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STANDING IN UNITY WITH THE GLOBAL BODY OF CHRIST

The IPHC is part of a bigger movement of the Holy Spirit that is sweeping the world.



By Doug Beacham

DOUG BEACHAM is the presiding bishop of the IPHC. He has served in various roles in the church including Georgia Conference Superintendent, executive director of Church Education Ministries, and executive director of World Missions Ministries. s I write this column, global news outlets are decrying the beheading of 21 Coptic Christians from Egypt. These men were killed by the Islamic extremist organization known as ISIS. This tragedy reminds us that much of our global Christian family lives in places where it can cost your life to bear the name of Christ.

Reading the horrifying account of their deaths, I was reminded of visiting IPHC congregations in Egypt. When I stood in the pulpit to speak, I saw men with rifles sitting at the doors, ready to defend the congregants if trouble arose from outside.

I still remember my conversations with the Coptic Christian owners of the hotel where we stayed in that Egyptian city. The owners spoke passionately of their desire for Christ to return.

On several counts it was a wake-up call. First, I knew that Coptic Christian beliefs over the nature of Christ are different from the historic views held by us and most other global Christians. Second, I knew that in spite of those differences, those men and women are nonetheless followers of Jesus Christ, and they are my brothers and sisters in Christ and in the Spirit. To this day I remember them in my prayers.

It seems to me that is part of what the IPHC Mission Statement expresses in its final clause. Here is the full statement: "The mission of the International Pentecostal Holiness Church is to multiply believers and churches, discipling them in worship, fellowship and evangelism as we obey the Great Commission *in cooperation with the whole body of Christ*" (my italics).

That final clause is a powerful reminder that we are not competing

against our brothers and sisters in His body. Our forefathers understood this. In the inaugural issue of *The Pentecostal Holiness Advocate,* May 3, 1917, Editor G.F. Taylor wrote, "It shall not be the policy of this paper to magnify The Pentecostal Holiness Church

above every other organization on earth. We do not believe that we have the only church in the world

... We believe that there are other organizations just as much in the will of God as we are ... We believe that God has committed a certain portion of His work into our hands, and that we shall be responsible for that at the judgment" (pp. 9, 10).

Among others, G.F. Taylor and J.H King understood our theological and ecclesiastical connections to the larger and historic body of Christ. They did not discount two thousand years of church history and saw the Holy Spirit at work in every epoch of that history.

As Pentecostals, we recognize the Spirit's presence and work in numerous people and places. This recognition begins at creation in Genesis 1:1, 2 and continues through the thousands of years until Revelation 22:17-21. But the Spirit's work did not end at the close of the first century A.D. or even with Constantine in 325. The Holy Spirit has been at work in every generation. There have always been faithful people willing to stand for righteousness and truth. There have always been people "not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:16). Wherever there have been such people, the Holy Spirit has been present renewing the Body of Christ.

The fact that there have always

"We do not have to agree with every 'jot and tittle' of doctrine of other denominations in order for us to serve Christ together." been people who have failed the cause of Christ does not discount the presence of the Holy Spirit, even in those times and places. History tells of those failures of doctrine, of personal holiness, of societal righteousness. The Spirit has

been grieved and the name of Jesus Christ despised. Our times are no different: the same failures occur today across the spectrum of global Christianity and we Pentecostals carry our own shame.

In our "cooperation with the whole body of Christ," we work together locally, nationally and internationally in the spirit of grace and truth. We pray for Christ's body wherever present. We intentionally seek common ground in biblical truth so we can manifest a common life of grace to a graceless world. We do not have to agree with every "jot and tittle" of doctrine of other denominations in order for us to serve Christ together.

And yes, let's be clear, we must be discerning regarding doctrine and its application to the issues facing us globally. We do not abandon our own doctrinal distinctions nor our understanding of how holiness is manifested personally or corporately in our world.

Such "cooperation" is not easy. It requires diligence, prayer, humility and the time necessary to listen and learn from others. It requires

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us to be certain of our beliefs and values. It requires us listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit, enabling us to discern the boundaries of such relationships.

Acts 2:42 reminds us that the first Christians (can I dare write 'the first Pentecostals'?) "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Doctrine is important, very important. So is fellowship, or to use a more contemporary word, relationships. We need both. Doctrine without relationships leads to legalism, fear, control and isolation. Relationships without doctrine leads to lack of discernment, loss of clear voice, and ultimately spiritual compromise.

The issues before us are numerous: faithful proclamation of the gospel, persecution, poverty, sanctity of life, care for the creation, the proper meaning of marriage, the confrontation of various forms of human abuse (e.g., sex traffic, racism, slavery) and more. I pray that as a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led movement we will continue to cooperate with the whole body of Christ in "the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

WHAT IS GOD DOING WHEN HE DOESN'T 'SHOW UP'?

God is present everywhere, and His Holy Spirit is at work even when we have no evidence.



By Paul Oxley

PAUL OXLEY has invested his life as a college professor, teaching for 12 years at Southwestern Christian University and for 30 years at Emmanuel College. He received his M.Div. at Oral Roberts University and his MA at the University of Oklahoma. Today he serves as an adjunct professor at Emmanuel while enjoying his grandchildren. He and his wife, Beverly, live in Royston, Georgia. hen I was eight, I was blessed watching my parents and neighbors gather in our house for Friday night prayer meetings. The leader often would say, "Well, there are not many of us here, but we know that God says, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there *I am in their midst*'" (Matthew 18:20 italics added). Hearing that God was in our house made me feel safe.

Knowing that God is with me still gives me a sense of security. The significance of a God who is present is foundational for Christian faith and practice. The grounding of my belief in God's presence, of course, is not based on the number of people gathered to worship, but upon the reality of the Holy Spirit's on-going work in creation.

When trying to explain how the Creator God can be present in His creation, theologians make the distinction of God's manifest presence versus His omnipresence. We can tell if God is manifestly present like we can detect the invisible wind's presence in rustling leaves (see John 3:8).

A bodily healing, a Spirit-baptism or miracles of finances are often used to provide evidence of God's manifest presence. Some might say, "God showed up!" But what happens when there seems to be no manifestation? Does that mean that God did not show up—that He wasn't there?

God exists, even though we may be without manifested evidence. The term "omnipresent" is used to affirm that God is present everywhere and that there is no place where His presence is not (Psalm 139:7–10).

Our temptation may be to distinguish God's omnipresence from manifest presence in a way that shuts off the wider working of the Holy Spirit in creation. We might assume that God is at work only in His manifest presence but not His omnipresence. For example, we are tempted to assume that God is at work in a miraculous divine healing, but not at work when healing comes from taking medicine.

We may wonder: if God is omnipresent, should He not be more pro-active as a moment-by-moment player in the natural order of things? Is God omnipresent in the sense of being everywhere, but inactive? Is He just waiting to be activated from a silent observer in omnipresence mode to an active mode in His manifest presence?

No, the truth is that God is always present and actively at work in all of His creation—even when it looks otherwise. So what *is* God doing when we don't see a manifestation?

First, God's omnipresent Spirit is still active in His on-going work of creation. The Bible describes God at work in the present and future more than it does in the creation narrative. When the wind blows, God has created it (Amos 4:13). When a generation of people will arise to praise the Lord in the future, God will have created them (Psalm 102:18).

Regardless of the method or time of creation, it is always God Himself who creates. "You gave me life and showed me kindness, and in your providence watched over my spirit." (Job 10:12 NIV).

Second, God's omnipresent Spirit is still bringing redemption to His creation. The God who created the world in the first chapters of Genesis is the same Trinitarian God identified in Colossians (1:16) as Jesus Christ, the revelation of God, for whom and by whom all is created. The goal of the Creator God of Genesis is a new creation in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit (Colossians 1:13–22; Galatians 6:15).

Presiding Bishop Doug Beacham describes the redemptive experience for the new convert in his book *Plugged Into God's Power*: "When Christ's presence as risen Lord is at work within us, it is the Holy Spirit that is at work within us. You have this new powerful Person living inside you, and His name is the Holy Spirit...The Creator of the universe is inside you."

Third, God's omnipresent Spirit is at work behind the scenes prior to His showing Himself in manifest presence. Evangelistic crusades often report of thousands in one service who make a decision for Christ. We could easily think this is God moving by His Spirit in a special manifestation.

"God is always present and actively at work in all of His creation—even when it looks otherwise."

Where is God in those preconversion times during those months of, say, praying for the sinner when nothing seems to be happening? In His omnipresence, He is just as much at work in pre-conversion "convicting of sin" which leads the sinner to Christ (John 16:8–9).

Jerry Trousdale's exciting book, *Miraculous Movements*, documents how the Holy Spirit is powerfully moving as the manifest presence of God throughout the Muslim world today. Hardened rebels are being healed and delivered from addictions and coming to Christ through dreams. But what about the missionary who sowed seeds of the gospel among Muslims long before seeing a first convert or seeing evidence of God's manifest presence among the Muslims?

We can frame an answer here in light of the truth of God's omnipresence

at work. Christ said in Matthew 28:20, "Lo, I am with you always" He promises His disciples that He Himself as God will be at work pouring out His Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:18). Today, because His Spirit is *already* at work among the peoples of the earth, we can go to groups previously unreached by the gospel and discover in unprecedented ways that the Holy Spirit's work of re-creation in Christ has already begun.

Finally, God's omnipresent Spirit enables us to perceive Him at work. The Holy Spirit does a behind-thescenes kind of work in glorifying Christ (John 16:7–15). The disciples on the road to Emmaus had eyes to see the physical world of Jesus and, yet, did not recognize Him when walking with Him. When Jesus opened their spiritual eyes, they saw Him as the risen Lord (Luke 24:31,45).

When God opens our eyes we can see by faith, not just His manifest presence, but also His omnipresent handiwork. In that way our faith is deepened and strengthened.

The worship leader on those Friday night prayer meetings of my childhood wanted us to become aware that God was in our midst. My prayer is that we experience subjectively what is true objectively: God is present everywhere in the totality of His creation, including our personal lives, always working at redemption and restoration through the Holy Spirit.

Experiencing this will move us to join the praises of the saints, who declare: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being," (Revelation 4:11).

ARE YOU KEEPING UP WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Leaders in God's kingdom can't live in the past. You must be willing to embrace change!





By Becky Shirey

BECKY SHIREY is a speaker and writer who serves as a leader with the Protestant Women of the Chapel, an evangelical outreach to women in the U.S. military. She has preached in nine countries and in many venues in the United States. She is married to Lou Shirey, who serves as Director of Clergy Development/World Intercession Network for the IPHC. She and Lou also serve on America's National Prayer Committee. They live in Oklahoma City. y involvement in women's ministry has been through Protestant Women of the Chapel (PWOC), the ministry to women in Army, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard chapels on military installations worldwide. When I attended my first PWOC meeting as a young military wife, I never envisioned that years later I would serve on multiple leadership teams at the national and international levels. How could I? PWOC had not yet been officially organized at the USA or international levels.

Exactly one year to the date of the organization of PWOC International, the historic first PWOC chapter in Giessen, Germany, was closed due to military installation downsizing in Europe. I spoke at that closing to honor the women who were obedient to follow God's leading to do a "new thing" in their generation. My mother-in-law, Millie Shirey, was one of those forerunner women who envisioned PWOC in the early 1950s.

The prophetic significance of the Giessen closing on the birthdate of PWOC did not go unnoticed. "See, I am doing a new

thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:19 NIV). I honored those founding women, but I also recognized that God calls new leaders in every generation. God is always doing a new thing.

The most successful leadership teams I served on recognized the constant nature of change. They embraced change, although it did not come without struggle. Through the experience of those years, I began to observe common characteristics of kingdom-minded leaders. My list is far from exhaustive, but I want to point out a few:

1. THEY LEAD OUT OF FRESH VISION.

God gives God-sized vision to his people, vision we can't accomplish without Him. Jody Detrick, in her book *Jesus Hearted Woman*, writes about stepping into "too-big shoes." We can recognize God's plan when we see that it cannot be implemented apart from him. "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails" (Proverbs 19:21).

People with fresh vision spend time in God's presence, listening for his guidance. Listening requires stillness to hear the Holy Spirit's whispers. Hearing also produces vision, the way sound can form a picture. The initial vision God gives might seem as vague as the image produced by the sonogram of a baby in the womb, but as we move out in obedience, he gives clarity, as we need it.

2. THEY LEAD THROUGH THE TENSION OF WAITING.

King David understood the importance of waiting on God for strategy. David faced two different battles with the same enemy in the same place (2 Samuel 5:17–25). The first time, God instructed David to go straight in to attack. But when a new challenge arose, David didn't assume the previous strategy would work. He asked God for a specific plan for this new battle, and God gave it to him.

David delayed his attack until he heard the rustling in the trees, a clear sign the Lord had gone before them. It might have been difficult for him to wait for God's signal, knowing his enemies were poised for battle, but David's trust in God's promised victory was greater than his personal need for action."

We can't assume God will use the same methods he used in the past. He uses new and evolving ways to reach people. Kingdom minded leaders don't rely on carbon copies of the Lord's will, but seek him anew for each decision. God desires for us to follow relationship not a formula.

3. THEY LEAD THROUGH DIFFICULT DECISIONS.

I participated in many hard decisions spurred by the need for change. One involved a women's group controlled by one woman. She planned the meetings and taught the Bible studies. Approximately eight women attended her sessions.

After an extensive time of prayer about what to do, two of

the young leaders suggested to the woman how they would like to incorporate a different plan for the summer sessions. She was not happy about it, but the group grew to 20 women over the summer.

As they continued to implement God's strategy for that year, by the Christmas break the group had grown to 70 women in five weekly Bible studies, and a monthly program with an evangelistic emphasis. The women who led through the change became two of the strongest leaders in PWOC. A decade later, one of them became the international president.

The Holy Spirit desires to give wisdom, insight, ideas and creativity to accomplish his agenda in the context of our ministries and communities. But we have to be willing to make hard decisions when necessary.

4. THEY LEAD WITH A PASSION FOR THE GENERATIONS.

In the last few years, the International Pentecostal Holiness Church has emphasized Isaiah 54:2–3: "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities."

I imagine a tent, enlarged and strengthened, with the

tent flaps rolled up to welcome all who will enter. The organizations with the most influence give a voice to all generations. A great ministry makes room for everyone to grow. A flourishing women's ministry affirms the diversity and experience of every person.

When I asked a young woman what would draw her to attend a women's group, she said, "I want to learn about life. I'd love to ask questions to a panel of seasoned

women, and I would come to an event like that." Another woman wanted to see authenticity and transparency and to learn truth through sound biblical teaching. Another wanted to experience the power of storytelling as women gather to share life.

We're in a new day, and the Lord is ready to accomplish a new thing. We can be certain that it's greater than any program we can dream up on our own. When God speaks his kingdom agenda, his agenda always displays his glory, and his glory always reveals him to the world. We only have to listen. \Box

same methods he used in the past. He uses new and evolving ways to reach people."

"We can't assume

God will use the

THE 21ST CENTURY CHURCH AND THE APOSTOLIC MOVEMENT

We have been content to build churches led by pastors. Today we must build apostolic churches that take new ground for Christ.



By Greg Hood

GREG HOOD is the director of the Pacific Realm District of the IPHC, which is part of the Acts2Day Conference. He serves with his wife Joan as apostolic leader of Life Church Kailua in Kailua, Hawaii. Their vision is to love the lost, equip believers, disciple nations, multiply churches and impact the generations. There's a notion today that the church exists only to get people born again and give them a ticket to heaven. This idea has crippled the church from having maximum impact in our society. It is contrary to how Jesus designed His church to be on the earth.

In scripture the word *church* does not mean a building where people gather once or twice a week. When Jesus said to His disciples, "I also say unto you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it" (Matt. 16:18 NKJV), He did not have in mind a building. The word He used was first translated to the Greek word "ekklesia" which has been translated to "church" in English, but means "congregation or assembly" of believers.

To the Greeks the word *ekklesia* gave them a picture of the citizens who were called to gather at the gate of the city to make governmental determinations of what life would look like in that society. So, in Matthew 16:18, Jesus is actually telling His disciples that they were to be a governmental people. The authority that He gave them would not just get people saved but reform society.

When the Roman army was sent out and they conquered a region or a city, their government would send in a group of people called the ekklesia. This ekklesia would come in and change the street names, the laws (to reflect the laws of Rome), the language, the currency, the way the citizens of that city dressed, and the food they ate. Over a process of time, they would change things so that the city began to look like Rome.

In a short period of time, when someone came into that conquered city, they would actually feel as if they were stepping into Rome. This was because the job of the Roman ekklesia was to disciple that city or region until it looked like, smelled like, and acted like Rome.

This has astounding implications. Jesus said to us in Matthew 28:18–19: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you..." He said that we are to go and affect nations until the nations of the earth look like the kingdom of God.

Jesus was basically saying that we are to go and turn them from their heathen culture to a kingdom culture so that they look more like heaven than hell. The difference is, of course, that the Romans forced their change upon the societies with violence, while the church is to win people by persuasion in the power of the Holy Spirit—showing them a better way. This is the kind of church Jesus said He was going to build.

Why have we not modeled Jesus' vision for His Church? When pollster George Barna asked people why the church exists, 83 percent of respondents said it exists to meet their needs. This is the common mindset of why the church exists today and is a sad half-truth.

We can both meet the needs of the congregation and train them to meet the needs of others. We can encourage believers whose careers are in the marketplace and public service like education, government and media to use their talents and skills in a godly way to exert godly influence in those arenas.

I believe our cities, states, nation and the nations of the world are stuck in the state they are in because the church doesn't operate in the five-fold ministry with apostolic vision. We expect pastors to do all the work in a congregation. We must realize that we are here to

change the world—to "turn the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) and we need apostles, prophets, evangelist, pastors and teachers to do it.

Let's recognize that we need the apostolic anointing to fully equip people today. Here are some reasons why:

A pastor-led fellowship focuses on gathering and meeting the needs of the people. An apostolic church with the five-fold ministry does this and is also focused on equipping, empowering and releasing believers into society for reformation and for kingdom rule in every sphere of society.

A pastor-led fellowship will have a vision that is focused on making the congregation larger. In an apostolic church, the vision is to expand the kingdom by church planting and missionary endeavors. The church can become a place of passivity if it only focuses on the defensive—protecting the flock from the dangers of the world. A church should be a place of spiritual warfare (see 2 Corinthians 10:4) and strategic church growth planning (see Acts 13:2–3). The congregation on the offensive will have battles that they have never encountered before. Yet they will also experience victories they have never had before. Being part of an apostolic church demands taking risks.

A pastor-led church will have a vision that is mostly short-term if it has only one senior pastor leading it, because it largely will begin and end with him. An apostolic church, which constantly trains up new leadership, has a long-term vision that will span for several generations.

> We can view the church as a family—for we are the family of God. Yet we are a family at war with spiritual darkness. Our "children" must be trained and commissioned as spiritual warriors. They

must have a vision to scout out new territories—in all public arenas to take for God. We are heirs not of a distant kingdom, but of a present kingdom as we partner with God to expand it.

Jesus' original intent for His Church was to win the lost and transform culture. Let us be the generation that moves this way. Let's be the church the ekklesia—to bring about cultural transformation as we direct ourselves to disciple nations and not just individuals.

"Let's recognize that we need the apostolic anointing to fully equip people today."

DON'T BE WOWED BY THE CROWD

Our culture says bigger is better. But in the kingdom of God, less is often more.



By J. Lee Grady

J. LEE GRADY is an ordained IPHC minister who serves as contributing editor of *Charisma* magazine and editor of *Encourage*. He also directs The Mordecai Project, an international missions organization based in Florida. He is a member of the IPHC's Sonshine Conference. There's nothing more disheartening to a preacher than to see empty seats in a church service. I'll be honest—I like meetings where you have to pull out extra chairs and put people in the aisles. Why? Because I assume if God's blessing is on a meeting it will be packed. I like numbers because, in my carnal thinking, crowds are more significant.

Our culture puts value on things depending on how popular they are, and we are guilty of applying this rule in the church. We like big. We even rate churches based on size. We know that the three largest churches in America are (1) Joel Osteen's Lakewood Church, (2) Andy Stanley's North Point Ministries and (3) Bill Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church. The assumption is that these churches are leading the way in making spiritual impact.

But God doesn't evaluate us based on numbers, nor does He rate our effectiveness by comparing us to someone else. Many pastors of small or mid-size churches get discouraged because they evaluate their ministries by counting the number of rear ends in seats or the amount of money in offering plates. But God's ways are not our ways! Remember these kingdom principles:

🕞 Less is sometimes more.

Jesus attracted big crowds, but the numbers didn't impress Him because He knew many who were healed in His meetings wouldn't follow Him to the cross. He even told one of His crowds that the gospel seeds He was sowing would be eaten by birds, scorched and withered, or choked by thorns (see Mark 4:3-8). Only a small percentage, He said, would bear fruit. Jesus was looking for quality, not quantity.

In the end, after thousands heard Jesus' messages and ate His free lunches, only 120 of His followers gathered in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost. That is not an impressive number, and today's church growth specialists might say Jesus failed to break the 200 barrier within three years of ministry!

2 Follow the cloud, not the crowd.

There are a few crowd shots in the book of Acts. But most scenes of the early church are less impressive. An Ethiopian is converted on a desert road. The Holy Spirit falls on members of an Italian family gathered in a home in Caesarea. A woman named Lydia comes to Christ at a small prayer gathering by a river in Philippi. She becomes the first convert in Europe.

Why are these seemingly inconsequential stories highlighted in Scripture? Because God moves as powerfully in one-on-one conversations and small group gatherings as He does in big meetings. When we follow the cloud of His presence, He often leads us to the one instead of the many.

The book of Acts ends with a scene of Paul ministering quietly to people in a small apartment while he is under house arrest (see Acts 28:30-31). Paul certainly didn't measure His impact by large buildings, big mailing lists, media exposure or book sales. (And his writings didn't become popular until he was dead!)

🕄 Make disciples, don't entertain audiences.

Every man's work will be tested by fire, and every ministry will be evaluated not by church-growth experts but by God's holy standards.

"God doesn't evaluate us based on numbers, nor does He rate our effectiveness by comparing us to someone else."

Sitting in a church does not make a person a faithful follower of Jesus. Don't confuse disciples with pewwarmers. He will not evaluate us by how many people were in attendance, or even by how many danced in the aisles or shouted when we preached, but by how many disciples we made.

4. Stop trying to be popular.

The three largest concerts in history were performed by (1) Indian singer Babbu Maan, who recently attracted 4.8 million fans; (2) raspyvoiced British rocker Rod Stewart; and (3) French New Age composer Jean Michel Jarre. If you asked, "Who in the world is Babbu Maan?" then you proved my point. Crowds or fleeting popularity do not determine significance!

Pop singer Katy Perry has more Twitter followers-60 million-than anyone on the planet. She is followed by Justin Bieber and President Obama. We are supposed to be impressed, because in our culture, value is determined by star power. But you have to wonder: Is a 30-yearold singer the world's most powerful person? No, because in the light of eternity the size of Perry's fan base is as meaningless as how frequently she changes the color of her hair.

Let's stop evaluating our own effectiveness-and each other'sby crowd size. Be faithful with the people you have, whether it is a home church of seven, an office Bible study of 10, a rural congregation of 30 or a megachurch of 2,000.

Whether you are ministering to a handful of inmates, a roomful of Alzheimer's patients, a dozen orphans or one depressed friend, forget your need for the spotlight. Just let Jesus use you, and make Him popular. 🖵

2015 **IPHC'S** GLOBAL ASSEMBLY IN HONG KONG

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