

The Man Who Hates

by Steve Mays

The sermon emphasizes the importance of forgiveness and the dangers of unforgiveness, highlighting the consequences of hating others and the power of forgiveness in renewing relationships with God and others.

Duration: 37:30

Scripture: Matthew 18:21-22, Matthew 22:37-39, Romans 12:20-21, 1 John 2:7-11

Topics: "Anger"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of love and obedience in the Christian faith. He references the parable of the servant who owed a large debt to the king and emphasizes the need for forgiveness and mercy. The preacher also highlights the value of love and the virtue of sacrificial love, using the example of Christ's love for the church. He encourages listeners to overcome evil with good and to live a life free from resentment and bitterness.

Transcript

It's the 2011 Summer of Sermons with Steve Mays. When we are not living for God, then we begin to pick each other apart. Today on Light of the Word, Pastor Steve Mays shares why loving God means loving others.

To say that I love God with all my heart and go home and not love my family is not acceptable unto God. To say that God is using me and I hear God speak to me and go to work and treat people like dirt is not pleasing to God. If I'm going to love God, I must love others.

Light of the Word, Light of the Word. Hope that shines in darkness, a voice that will be heard. Light of the Word, Light of the Word.

Hope that shines in darkness, so we'll follow the Light of the Word. It's a fact that light and darkness cannot coexist. Yet among those of us who say we love the Lord, many would have to admit a certain amount of hatred towards particular individuals in their lives.

Pastor Steve Mays says hatred is the darkness that has the potential to snuff out our love for God. So Steve shares the Apostle John's words on the destructive nature of hatred and why loving God means loving others. Let's listen.

Here's Pastor Steve. So we open our Bibles to 1 John chapter 2. I'd like to teach you this morning on a very important subject. And so would you turn with me to 1 John chapter 2. And I'd like to take a look at verse 11, one verse.

But I'd like to pick up at verse 7 and read down through verse 11 to give you the context. And then we want to take a look at the problem of hating. And so the man who hates.

The devastating effect that it has in your life. Because I believe that in some ways we're deceived. Thinking that we can love God and hate people.

And even to the point of doing ministry and then not loving the ones we're living with. Or loving the kids that God's given to us. The danger of not loving.

Satan is seeking to lead us into an incredible trap. And so it says here in 1 John. And 1 John of course was written by John the Beloved.

He wrote the Gospel of John. And then he wrote 1, 2 and 3 John. And of course he wrote the book of Revelation.

It says, brethren, I write no new commandment unto you. But an old commandment which ye have from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

Again a new commandment I write unto you. Which things is true in him and in you. Because the darkness is past and the true light now shineth.

So you remember Paul said that we've been taken out of darkness. And we are in that marvelous light. No longer the children of darkness.

But now we're called the children of the light. Verse 9. He that saith he is in the light and hates his brother is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abides in the light.

And there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But the conjunction he that hates his brother is in darkness. And walketh in darkness and knoweth not whether he goeth.

Because the darkness has blinded his eyes. The danger of hatred. Notice if you would just for a moment a couple verses.

I want you to notice the danger found in verse 9. He talks about in darkness. And then notice verse 10. The occasion of stumbling.

And then in verse 11. Living in darkness. And then walking in darkness.

And then blinded by darkness. And so there's a progressive pattern that happens in our life. We begin to stumble because of darkness.

And then we find ourselves that we are in this darkness. And then all of a sudden we begin to walk in the darkness. And then we are blinded by the darkness.

All because we have been disobedient to God's word. And God's word teaches us that we are to love. And our love is to be unconditional.

And it's to be unlimited. In other words, we are to forgive. And the problem is so evident.

That God made us with the capacity to be loved. And so every one of us in this room has a desire to be loved. And sometimes because we don't understand the other.

Then there's a wall that begins to be built up. Then the very reason I was married to be loved. Now it becomes a nightmare in my life.

So on this side I want to be loved. On this side I see the weakness and the failure. And I see standards that do not live up to my expectations.

Even though I'm not living it. So when I want to be loved. Desperately loved by my friends, by my staff, by my God, by the world.

Over here I have this other standard. That people need to live a certain way. And if they don't, it bothers me.

And if they talk about me, I don't like them. And so the very thing I need, I don't have. And so the paradox is, what do I do? Well if I'm looking for perfection.

If I'm looking for people to be perfect. They're never going to be perfect. Because I'm not perfect.

So my standard is so high. That I'm unable to receive love. And therefore I'm unable to be loved.

And the Bible tells me. That God is the perfect one. And we are shapen in iniquity.

And we have all fallen short of the glory of God. And when we are not living for God. Then we begin to pick each other apart.

And it's interesting when you look at this passage. To say that I love God with all my heart. And go home and not love my family.

Is not acceptable unto God. To say that I'm involved in ministry and serving God. And go to work and treat people like dirt.

Is not pleasing to God. To say that God is using me. And I hear God speak to me.

But I do not love my children. Because they just are an irritation in my life. Is not pleasing to God.

If I'm going to love God. I must and have to love others. It is a commandment.

It is a duty that I must understand. And it's so evident. That John here begins to minister.

Now when we think of John. We think of that apostle of love. One who was able to care my little children.

And he constantly talks about this incredible compassion. Abide in him. In John chapter 7. All the way through the living water in the gospels.

You read John. And you come to a point. Boy I wish everyone was like John.

And if Christ was going to have anybody write revelation. It would have to be John because of his compassion. Only someone with such compassion can write about the wrath of God.

But it was not always so in John's life. And that's what I want to share with you this morning. You remember John was a very explosive personality.

He had a problem with anger. He was very short fused. And we find that he was unpredictable and impulsive.

You say well I don't see that. Well you will in just a moment. And maybe you're going to say to me well Steve I am explosive.

I just explode. Or maybe I'm impulsive. I have no patience with people.

Well then you really need to listen. Because their anger and the hatred is robbing you from the relationship with God. And the relationship with others that you can really have in your life.

And it's fine because it comes to a point that John's life was out of control. And Jesus nailed it right off the bat. He destroyed others.

You remember John? That time that Jesus and John were coming into a city of Samaria. And all of a sudden they would not let Christ in. John's attitude became very, very angry.

He said Jesus let fire come down and consume them. And Jesus turned around and said John you don't know what spirit you are of. And then he nicknamed John sons of thunder.

You remember? I think if I could go back and have a mortar sack of group. I would put sons of thunder in a big lightning bolt on the back of my leather jacket. And give you all Harley Davidsons.

And we could go down the street with an attitude. Just a little attitude. John had a nasty attitude.

Then if we can't spend the night then torch the city in God's name. Have you ever done that? Have you ever driven on the 110 freeway and someone cut you off? Oh God smite him in Jesus name. Curse him.

You know you bam right there. Or you are talking to your wife and she says something. Right in her face.

I mean right there. But just a while back you got married. Now you are right in her face and she is right in your face.

And now you are living in each other's face. And God just saying help these two. I mean anger.

Just unbelievable anger. Or you say something kind of silly. And she gives you that look like you are stupid.

I mean really a lot of love coming out of here. And then when they begin to cause problems. Oh God just deal with them.

No, no, no, no, no, no. That's an angry spirit. And some of us are really controlled by this incredible anger.

And then we find that John you remember he heard that people were coming. And he said that Jesus forbid them from coming. And Jesus said John to God they all would come.

He was wrong. We don't want them here. Get them out of here.

We don't need any more problems in our life. You have those types of people here. And we don't want anyone over.

It's a mess. The house is always a mess. Have them come over.

You say give them away. No. It's controlling.

And then the last time you begin to realize is all of a sudden John wanted to be on the throne next to Christ. He was selfish. Forget the other ten.

I want the position. Me and my brother we want to sit on your throne. You don't see that side of John.

Oh no. You see John oh let us love one another. Let us abide together.

Oh little children let us love one another. But this is the same guy that said hey fire come down on South Bay and toast it. This is mad.

This anger was unacceptable to God. It was not pleasing to the Father. And it was dealt with by Jesus Christ instantly within his life.

Now anger in itself is not bad. If it's governed by God it's called passion. I have a passion for the things of God.

I hate sin. I hate Satan. I want to live my life for Christ.

I want to stand up. I want to make a difference. I want to go after certain things that are pleasing.

But when it's not under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit it's very destructive. It destroys people's lives. It sends kids out of the home.

It condemns people's lives. And that's what I want to talk to you about just for a little bit this morning. Temper has to be tempered.

And often times everything that is any good has to be tempered. Metal has to be tempered. And so you find someone fixing body work.

When they finally get it all fixed they heat it up one last time and they hit it with a hammer. Just tap it. Because it changes the structure of the metal.

Or iron. Reheat it. It becomes even stronger.

So sometimes the things in our life is to make us stronger. But because of our immaturity we become defensive. And when we become defensive we begin to accuse and we get hurt.

And when we get hurt we begin to gossip and we begin to talk. Jesus went right after John. He said, John, you don't know what spirit you are of.

This spirit is going to destroy your life. You remember what John said. Listen, darkness is going to destroy your life.

You're going to stumble. You're going to begin to walk in it. And finally it's going to blind you from seeing the truth.

John was blinded from seeing the truth. Christ came to save not to destroy. And so you get married to be lovers and now you hate each other.

That's not the reason you got married. What happened? Somewhere you became angry. Or you had children because of a relationship together.

Now you don't like them. What happened? Somewhere along the way things happened and you never rectified them. And so you find out that this anger begins to burn.

And then you begin to see the absence of the move of God's spirit. And you realize that when Uzziah became so angry at the priests he was smitten with leprosy and that was the end of his ministry. And when Moses was so angry at the people he beat the rock and that was the end of his ministry.

And when you and I become angry it destroys every relationship we have. It can destroy your boss. It can destroy your wife, your children.

It can destroy a church. Anger is a very devastating thing. And Jesus went right after him.

Listen John, I will not tolerate this spirit, you calling down fire from heaven because it's not from the Father. And John, I'm not going to allow you to condemn people. Everyone has a right to come to me.

You cannot isolate people. And John, you cannot be selfish. There are other people around you.

You are not the only one to be here. Jesus went after it. And I believe that God does go after our anger.

I believe that God does speak to us about forgiving. I believe that we often make a choice that we will not forgive because it's just too much of a hassle. But I want to encourage you that if you do not forgive then the problem is that you're walking in darkness and not walking in the light.

And instead of helping, John was judging. Instead of loving, he was condemning. Instead of serving, he was destroying.

And so the destructive nature, notice verse 11, but he that hates his brother is in darkness and walks in the darkness and knoweth not whether he goeth because the darkness has blinded his eyes. It says that he stumbles in darkness. In other words, he's starting to trip.

As a Christian in the light, you're not going to trip. You're going to see. He's going to light your way.

Things are going to do well. You're going to have trials. But you're going to know what you're doing.

But you're now beginning to trip over it. Why? The light's not there because you're going contrary to God's word. God says, forgive.

I'm not going to forgive. Now you're in rebellion. God says to let it go.

I'm not going to let it go. So you're now heading towards darkness. And the moment you head towards darkness, you're going to trip.

And then notice verse 9, you're going to be overtaken by darkness. When you head towards darkness, you're going to trip and then you're going to be overtaken by darkness. And then notice verse 11, you're now walking in darkness.

You see the progression. I trip, I'm overtaken, and now I'm walking in darkness. In other words, I'm living my life.

I'm going to church, hating people, worshiping God, loving God, not going home, hating people, hating the world in which I live, hating myself. It's all contrary to God's word. And then finally in verse 11, I'm blinded by darkness.

I'm ministering, teaching the word, sharing the gospel, but there's bitterness and anger in my heart. God sees it. It's unacceptable.

And then this person falls in the pulpit. Why did he fall? Because somewhere along the way, he violated the word of God. You remember the great parable that Jesus taught? Probably one of the ones you know the very best.

Probably one of the greatest. He talked about a servant that was summoned before the king. And this servant owed 10,000 talents.

And the king said, I want you to pay me today what you owe me, or I'm going to throw you in jail. And the man looked at the Lord and said, Have mercy upon me. Be patient with me, and I will pay it.

That parable came on the heels of what Peter said to Jesus. Jesus one day was sitting around, and Peter came up and said, Jesus, I have forgiven a man seven times. How am I doing? Now bless his little heart.

From a fisherman to seven times, pretty good. So he now comes kind of bragging, kind of sharing, and Jesus turned around and said, Peter, it's not seven. It's seven times 70.

It's 490 times. And Peter was devastated. And Peter just looked at Christ.

And the issue, it's not how many times, it's unlimited. It's not how many times you forgive each other. It's unlimited.

In other words, it can never stop. The nature of Christianity, who you are in Christ, this is such a critical issue. Because when it becomes, well, she did it one too many times in my marriage.

I'm not going to forgive. Then the marriage is over. And you're over.

Because you're going to be eaten. And so this man comes, and Jesus explains that to Peter. And then Jesus says to Peter, let me tell you a parable.

There was a servant who was summons. The man had 10,000 in debt. The man fell down and said, would you forgive me? And the king said, I will forgive you.

In fact, it says in Matthew 18.26, the servant therefore fell down and worshipped him saying, Lord, have patience with me. I will pay you all. Now remember that.

Have patience with me. I'll pay you all. And the king, in verse 27, then the lord of the servant was moved with compassion, loosed him, forgave him of the debt.

Now the man should have went home. He should have went out and told his friends, listen, I was in debt 10 million and I was forgiven. I'm a free man.

But he didn't. What did he do? You know the story. He didn't even get outside the doors.

On the marble steps, he found a man who owed him \$5. The Bible says he grabbed him by the throat. He said, pay me what you owe me.

Or I'm going to throw you into prison. And the man said this. He said very simply, and his fellow servant fell down at his feet and besought him saying, have patience with me and I will pay you all.

The exact same words. So the man who said to the king, have patience, I'll pay you all. The king said, no problem.

Now this man who owed him \$5 is begging. Have patience with me. I'll pay you all.

And the man said, forget it. You owe me. You pay me.

Or you're going to jail. You can't pay me. In jail you go.

And he threw the man in jail. Well the servants of the king saw him. Went back and told the king.

And the king said in Matthew 18.34, And his lord was wroth, angry, and delivered him to the tormentors to resupply all that was due. So likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you, if from your heart you don't forgive. This is powerful.

This is life changing stuff. What God is saying, is that if you choose not to forgive, you're going to land yourself in prison. You're going to bring poison in your life.

You're going to be out of fellowship with God. Because God requires and demands, and it's not an option, you must forgive unlimited for the rest of your life. Why? Because of Christ dying for your sins.

So in my mind with my wife, I need to forgive her for the rest of my life. No matter what we go through, I must forgive. The staff, the church, everyone else.

And vice versa. So the moment I say, I don't want to forgive. And there was that time.

I became very bitter. And it just destroyed my life. Destroyed my heart.

And the reason why, was you're saying, now wait a second, if you're hearing the word, does it make a difference? I was disobedient. I allowed bitterness to get in. I started heading towards darkness.

I started copping an attitude. The love of God wasn't in my heart. And I knew it.

And I had to deal with this thing and make it right. And the moment I did, the light came back, and I was able to understand the importance of forgiveness. So if I choose not to forgive, I'm heading towards darkness.

If I choose to hold resentment, I'm heading towards darkness. And that's how I have to think. And not only that, if I am disobedient to what God is saying, I'm breaking fellowship.

He said, if you are going to bring me a gift, leave it. And go make it right with your brother, and then come back, and then do your sacrifice to me. I don't want hypocrisy.

So don't come and tell me how much you love me, and then you turn right around and hurt all the people I died for. So your wife, and your boss, and your children, I died. My blood is upon their life.

I need you to love. And the reason why I cannot love is the immaturity of my own heart. I've been hurt.

Well, everyone's been hurt. But if I have the knowledge of God, then I understand it's not an issue. I have to forgive.

Jesus once again talked about this. And so the king was upset through Mangel. You remember Jesus said to the disciples, when you pray, pray this prayer.

In Matthew 6, verse 14. For if we forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But the conjunction, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you of your trespasses.

Now you're dealing with the maker and creator of your life. You're messing with God. You say, well, I've never heard that before.

I want to say it so strong because I think that most of our lives are really messed up. And we think we're in God's will when we're really out of God's will because we're not loving the way God wants us to love. If you look at 1 John, the first thing that happens is obedience has to be part of the new birth experience.

But the second thing is my testimony on how I love people. So because of the light, I need to love my wife. I need to love my kids.

I need to be sacrificial. Husbands, love your wives even as Christ loved the church. Was the church right? No.

Christ died. So even though people are unwilling to forgive you, you must forgive them. It's your life.

And the moment you hold on to that bitterness, you're going to be thrown in the torment. It's going to torment you. And here's the tragic thing.

Some of you have been so in bondage for 10, 15 years holding this resentment that you have not lived the life that God really wants you to live. You have to let it go. Some pastor heard me.

Well, I'll tell you what. People are going to hurt you because people are not perfect. And when they're not walking with God, they're going to say things they shouldn't say.

But it doesn't mean that I respond in my life. So you can take somebody that's having a problem. They hurt you.

Now you have a problem and you carry it for 10 years and your whole marriage and your relationship is messed up because you can't get over this one little bit of hurt. That's darkness. That's satanic darkness.

And all of a sudden, Jesus is waiting for someone to say, I'm sorry. And the moment anybody says it, light begins to fill their heart and they're set free once again. And that's what He's saying.

You remember the great price of being unforgiving is torment and poison, bitterness. You remember Haman and Mordecai? I think it's a great story. Haman, who was the prime minister of Persia, hated Mordecai and hated the Jews and wanted to kill all the Jews.

Mordecai, who was a Jew, knew what Haman wanted to do. So when Mordecai saw Haman coming, everyone bowed down, but Mordecai would not bow down. He would not give honor to a man who was going to kill the Jews.

And it just ticked Haman off. I mean, Haman from that moment went crazy. And I want to tell you a little secret.

He went home and built the gallows in his own backyard. Interesting point. Most of the damage is in our home.

Do you hear what the church is doing? Do you hear what this is doing? Can't believe Savon. Can't believe Vons. Can't believe this.

My job's a mess. This is a mess. I'm just building gallows in my backyard.

My kids are hearing it. Hatred's spewing out. But hey, I love God.

That's hypocrisy. So Haman is trying to kill the Jews. Finally, make a long story short, God turned the table.

Esther stood up. Mordecai prayed. The king saw the plot.

And guess who hung on the gallow? It was who? Haman. Now here's the point. My anger is going to hang me.

If I'm mad or angry or I'm filled with hate, it's going to hang me at church. It's going to hang me at work. It's going to hang me in my marriage.

Everyone's going to see it. And when he hung, everyone knew that he belonged up there. Now that's not what I want.

I want to be loving and kind and gentle. I don't want to be a dictator or someone nasty or when I die, my wife is having a party. I don't want that.

I want a little bit of crying going on. Just a little bit. Then a party.

That's fine. But he hung. And all of a sudden I see that.

Let me give you another example. You remember all of a sudden the song to David? David killed 10,000. Saul killed 1,000.

The women and men were singing. And when Saul heard that he only got 1,000 and David got 10,000, he was really upset. And the Bible says in 1 Samuel when he heard this, this is so important to King James, he eyed David from that moment on.

And what it means is that at that moment, the hatred just took hold of him. And no longer was he doing his ministry. He was now going after David.

And he ran after David and chased David and did all these things and violated. Finally, Samuel one day came and said, the kingdom is out of your hands. In other words, the kingdom has been taken from you and given to this man named David.

Here's what it teaches me. My anger will strip my life. It will take away everything good in my life.

And yet we see people just filled with anger and hatred. They're mad. They're just upset with their children.

They're upset with their relatives. They're upset with the government. They're upset.

Listen, things are not perfect. But for me to allow the darkness to creep in, it's just so dangerous and devastating. And then I realize once again that anger will poison me.

And Jesus said, listen, it's going to torment you. It's going to imprison you. It's going to hang you.

It's going to strip you. And John said it the very best in verse 11. But he that hates his brother is in darkness.

That is so powerful. I don't like my kids. You're in darkness.

No, no, no, no, no. We have this relationship. No.

If you even hate your kids, they know it. And if you even have that thought in your heart, God knows it. And you and I cannot afford to go down that road.

He delivered us. So we ought to be the most thankful people. Yes, they're going to make us mad.

Yes, they're going to hurt us. My husband, my wife is going to let me down. They're going to break my heart.

Yes, but I'm not going to go down the road of Satan. I'm not going to be so devastated that I hate them. I'm going to stay away from them.

I'm going to treat them. I'm going to look at them. And you know what I'm talking about.

How are you doing? So we play these games back and forth. These word games. These eye games.

These things. And you know he's trying to make it up. You know she's trying to make... But you're going to make them suffer.

I want you to know God sees it. It's a game. Because of what God did for you.

Can you imagine Jesus coming down the cross and almost dying? Forget it. I'm going back up. You guys are worthless.

That's exactly what we do with people. When he came down, he was serious. When he went to the cross, you could pull his beard, he was going to forgive.

You could beat him over the head, he was going to forgive. You could nail him to the cross, he was going to forgive. He could not afford to go down this road of hate.

In the church of Jesus Christ, we've done it. We have these cliques. We have these little things.

We don't like our neighbors. We don't like this. We don't like that.

Dangerous. Chase somebody down the freeway because they honk at you. You're tripping over darkness.

You catch up with them. Now you're in darkness. You run them off the road.

Now you're in prison. See? Well, what should I have done? Prayed for him. Back off.

Well, I just kind of put a little bit of gas. Darkness. Oh, come on, Pastor Steve.

If you put any gas on that car just to kind of show him darkness because that's not what Jesus would do. Let him go. And if he gets shot and we have to bury you, why did you get shot? Because you went down darkness and that's what happens.

So don't blame God. You disobeyed God. You caught up with the guy and he shot you.

Oh, don't do it. You're not tough. Let God smite him.

Just say, Lord, give him two flat tires in Jesus' name. Something like that. I don't know.

And if you're really mad, blow their engine up. I don't care. But just let it go.

Give it to God. Now, if your engine blows up, then you know who's in trouble. Let me end with two Scriptures.

It says in Ephesians 4.31, Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking be put away from you with malice. What are we going to talk about now? That's the end of our conversation at the dinner table, isn't it? Anger and malice and bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil speaking. Think on that which is good, that which is lovely, that which is kind, and that which is gentle.

I've never done that before. That's what Paul is saying. Then he said in verse 32, Be kind one to another, tenderhearted.

You see, the moment I'm unwilling to forgive, I harden my heart. And when you harden your heart, you have no idea where it's going to take you. Oh, I can get it back.

You don't know that. If I'm unwilling to forgive, I've made a step towards darkness. I'm already tripping.

What do you mean? I've already tripped over the Scripture. The Bible says don't do it. I know I shouldn't do it.

If you know you shouldn't do it, you do it. It's sin. I'm already in trouble.

I know the truth. And then he says once again in Romans 12, 20, Therefore, if thy enemy hunger, shoot him. It doesn't say that.

Feed him. If he thirst, poison him. It doesn't say that.

Give him drink. For in doing so, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Now here's the key.

I want to leave you this. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. So what do you do when you're being attacked? And you know that the one's attacking you is not listening to God and you see satanic things, you pray.

And you turn right around and the good of God in your life is able to overcome it. If you get angry, what they did is wrong. Amen? You can say amen.

But here's the sad thing. The way you respond is almost a spiritual thing. They can deal with this, but this might take a whole lifetime to change.

You cannot afford going down that road. I want to be in God's will. Therefore, I have to love.

I don't have to like, but I have to love. I cannot hate, and I cannot choose, and I cannot play games with God. If I hold bitterness or resentment, then I'm going to hang or I'm going to be stripped.

It's going to be taken away. If God has forgiven me of everything I've ever done, how can I not forgive my friends? Pastor Steve Mays, sharing what hatred can do to us and our relationship with God. Important insight from one of Steve's most requested lessons of last year.

You know, it goes without saying that Christians are to love people. That's pretty basic, but what's sometimes more difficult to understand is what that love looks like, practically speaking, that is. Well, in Steve's four-part series called Loving God's Way, he gives a clear picture of what love is and what love is not.

It's a study that comes from a section of Scripture known as the Love Chapter, 1 Corinthians 13. In this message, he highlights the value of love, the virtue of love, the victories of love, and even the valleys of love. It's the kind of resource that can help deepen your understanding of real love, helping you make it the foundation of your life.

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