, you remember, says two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor. If one falls, here comes another.

Help him up. That's the principle of allies. But woe to him that's alone when he falleth and nobody help him up.

The eighth principle is stand by Israel because God plans to. Psalm 122, verse 6, pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May all who love this city prosper.

The scripture is filled with promises to nations who stand by Israel. You read your Bible. You read the history books.

You make a list on two sheets of paper what has happened to the nations who have befriended the Jew and the nations who have beheaded the Jew. And you can throw away the second piece of paper because they're gone. This nation under God must stand by Israel.

Satan says, trust me. We're all in this together. But you can't trust Russia.

You can't trust Red China. You can't trust Cuba. You can't trust Iran any more than you can trust their God, whose name is Satan.

So practically speaking, how can two nations walk together except they be agreed? What basis for unity does righteousness have with unrighteousness? What chance did the United Nations ever have to solve the problems of the world? How can the friends of God and the enemies of God join together to protect each other? The enemies of God are our enemies. As enemies, we must not align ourselves with them. These were the principles and the issues concerning unequal yoking.

Just one project I'd like to give you this week. As you read the newspaper, and as you watch the 10 o'clock news, take your Bible and take a notebook just for one week and write down, see if you can discern where God's people personally, where the church corporately, or where America nationally has violated these principles. And write down on a piece of paper the consequences experientially of what has resulted from those violations.

And see if that lines up with what God said the consequences would be. When God's people yoke themselves or align themselves together, that's God's truth about alliances. Let's pray.

Father, we live in a world that's so scarred by sin that we know that our minds are, our eyes don't really see clearly the issues before us. But Father, we love this country. And we thank you that you've given us a chance to worship here, to live here.

That you've given us the freedom to love you and to worship you in this country and from this country to send men and women around the world to tell them that Jesus is alive. Father, we pray that there would be a renewed sense of righteousness in this nation. Draw us to a recognition that we cannot align ourselves together with those who defy your name, with those who do not believe that thou art the living God.

Give us, Father, a greater burden to pray for the leaders of our nation. Give us a greater hunger and thirst to be faithful to the principles this nation was founded on. But most of all, Father, give us a hunger and a thirst to be in the world, minister to the world, and yet not be of the world.

Father, we love you because you love us so much. And may this week be a week of very special spiritual filling in each of our lives. To God be the glory.

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