

Bristol Conference 1975-02 1 Timothy - Chapter 1:

by Stan Ford

The sermon emphasizes the importance of expounding divine truth and exhibiting developed grace in the church of God, and warns against error and the need for witnesses to establish truth.

Duration: 42:34

Scripture: Exodus 3:5, Deuteronomy 19:15, Luke 3:22, Luke 24:4

Topics: "Church Discipline", "Divine Law"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by highlighting various biblical events where God gave instructions or commands. He mentions how God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses and how three thousand people were killed when they worshipped a golden calf. He also mentions how God gave the Holy Spirit to three thousand people and how Moses took off his shoes when God spoke to him from a burning bush. The preacher then transitions to discussing the importance of love and behaving properly in the church. He emphasizes the need to contend for the truth, combat error, and correct misunderstandings. The sermon concludes with a focus on the charge given to Timothy and the career of Paul in extolling divine law. The preacher references the importance of having multiple witnesses to establish truth and mentions the affirmation of Jesus as the beloved Son of God by the Father.

Transcript

Paul wrote the young Timothy. 1 Timothy chapter 1. With your permission, we will deal with a chapter each day. Now, you will well understand that I will not be able to exhaust the chapter, but if we can see a little of what it's about, then I'm certain that God will be glorified, and I believe we will be blessed.

I would like to read the first chapter of 1 Timothy. 1 Timothy chapter 1. With faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all expectations, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtain mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long sufferings, for a pattern of them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, the honour and glory forever and ever. Amen. This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before thee, that thou by then mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience, which some having

put away concerning faith have made separate, of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

The Lord will add his blessing, I'm sure, to the reading of his own church. It would hardly be necessary for me to remind you, because you have been reminded in Sunday school and in Bible class, that the words of 1 Timothy 3 and verses 14 and 15 sum up the very message of this book. It gives the reason for which it was written, and so I would like to read those two verses, as I will, each time we open and consider this wonderful, wonderful book.

If we may then, verse 14 of the third chapter, these things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I carry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. I believe that every one of us will acknowledge that an understanding of the epistle to Timothy is very essential if we will enter into the joy of Christian experience. For, here were words that were written that we might know how to behave ourselves in the church of God, please, not in bricks and mortar, because that does not, has not, will not ever be a church.

But, if we might know how to behave ourselves in the church of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, and no bricks and mortar have ever been the pillar and ground of the truth, God desires that we shall know how we shall behave ourselves in the assembly of his people. I'm not going to take time this evening in saying very much about Timothy. It seems to me there are four very short things I must say.

I must remind you, first of all, of his commencement. For, here was a young man who was brought up in a godly home. Here was a young man of whom 2 Timothy 1 and 5 dared to tell us that he had untamed love, and he had this untamed love because it was found first in his grandmother, Louise, and in his mother, Judith.

We are told that here was a young man who was the son of a perfect woman who was a Jewess, but his father was a Greek, and this young man brought him to a home where his grandmother and mother trained him in the knowledge of the scripture. This young man, whose father a Greek, would have trained him in the knowledge of that language to make him acceptable in the day yet to come to those that he would minister the things of God. This was the commencement of this young man, and I look around the congregation like this.

I know nothing of your commencement. I know very little of your background, from I've come to know and love in Christ. I only know this, that whoever we may be, whatever may be our background, God wishes to take out of the things that we learn in our childhood and youth lessons that we might be able in a day yet to come to use them for the glory of God, and I believe that be true even if our home be not a home that would be known as a Christian home.

All you young folks, my older brother and sister, let us remember we are what we are. And God wishes to use us. He doesn't want to make me another evangelist.

He doesn't want to make me someone else. He wants to make me what I am for His glory, and this young man was trained by a grandmother, another who loved the Lord, and a father who was a Greek. His conversion, why, I know very little of it.

I only know this, that when the apostle wrote that 17th verse of the fourth chapter of 1 Corinthians, he made reference to this young man, Timothy, and he said, my beloved son. He dared to commend him for the fact that he was faithful. So, I presume, if you disagree with me, God bless you, I would like you to agree with me because I would like you to be right.

But, nevertheless, I am not absolutely certain, but it seems by such an expression that the apostle Paul was the man that led Timothy to the Lord. My son, my son, who was faithful. Oh, is it wonderful when you come across men and women that in some small measure you have influence for Christ? Now, I have used the word small measure properly, because I believe in that day of the judgment seat of Christ.

It will not be the apostle Paul who will stand and say, oh, master, the man don't forgive me. I've got a feeling there's going to be a grandmother. I've got a feeling there's going to be a mother who talks and prays.

Oh, my whatever else you do, remember that in that day, no greater joy will be yours than to see your grandchildren and your children there, and they're there because of your training and your praise. But, Paul had something to do with the conversion of Timothy. I see indeed the commencement of his life.

I see his conversion. I am not unmindful of his commendation. I am not unmindful that there came a time when this young man associated himself with the work of God as done by Paul.

And, you will remember that it's recorded in that first verse of the 16th chapter of Acts that here was a young man, a certain disciple named Timotheus, the son of a perfect woman who was a Jewess and a Believer. But, his father was a Greek which was well spoken of by the brethren. Oh, this is the very parameters necessary for a man who will associate himself with those that are laboring in the cocktail, that that young man shall be well spoken, that that sister shall be well spoken of by the very assembly, by the very Christians with whom that young man has been intelligent.

I do trust that in the coming afternoon, when Mr. McKenzie will be unfolding to us some of the Bible principles of missionary work, that you young men and women will think it worthwhile to avoid even a game of basketball, or that daft game you play with a bat in your hand, and think it worthwhile to come and listen, and listen as the Word of God is unfolded concerning this thing. We will hear much, I am sure, of the commendation of a man of God. Then, will you notice not only the commencement of his journey, his conversion, his commendation, but would you please remember his continuance? For, if there is one thing I'm persuaded of, it is not where a man starts the task, but where he finishes.

And, is it grand that the young man who trusted the Lord, the young man who bore the commendation, the recommendation of the very assembly with which he was intelligent, was the young man who, right through his journey, despite hardship, despite sickness, despite responsibility, he pressed on with God? Oh, what sickness he suffered! We will be thinking a little of it in a moment, in a coming day, as we will think of this young man who was exhorted to drink no longer water, but to take that which was available in the form of medicine for his stomach pain. He was a young man who suffered many infirmities, and yet, despite it, he pressed on with God. You know, I think it's wonderful when I come across young men, healthy and strong, young men who have the faculties of mind and body, who serve God, but listen, they ought to.

But, when I come across a man or a woman who knows the strength and strength of a body that is not as strong as some of us, and they still go on, oh, bless God for them! If I'm talking to a brother or sister here

today, and like Timothy, you've been called to pass through some physical ailment, and yet you've gone on with God. Let me say, on behalf of the church, thank you! Thank you for the example you set. Thank you for going on with the Savior.

Well, Timothy went on, and hardship is why they drove the apostle Paul, you remember, out of the city. But, bless God, there in Berea, Timothy stayed. The persecution that Paul had to face, Timothy had to face, and yet he still went on with God.

When it comes to responsibility, oh, what responsibility! I often wonder at the words of the apostle, you remember, when speaking of the things that he had to pass through. Shipwrecked, tossed into prison, beaten with rods, all the pains he endured, and then he comes to a question, and he says this, and beyond the side, all this, the care of all the churches and the beating of rods, heavier than the imprisonment, heavier than the starvation, heavier than the shipwreck, the care of all the churches. And to Timothy was given the responsibility both of caring for the churches and caring for others.

He was exalted to do the work of an evangelist. Now, I don't believe that Timothy was an evangelist. If I read or write, it seems to me that Timothy was a teacher.

Timothy had been given the gift of one, filled in the exposition of the Word of God, and yet he was commanded to do the work of an evangelist. And he never hid behind the facts of saying, that's not my gift. Of course, you've never hid behind that, have you? You've never hid, but he never did.

He bore the responsibility of doing that for which sometimes, no doubt, the devil would have said to him, you are not qualified. My friend, if you're willing to serve God, you'll find this, that if there's a task to be done, he'll give you the grace to do it. The grace to do it.

Oh, what a man is Timothy! But, I didn't intend to talk about Timothy. I wanted to talk about behaving ourselves in the church of the living God. So, let's get down to what the Holy Spirit wrote.

I must suggest to you that the first chapter is divided into four sections. First, there is a charge to Timothy in verses 1 to 10, and that charge can be summed up in the fact that he is exalted to expound divine truth. May I repeat it? Here is a charge to Timothy to expound divine truth.

Then, you will notice from verse 11 to verse 17, it is not now a charge to Timothy, it is now a career of Paul. As Paul, in these verses, goes back over his own life, and he dares tell us that the purpose of his career is not to expound divine truth, but to extol a divine law, a dignified law. Then, if you will come with me, please, into verse 18 and 19, you will notice that having a charge to Timothy, and having a career to speak of, now this young man, Timothy, is commanded, and there is a command to him to exhibit developed grace.

I'm going to say something about that in a moment. I think it to be most important in the church of God that we might exhibit developed grace, and this is the command that comes to us, and oh, what a command! This I charge, says he, loose on the words of this hand, this I charge. Then, of course, in the church of God, the assembly of God's people, there also has to be the condemnation of the unruly, and in those last verses of this chapter, you will notice how, indeed, the exercise of discipline is brought before us in it.

So, let's go back to the first section. I wonder if we may dwell for a moment or two, as we consider the charge to Timothy to expand divine truth. Mercury says this, as I before thee to a fine fellow at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.

That they teach no other doctrine, all that we might take the charge that we might expand divine truth. He is exalted in expounding divine truth, first to contend for that truth, then to combat error, then to correct understanding. He is exalted first that he might contend for the truth, teach no other doctrine.

Now, what is the doctrine that he's speaking of? Of course, he speaks of it, does he not, when going to those that have been breaking the law, and he says, and beyond this, that which is not according to the glory of the gospel of the blessed God. But, nevertheless, it seems to me that in those opening words of this epistle, something of divine truth is brought before us. The apostle writes, and he dares to remind him that he's writing on behalf of, he is writing to expound the virtue of the one who is Jesus, the author of salvation.

Now, never let us forget that this is truth that we must ever howl for. When men and women enter the doors of the chapels, where indeed we would proclaim the truth of God, let us make sure that they never leave without hearing this, that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby they shall be saved. There is only one name, and that is the name of Jesus.

Why, the apostle writes, and he dares to say, by the commandment of God our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ which is our host, I suggest to you that the very truth of doctrine is summed up in this, that Jesus is the author of salvation. I dare remind you that Christ is not the author of salvation, but the authority of salvation. When last I was with you, when we spent some time in the first chapter of Acts, I reminded you then, as I have reminded many in the preaching of the gospel, that when we take this title Christ upon our lips, we are taking a divine title.

I reminded you then, I would remind you again, please, if I may take you back to your primary class, that Jesus is his name, Christ is his title. We speak of John the Baptist, we speak of Peter the fisherman, we speak of Jesus the Christ. You will remember that Christ is the Greek word.

They have not given us a translation, but a transliteration. If I was to say it in English, as you know, I would say anointed. And we dare remind our hearts that Christ is the same word for the English word anointed.

God commanded three people to be anointed, prophet, priest, king. And when we say Jesus is the Christ, we say he is the prophet, priest, and king. He is the prophet to reveal, the priest to reconcile, the king to reign, glory to his name.

He is the authority of salvation, the Christ. When we think of Jesus as the author of salvation, when we think of Christ as the authority of salvation, we think of Lord as the authorization of our salvation. And day by day, we must remember that while we may look back to a moment in our day when we said Christ is the name, and we pass from death unto life, from the parents taken under God's blessedly his name, let's remember that was not the end of our salvation.

How much more shall ye be paid by his life? I thank God I have a salvation day by day. My Bible does not teach sinless protection. But are you listening? Please, are you listening? My Bible does not teach because I sin today, I've got to sin tomorrow.

My Bible teaches me there's victory in Christ, that sin shall not have dominion over you. I thank God that when we acknowledge him as the Lord of our living, may I use those words again, may I say, may I, may I say to you a prayer, for I believe that the words are real. Let the Lord have his way.

In my life every day, there's no rest, there's no peace, until the Lord has his way. Oh, I'm no poet, but I tell you this, that those words came out of an experience. I trust that we may have that experience knowing Jesus Christ as the Lord of our living.

Oh friends, what a charge! Contend for the truth, teach no other doctrine but the doctrine that is found in Jesus Christ, the Lord. Then would you remember, he exhorts him not only to contend for the truth, but to combat error. Why? He speaks of fables and endless genealogy, and he dares to say neither give heed to fables and endless genealogy, which minister questions rather than godly edifying which is in taste.

Why, he charges you and I to combat error, and there's only one way to combat error, to combat error we must know truth. It is the truth that will make us free. Oh, brethren, sisters, I believe that it is most important that like those eleven stood with Peter on the day of Pentecost, that we shall stand where the gospel is preached, with a gospel preacher, that we shall be there, that I believe it is even more important that as believers we shall lift hand at the Bible reading, that we shall lift hand at the ministry of the word, that we may bring our contribution, that we may suggest, that we may be able to pass on that which we have learned in our private, quiet time of the Christ.

Oh, that we might know the truth, and the truth might set us free, then we'll know how to behave ourselves in the church of God. Oh, that we might know the truth. You know, there's so much error in the world today, isn't there? Really, it makes your heart pound.

There's so much error. I wonder if I could just remind you. I expect I've said it before.

If I haven't, forgive me, I should have, and if I did, then it's not worth saying twice. I shouldn't have said it the first time, should I? But, may I please remind you of those tremendous words in the book of Deuteronomy, when God laid down the great principle of evidence. You will remember how, indeed, He dares to say in that fifteenth verse, is it not, of the nineteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, He dares to remind us, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established.

Isn't it remarkable that God never does, or never asks us to do, what He doesn't do Himself? If He expects us not to listen, unless there are two witnesses, then He makes sure that through every great divine truth, we get two witnesses. Come with me in thought, into the gospel of Luke. You remember the great story, indeed, of that ninth chapter and thirty-first verse, when God split the heavens and said, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

But, the Father said it, and I'm not prepared to accept one witness. So, what does He do? He gives us two witnesses, for as the Lord stands in the river, so the Holy Spirit falls on Him. The Spirit of God bears witness, and the Father bears witness to His loyalty.

That's true, that's true, to declare His loyalty. When you go on again, please, I'm sorry I made a mistake, didn't I? You know, it's the first mistake I've made since the last one. Why, of course, it's not the ninth chapter of the gospel of Luke, it's the third chapter of the gospel of Luke, and that great turning second verse, forgive me, please, you know, I can see Mr. Smith sort of looking at me over his glasses.

So, when we come to the ninth chapter, it is not the twofold witness of His loyalty, it is the twofold witness of His redemption. You remember on the Mount of Transfiguration, they spoke of the deceit that He should accomplish at Jerusalem, and He gives two witnesses, Moses and Elias. When we go down to the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, it is not now the twofold witness to His loyalty, neither the twofold witness to

His rejection, it is the twofold witness to His resurrection.

As they look in the tomb, and they see one sitting at the head and at the foot of the place where Jesus lay, and those two in white apparel said, Why keep ye the living among the dead? He's not here, He's risen! You know something? If you want to know divine doctrine, you'll see the doctrine of His loyalty, you'll see the doctrine of His redemption, you'll see the doctrine of His resurrection, and then you'll come into the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and you'll see the doctrine of His return, and the twofold witness, twofold witness, two men in white apparel, white sand, keep chasing up into heaven, this same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye've seen Him ascend into heaven. All brethren, sisters, we must follow cunningly to thy table. We dare say, as Paul said to Timothy, that we will combat error.

Genealogies and tables have no place for them in the church of God. Then, would you notice, He exhorts him not only to contend for the truth, not only to combat error, but He exhorts them to correct understanding. He speaks of the law.

He reminds us that the law is not given for the righteous, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the unholy and for pained, for murderers of fathers and murderers of brothers, for tax dealers, for lawyers. He dares remind us of that great doctrine of the law, but then He says this, that the end of the commandment is lost. Oh, what did we attend? The end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, but of a good conscience, under faith and painedness.

Oh, brethren, this is what in the assemblies of God's people we need to do. We need to correct understanding when it comes to the design of the law. We need to remind men and women that this is the end of the law, love out of a pure heart.

You know, I'm so glad of that. Should I let you into a secret, you wouldn't tell anyone, would you? I don't know if you'd tell someone else, I'll be ever so glad. But my God doesn't go around with a big stick in His hand waiting to hit His own.

My God's a God of love, and He loves His people. He understands that sometimes we stumble and fall. Sometimes we do things we feel desperately insane of.

We sometimes say things we wish we never said. But God loves us. Oh, He will arrange for our correction, but He loves us.

We're His, and what love He shows to us, we need to show to one another. Oh, God give us the love of brethren. When I say the brethren, I mean the sisters as well, but it's a bit more appropriate for a man to say love the brethren.

You understand, this should be the mark of a Christian assembly, that they love one another. They love one another. Now, I know it's difficult to love them.

I mean, you imagine if your assembly consisted of everyone like me. Cool. But you see, it consists of some nice folks like you as well.

And God wants us to love one another. Oh, that we might do this, that we might realize the end of the law. Please, I'm not going to take time to do it, but if I was preaching the gospel tonight, I'd tell you what I'd tell you.

I'd say this to you, that when God gave the law and Moses marked down out of tiny ice pants, and saw people that were bowing their knees to a golden calf, three thousand were killed. That's the giving of the law. But when God gave His Holy Spirit, there were three thousand saved.

I'd remind you if I was preaching the gospel tonight, that when God spoke out of a burning torch and said, Moses, Moses took the shoes from off his feet. But when the prodigal son came home, the father said, bring the shoes and put them on him. I'd remind you, oh, but I'm not preaching the gospel tonight.

I only know this, that the end of the law is love. Love out of a pure heart, out of a good conscience. So, would you notice, please, there is a charge, and this is the charge, how to behave ourselves in the church of God, then defend divine truth by contending for the truth, by combating error, and please God, by correcting understanding.

Then we come to the second section of this chapter, and it is not now a challenge, a charge, rather to Timothy. It is a career of Paul, and that career has been given him that he might extol a dignified Lord. Why, he's going to come to the glorious doxology that we've been singing every night during the past week.

For wherever we've gone, we've made our little crusade chorus, 1 Timothy 1, 17. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, the honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

You know, I have a good mind to ask Brother George to come up here and sing it. Well, no. Oh, I only know this.

I only know this, that it's wonderful, isn't it, to reach a doxology like this, and it was reached because a man could look back over his career and trace the good hand of God. He reminded Timothy of the fact that the gospel was communicated to him. He says, the gospel in verse 11, which was committed to my trust.

Isn't it grand to know that the message we preach is not our message? It's God's message. Let all brethren, sisters, let never apologize for the message of the gospel. I have said a hundred times, I wouldn't spend one minute in defending the gospel.

Not me. Not me. I wouldn't spend one minute in defending the gospel, but I'll spend my lifetime in declaring it.

I'll leave the defense of it to someone who's better than I, the one that gave it to me. He can look after his gospel better than I can. And you come along in these afternoon sessions, and you hear Mr. McKenzie tell how God has been defending the gospel in the Chad.

You come along. I tell you, if you don't shout hallelujah, I'll take the lot of you, a lot of backsliders. Really, I will.

You'll see how God can defend his own work when the very powers of hell lift their hand against him. Oh, what a thrill it is to know that our God's a wonderful God. He gives us the charge of the gospel.

This gospel is communicated. He speaks indeed of his own concentration for the black gospel, and how necessary this is. He dares to say he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.

Oh, what work! Not that the brethren counted him faithful, but the God counted him faithful. I think all of you, whatever you think I'm trying to advertise in those afternoon Bible readings, should I let you know a

secret? So I am. So I am.

So you come along and see what is required of a man or a woman who steps out to serve God in another country, and you'll find that God counts certain people faithful. God counts them faithful, putting them into the ministry. Then, of course, he makes his confession.

He says, I was before a blasphemer and injurious. Oh, listen, Frank, can I say this to you? If these words weren't written about Paul, they could have been written about me. Every word that's there is my testimony, and I feel desperately humbled that I was before a blasphemer and a perfidious and injurious.

What are you listening? I obtained mercy. No, I can't say I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly. I can say I did it in unbelief, but oh, what a grace of God we have.

And he makes his confession. He goes on to say that now he's still the chief of sinners. I like that, don't you? I like that.

You know, if ever there was a man who could stand up and say, I am crucified with Christ, it was Paul. And yet that same Paul didn't say I was the chief of sinners, he said I am the chief of sinners. And I'll let you know a secret.

If ever I know anything from a close walk with Jesus, it's then I realize the wickedness of my own heart. The closer we walk to him, he is such a light shining on us and showing us our need. He goes further.

He speaks of the cause of it all. Having made his confession, he speaks of the cause of it all. And he says, for I am a pattern.

I will be a pattern to them which shall he after believe on him to life everlasting. Then he comes to the doxology and to the kid he turns. The command to Timothy, the command to Timothy, to exhibit developed grace.

He commands Timothy concerning his conflict. He says, this I charge, that you war a good warfare. Now there are so many things I know nothing about.

Please, I know nothing about. I've got an ignorance, but I do know a wee bit about fighting. I don't know much about many things, but I know a wee bit about that.

You know, the apostle could say, I fought a good fight. I like that, don't you? I like that. He didn't say I fought a fight.

He said I fought a good fight. You know, some people think that fighting, standing up, letting someone hit you, that's not fighting, that's slaughter. Fighting, hitting them as well.

And that's not bad. The apostle says, I fought a good fight. He didn't stand up and let the devil attack him.

He attacked the devil as well. And my Christian friend, let's go forward. To attack that which is evil.

And we war a good warfare. Here indeed is the conflict. And he's exalted to cling to the faith.

Hold fast, he says, hold fast. I like that as well, don't you? I can't spend any time talking about it like you one day. But let's come to the end.

My time is more than gone. Here's a command to Timothy. But here is a condemnation, how to behave like self in the church of God.

Here is a condemnation of unruly faith. That in the church of God, we are not to permit that which is wrong, to exercise discipline. Why, he speaks indeed of Enoch and Alexander.

He dares to say that they must learn not to blaspheme. Why, if you come with me and talk to Timothy, you will remember why Hymenaeus is spoken of as a man. And this is what it says, their word will eat as a tinker, as a tinker, of whom is Hymenaeus.

And this was his word, so concerning the truth, prepared, saying that the resurrection is past already. Now, in the church of God, we must not permit error to be taught. We must stand firm to truth.

Oh God, grant us something we've said today. Will send us on this place to say, Lord, not the person sitting next to me, or behind me, or in front of me. It's me.

It's me. Oh God, enable me to behave myself in the church of God, for his name's sake. Amen.

Can we sing 1 Timothy 1 17, Mr. Songleader, sir? Don't you know it, sir? After you've served God all these years, you mean you don't know the music? Ah, that's better. Well, may we please? Many of you have sung it with us. It goes something like this, 1 Timothy 1 17.

You've got the words in your Bible. Make sure it's the King James Version. It goes something like this.

I can't sing as you know, but I'll try. It goes something like this. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only white God, be honor and glory forever, and glory forever and ever.

Amen. Have you got it? Come on then. You know, I want you to sing it.

It's the only time I get you all to say amen. And I get you to say it three times. So come on.

Now unto the King eternal, away we go.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10396.mp3>

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