

The School of Prayer - Part 3

by Walter Beuttler

Walter Beuttler emphasizes the importance of prioritizing our relationship with God and seeking His kingdom in prayer and daily life.

Scripture: Matthew 6:26

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Financial Stewardship"

Description

Walter Beuttler emphasizes the importance of seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness before asking for material needs to be met. He highlights the need for a right relationship with God as our heavenly Father, recognizing His sovereignty and obeying His laws. Beuttler stresses the significance of honoring God with our substance, paying tithes, and practicing financial responsibility. He also addresses the necessity of diligence, working to provide for our needs, and having faith that is rooted in compliance with God's Word and free from condemnation in our hearts.

Transcript

24) "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (money).

25) "Therefore I say to you; Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

26) "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they?"

27) "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?"

28) "And why take you thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin."

29) "And yet I say to you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

30) "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

31) "Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

32) "(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things."

33) "But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."

34) "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:24-34

In the last message, I emphasized what Jesus taught His disciples when He said, "And pray to your Father." I told you that this is not a matter of format. Simply changing the format, the phraseology from God to Father does not do a thing. Behind this - "And pray to your Father" - there needs to be an inner awareness of our relationship to God as our heavenly Father.

This comes by the Spirit where Paul says, "Whereby we cry Abba (Pappa) Father."

The Holy Spirit within us gives us a conscience awareness, an assurance, an instinctive knowledge that God is our Father. He makes us so aware of this relationship that we can pray to Him like a child will pray to its earthly Father.

Concerning your method of prayer about your personal necessities of life, you might not have any necessities as you might not need money or clothes, but you may know of somebody else who does. Then you can help them.

If we want our Heavenly Father to supply our needs, there are some things to be observed. In this chapter (Matthew chapter 6), Jesus is speaking predominately about our personal necessities of life. For most of it, He talks about drink, clothing and food.

Also, there is involved a threefold recognition of God. Much of our receiving things from God depends on our personal relationship to Him. It is not simply of pushing a button and saying, "God, I need the \$100.00 that You promised." Presto, change. No, there is a relationship that is involved.

In Matthew 6:24 again, "No man can serve two masters." Here, the Lord indicates in this context that there are "two masters." We are either ruled, dominated, controlled by God as our master, or by money as our master. The Word says, "The love of money (not money, but the love of money) is the root of all evil."

The Lord indicates that we are either mastered by things, or we are mastered by God. Many people are mastered by things. Jesus said, "Man's life consists not of the things which he possesses." Men live for things. Now the question is: Do we live for God or things? Are we mastered by Him or by things? We need to decide who is our master, and if necessary, choose God as our master.

In Matthew 6:26, "Your heavenly Father feeds them." This is the fowls of the air. Now do not fall into a rationalistic trap here. We have had a student in school who did not pay his bills, as he did not do any work. I challenged him about his negligence and he said, "Brother Beuttler, why should I work? The fowls of the air did not work, yet the heavenly Father fed them." I said, "Yes, He fed them, but He did not put the food into their mouths. They had to go out and get it." The heavenly Father lets the berry grow, but the bird

does not sit there with its mouth open waiting for God to put the berry in. He has to go out to the bush.

What we have here is the faithfulness of our heavenly Father. This involves the recognition, and I talked about that in the last message, that God is our Father and consequently has a responsibility, an obligation and is faithful in taking care of His children. So we need to recognize Him as our Father.

Then we come to a difficult one, not to understand, but to carry out. Observe here that Jesus talked about the Father, how He takes care of the fowls, how He has clothed the grass, the flowers, how pretty they are.

He says in verse 33, "But seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." Now the Lord is pointing out some necessary conditions that need to be met on our part. Some things take priority over our food and over our clothing.

First, He says the Father cloths you, He will give you drink, He will give you good, He will give you pretty clothing. Why not? We do not have to walk in rags. We might have to be willing to, but then, He adds something - BUT. "But seek you first." There are things which must take priority in our lives over food and drink and clothing.

I talked to a young people's group in New Jersey. Afterward in the evening, a girl followed me up to the bus station and said, "Brother Beuttler, I want to talk to you." She said, "What is wrong with me?" Well, how would I know? So I followed what we used to do in Germany as children. When we did not feel well, Mother would take us to the Doctor, and he would say, "Son, stick your tongue out." So you stick your tongue out and he will look in there and supposedly discover what might be wrong. I let her stick her tongue out. I still use that method.

They come to the office and say, "Brother Beuttler, I have a problem. I am so discouraged. My boyfriend ditched me. Boo hoo." "Well now, first of all come, wipe your tears off." I always have a clean handkerchief in Bible school - for tears. So I said to her, "Tell me your story." I let them stick their tongue out. Sooner or later they say something and you catch on. I did this with that girl.

She mentioned something about her clothes. We came back to that so I said, "Tell me more about your clothes that you mentioned before." I saw the twinkle in her eye when she touched clothes. She said, "Brother Beuttler, I live for clothes. Money does not mean a thing. I have everything. I am a receptionist." That was her trouble. She was mastered by clothes.

Now there are "firsts." "Seek you first the kingdom of God." Jesus is not speaking about heaven at all. He is speaking about the kingdom of God within us. He taught that the kingdom of God is within us. What Jesus is saying primarily is this: If you expect the heavenly Father, the Almighty God, to supply your every need, you must first of all establish a right relationship with Him, and seek the establishment of the kingdom of God within you.

That is to say, first of all it is necessary to recognize the sovereignty of God in our lives. It is one thing to call the Lord, Lord, and it is another thing to do what He says, and to regard Him as such. We have a kingdom within us, and it means that, first of all, our lives have to be reordered if necessary, "Seek you first." Priorities have to be considered.

The kingdom of God within us, that is to say, our recognition of God our Father as sovereign, and our subjection to His sovereignty by doing His will takes priority over our request for the supply of our material

needs. Every kingdom has laws and seek you first the kingdom of God means, before you even pray for God to supply your needs - first of all, recognize the sovereignty of God in your life, not merely in theory, but in practice. Subject yourself to the laws that govern His kingdom, a subjecting through obedience doing the will of God. Then we are in a position to come to Him with confidence to supply our needs.

Again, I say there may need to be a re-ordering of our priorities. So often we have wrong priorities in life. What comes first, what comes second, what comes third? The kingdom of God has firsts and seconds when His sovereignty is recognized. That implies we do the will of God.

Some of you might say, "But I find it hard to do the will of God. The price seems to be great." That is very true. Saying "Yes" to God has quite a price tag, but I will tell you something, "While it costs us much to say yes to God, it will cost still more to say no to God." The price of obedience to God is less than the price of disobedience. There is a price to obey, believe you me, but disobedience carries a higher price tag.

So, "seek first the kingdom of God." Let Him establish His government, His rule in your heart, and subject yourself to His will, to the principles of His Word, and all these things shall be added to you. What things? Drink, food, clothing, the necessities of life. I will borrow here from Martin Luther, the German translation. Then everything else will be thrown in.

That reminds me when I was a boy in Germany, our grandfather sent us two boys, cousin and myself, out to pick up the apples that had fallen from the tree. Otherwise they rot. They take and make cider out of them. We had a basket in our arm and walked around and picked up apples. Every once in awhile an apple would fall off the tree and right into the basket. That is exactly Luther's translation.

First of all, seek the kingdom of God, subject yourself to the laws of that kingdom and the sovereignty of God in obedience to do His will, and these things, the necessities of life, will be thrown in. God will simply drop them in, but first comes first. Now then, what about these laws? I am trying to help you, but this is not simply a case of pushing a button: "Hey God, I need a \$100.00." No, it is not a push button thing.

There are laws, "seek you first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." His righteousness is expressed, is codified shall we say, in the laws that govern His kingdom. The supply of our necessities of life has laws which govern that supply. Our adherence or compliance with those laws is necessary. But this I say, "He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (II Corinthians 9:6).

Here is a law. Paul is speaking about giving and receiving. He says, "If you give little, you get little. If you give much, you get much." That is a law, and this law is as operative as the law of the universe.

"Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. (here is the law) For with the same measure that you mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

This things works, and it is not always easy to carry it out. I went to Bible school in 1927. I did not have anything. I worked, but wages were low. I had to support myself, live by myself, and I tried very hard to save money to attend Central Bible Institute. They wanted \$125 cash upon arrival. Then, I thought they were awfully unspiritual for wanting money. I have been to school long enough, I see a different side, of course.

Well, I saved and saved, prayed and prayed, "Lord, I need my tuition. Give me my tuition."

Sunday morning came, and the pastor said, "Now this morning we are taking up a special offering." I thought, "Hallelujah! Here comes the answer to my prayer."

Then he added, "This offering is for a poor widow in this church." Try as I may, I just did not seem to qualify for the offering. My heart sank.

They took an offering and it was not for me. They had started, and the Lord dealt with me to put \$3.00 in the offering. "\$3.00! That is an awful lot of money for me (in those days)." I thought I was doing well to put in a quarter when the offering came around previously. "\$3.00! Lord, I cannot." The Lord dealt with me. I knew the offering baskets were coming up. I was in front. They started in the rear. The Lord dealt with me to give those three dollars. I fought with Him, argued I should say.

"How can I give \$3.00 when I do not have enough money myself?" He just could not see my point, so finally I said, "All right, I will give it, but if I do not get to Bible school, it will be Your fault." I said it just like that. The basket came along and I dropped my \$3.00 in there, woefully.

I will admit that I was not a cheerful giver. You know what a cheerful giver is. A cheerful giver is not one who gives what he can give cheerfully, but who gives cheerfully what God has a right to expect what ought to be given. I remember a story somebody told me when I was in Bible school in 1927, and the story stayed with me. A brother got up in chapel and told the story. A father sent his son to Sunday school and gave him two coins, a dime and a quarter. He said, "Now son, when they take up the offering, you put in either the dime or the quarter and bring the other coin back."

The son returned and the father said, "Son, which coin did you put in?" The son said, "Well Father, it was like this. When they first took up the offering the Scripture came to my mind, God loves a cheerful giver. I was going to give the quarter, but when that Scripture came, I thought I could give ten cents more cheerfully than the quarter. So I put the dime in."

I worked in New York City. About three days later, I crossed the Hudson in the evening by ferryboat reading the evening paper. The paper reached down to my chest. A brother sat next to me. He did some writing. I paid no attention. It was none of my business. But he reached over and dropped a check on the top of the paper. The check slid down and stopped at my chest and I read: To Walter H. Beuttler, \$25.00, and the Scripture came with quickening, "Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom." What more do you want? \$25.00 against \$3.00.

Romans 13:8 gives us another law regarding the affairs of His kingdom in the realm of supplying our material needs. Here I am speaking somewhat from a Bible school background. After all, I spent most of my life there. Owe no man anything.

If we want God to supply what we need, we need to observe also this law of His kingdom, namely, to practice financial responsibility. Owe no man anything.

Many Bible school students are so very indifferent in their financial responsibility to the school in which they are getting their training. And as I said, "I speak from experience." The carelessness, the indifference of some students is almost unbelievable. Bookstore bills? "Who cares? I' am trusting the Lord. The Lord has not sent it in. When He sends it in, I will pay." When He does send it in, they get a hoagie. The bookstore can wait.

Financial responsibility - I will tell you frankly, "If I were owing you money, I would rather skip my meals to pay back what I owe than sit down at the feast." Wife and I have made this a principle of life for many years. We simply do not owe. We do without first of all.

We had a student in Bible school who for three years paid not one cent on his tuition. On graduation, he never paid the \$2.00 for his diploma. Now that could not happen today, but in those days the school did not have tough enough policies. Today they do. If a student does not pay up at the end of the semester, he is not accepted for the next semester. It is surprising how the students can get money when they are up against it.

That boy graduated. After graduation, he bought himself a new car, got credentials in the ministry and is in the ministry today as a pastor. That man has never paid one cent on three years of Bible school tuition. He has had letters. He never answers one letter. Finally the school gave up. How can we be in the ministry and teach our people the laws of the kingdom of God when we ourselves ignore them?

It is a pity when a ministry cannot be trusted in the matter of financial responsibility. A good time to begin is to now, to pay each bill when due. I used to be on the Board of Administration for many years, and I remember one year when we added up what students owed, and past students owed the school. Most of it to this day has never been paid. The school had to borrow money and pay interest because the students refused to pay.

Again, the Kingdom of God at work within us, when we recognize His sovereignty and the laws that govern His kingdom. We should do our utmost to be free from financial debt. It maybe necessary sometimes temporarily, but I am speaking about the lack of responsibility in this area.

As I said before, this matter of getting God to supply our need may very well involve a re-ordering of our priorities. Wife and I have a fixed rule: What we cannot pay for in cash, we cannot afford to buy. We never buy on the installment plan, not even an automobile.

I was trained to save when I was a boy in Germany. They are great workers and savers. Children are taught to save from a child on, have a bank account to save your few pennies. When we buy a car, we first save up for it. We put aside five cents for every mile we drive. At the end of the month we put that in a bank account that pays interest.

Then when it comes time to buy a new car, the money is there. Instead of paying out interest, we gain interest. It is a marvelous system, and it works if you have the will to follow through. Now in the beginning, it may be different.

I want to clarify something on the matter of debts. I do not want someone getting an impression that I do not mean to convey. I do not mean to imply that installment buying is what Paul is talking about with "owe no man anything." This does not refer to buying things on installments. I mentioned installments because they are so expensive and there is a way of avoiding this in many cases.

When payments are due, and they are neglected to be paid, that is where Paul's admonition comes in. I have an American Express credit card that I use all over the world in charging hotels and airline tickets, but that is not in a sense a debt. That is a contract, an orderly arrangement. When the bill comes, I pay it in full.

I mentioned re-ordering our priorities, complying with the laws that govern His Kingdom in this area of financial responsibility, and now another one namely, honoring God with our substance.

"Honor the Lord with your substance, and with the first-fruits of all your increase. So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine." Proverbs 3:9-10

"Honoring the Lord with our substance and with the increase of our first-fruits" means that, first of all, what we already have should be used for the honor and glory of God and not wasted. Some people who are in need are great wasters. We are not exactly poor, nor are we rich by any means, but we are very careful with wasting food. We just do not waste food. It is part of the substance the Lord has given to us, and we try to take care of it. And God takes care of us.

To honor the Lord with the first-fruit of our increase brings us into tithing. We ourselves tithe systematically. Not everybody tithes. But if we are going to honor God, we are going to pay our tithes.

Last year in school a question came up by some students, "Where are we to pay our tithe?" Some go out to work and wanted to know, "Should we send it to our home church and support the pastor, or what should we do with our tithe?" Far be it from me to tell anybody what to do with their tithe. I said, "Where do you get your spiritual nourishment? Where do you get your food? Where do you get your spiritual values?"

They answered, "Here at school."

This takes us to Malachi 1:

"A son honors his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? And if I be a master, where is my fear? Saith the Lord of hosts to you, O priests, that despise My name. And you say, Wherein have we despised Your name? You offer polluted bread upon My altar; and you say, Wherein have we polluted You? In that you say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if you offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now to your governor; will he be pleased with you, or accept your person? Says the Lord of host." Malachi 1:6-9

I was speaking one place. The pastor showed me something and said, "Brother Beuttler, look. This is what was in the offering basket." There were four pieces of a dollar. The four pieces were completely separated hooked together with a safety pin. They were taped, they were dirty, they were torn.

Somebody put in the offering basket four separate pieces of an old dollar bill, pasted, torn, dirty, hooked together by a safety pin.

I would say that this was an insult to Almighty God. To think that God is so little appreciated that the person would dare to put a dollar bill like that into the offering basket! It is the same spirit as you have here, "Anything is good enough for God." I would have rather thrown that dollar bill in the garbage can than offering it to God. Do you see what I mean?

The table of the Lord is contemptible. Anything is good enough for God. People have a Canadian dime or a quarter and don't know what to do with it. Nobody wants it. Well, give it to the Lord. Put it in the offering basket. Let the treasurer worry how he'll get rid of it. I myself would rather throw it away. I would rather throw it away than demonstrate such a callous disrespect for our heavenly Father.

Here God is saying, "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master, but you are not honouring me."

"Wherein did we not honor you?" By putting a Canadian quarter in the offering basket. If you had any respect for Me, you'd rather suffer the loss than bring me that for an offering.

It's not merely a case of a financial transaction. It's worship. When we give gifts to somebody, a person that we respect, a ten-dollar bill for a birthday gift. What do you do? Many a time, we've gone to the bank for the brand new ten-dollar bill, put it in an envelope and presented it in a nice way. How about bringing the Lord His gifts in a nice way?

In the island of Bali in Indonesia, I watched the temple worshippers, these Bali dancers dancing to their deity, bringing their offerings. O brother! I want to see that again. They brought their fruits and flowers beautifully arranged on a tray. You wondered how they did it, beautiful patterns. They bring it on their hand and there they dance before their deity and finally they put it down. Literally, tears came to my eyes when I saw how those girls was so devoted to their stone deity in front of them, with what honor and grace and respect they presented their offering. And here we just pack up a Canadian quarter or something, throw it in the basket, good riddance, Hallelujah. The Lord will fix it up somehow.

No, no, no, no. If you want to come to the heavenly Father in confidence, there needs to be a respect on our part, honoring God with our substance and the first-fruits of all our increase.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." Malachi 3:8

How can we come to God and ask Him in confidence to supply our needs when, according to His standards, we are a thief stealing from the Lord by withholding wrongfully. You see, we can't have faith without obeying His laws. I've come to that just in time.

We're still on the laws of His kingdom, putting our priorities in a Biblical order as the Lord said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." First comply with the rules, the laws that govern His kingdom. First subject yourself to the sovereignty of the will of God.

"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." II Thessalonians 3:10

I wish all America believed this. Of all the drones and lazy people that we have on welfare today, people with whom welfare subsistence is a way of life from generation to generation. That is correct now. But God has a law, If any man would not work, neither should he eat.

We've had a student in school with a family, and that family was down and out. The children were ill clothed, poorly fed. They come around to our houses, faculty houses, sometimes to play with your children. They come at mealtime and their eyes fairly popped. "Honey, would you like to eat with us?"

"I sure would. I sure would. We don't have that at home."

"Well, what do you have at home?"

"We have bread and jelly."

"And?"

"And nothing," they replied.

"What's your Daddy doing?"

"He's praying."

"Oh, What's he praying?"

"He's praying for God to supply our food. He prays a lot."

When you see that Daddy, "How you doing, brother?"

"Praying to the Lord."

"Have you ever thought of getting a job?"

"No, not me. I'm living by faith."

"Living by faith? Don't you want to get to work?"

"Oh no. I have a trade. I could work at it, but the Lord wants me to live by faith."

"Well, what about the family?"

"That's the Lord's responsibility."

"Oh, is it?" My Bible says that "if any man provide not for his own, he is worse than an infidel and has denied the faith." It's a man's responsibility to take care of his family, not God's.

I've heard him get up in a testimony meeting, "Well, I thank God for a real good prayer time. My family hasn't had a decent meal for weeks, but I tell you folks, I still believe the Lord. Hallelujah! God will not let me down. He will find somebody to help us." He was making an appeal. Of course the baskets began to show up and then he felt that he had confirmation that he shouldn't work. All the people did was have pity on him and his stupidity. Finally it got so bad he had to get a job. It's no disgrace to get a job. I worked while I was a student.

I know something about faith, but also the laws that govern this. I met a lady whose husband was a graduate of our school. She said, "Brother Beuttler, I wish you could do something for my husband. All he does is pray. He doesn't go to work. He gets no job. We have nothing to eat. We don't know what to do next. He's up in the attic praying all the time."

"Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah, glory, glory, glory, hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, hallelu. O Lord, You're the one who feeds the birds." I told you He doesn't carry it to their mouths.

I gave him a talking to. I took him over the coals and I said, "Brother, you're worse than an infidel with no sense of responsibility for family. Quit your praying and go out and look for a job." He did. He got a job and his family was taken care of. Prayer is no substitute for work when work is an obligation.

Amen't I terrible this morning? It's easier for me to say these things than for these men because they'll have to stay with you. They have to live with you. I'll be going. That's one advantage of having an outsider. All right now, but what about faith? Let's come back to Matthew. I hope you could follow me because I spoke a little hastily because of time.

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith." Matthew 6:30

Among the laws of the kingdom that govern the supply of our material necessities of life we've had arranging our priorities in accordance with God's laws, observing God's laws, financial responsibility-exercising it by paying our bills, and having a real concern for it when we can't. We do our best. Honoring God, diligence. God has not promised to supply the needs of loafers. God does not like loafers. God wants people who will work. He doesn't like drones. They're no good to Him, not in the ministry, not in Bible school.

"Faith. O ye of little faith. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." And this hearing doesn't simply mean hearing. It involves a compliance with the Word. If we want faith for God's supply of our needs, we need compliance with the Word of God that has to do with the supply of our needs.

I'll take you lastly to I John 3:21, and see what we get there:

"Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." I John 3:21

If our heart condemn us not. You see faith is not a matter of intellectual calisthenics, "Hallelu, hallelu, I believe, I believe, hallelu, hallelu, I believe, I'll just believe." You cannot just believe. Faith is a fruit. It comes through the Word quickened by the Spirit, but it cannot grow if there is condemnation in the heart.

"If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

We cannot have real faith if our lives are not in harmony with the Divine priority. We cannot have faith for finances if we do not comply with the laws of His Word that govern finances. You can't have faith because that disobedience will inhibit the development of real faith in our hearts. Our faith cannot be what it should be if we have no financial responsibility, if we let debts ride, if we don't care whether the school sinks or swims, if we don't hurry to the bookstore and pay our bill to the best of our ability, or the business office and put there what belongs there to the very best of our ability in the earliest possible time. Faith cannot be what it is, honestly students.

We cannot have a real faith without a real sense of responsibility. We cannot have real faith, adequate faith, without honoring God with our substance and paying our tithe conscientiously and putting them where they belong. We cannot have real faith if we are lazy, we're not diligent, we're slothful. We don't want to work. We'd rather say, "I'm trusting the Lord. I don't have to get a job. You poor fellows, the way you got to sweat in the factory. That's not me. I'm spiritual. I believe the Lord. I'm trusting the Lord. I, I, I. I live by faith. You live by sweat, poor thing. Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu."

God has more respect for those who live by sweat than those who sit up in an ivory tower with, Hallelu, hallelu, hallelu, and shirk their responsibilities and obligations.

"BUT seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

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