

THE CHRISTIAN LOVES GOD ABOVE ALL

July 2, 2023



Welcome!

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We are happy that you are here!

NEW TO OUR SAVIOR? We are excited that you have joined us for worship today. Our message is as old as God's Word to mankind: Jesus Christ, crucified and risen to take away our sins. If you need assistance during the service, an usher located in the back will be able to assist you.

Please take a moment to fill out a Connect Card—if you would prefer to fill it out online, scan the code with your phone, or go to <u>OurSaviorBirmingham.com/Connect</u>. You can put the Connect Card in the offering plate or give it to an usher as you leave.

FAMILIES WITH KIDS: We think it is important for families to worship together regularly. We know that occasionally, kids are going to have a rough morning. If your little one needs a moment, there is a speaker and window in our entryway that will allow you to see and hear the service.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY SHEETS give activities and lessons pertaining to the Scripture lessons for today's service. Ask an usher at the door into the sanctuary.

AN OFFERING will be gathered during our worship service today. If you are a guest, please do not feel obligated or compelled to participate. If you would like to give an offering that supports the ministry work at Our Savior, there are several ways to make a tax-deductible contribution:

- (1) place your offering into the offering plate,
- (2) you can scan this QR code to take you to our secure, online giving site where you can give via credit card or ACH transfer.

BATHROOMS are located at the far end of the hallway as you exit the sanctuary. There is a changing station located in Room 3 (Nursery).

FREE WIFI is available if you use an online Bible or Bible app on your phone or tablet. Look for the "OSLC-Guest" connection to get online!

AN AUTOMATED ELECTRONIC DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) is located in the fellowship hall, in the corner nearest the front door.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION? If you would like to learn more about Our Savior Lutheran Church, you can stay up to date and in the know by connecting with Our Savior online.

OurSaviorBirmingham.com | Sermon archives, podcasts, calendar of events, and more!

- **9** @OurSaviorBham | Weekly sermon videos and upcoming events
- **f** OurSaviorBham | Weekly sermon videos and upcoming events
- O **OurSaviorBham** | Event pictures and church pictures
- **OurSaviorBham |** Weekly worship service and sermon videos, Our Savior Kid's videos
- **Pastor@OurSaviorBirmingham.com** | Pastor Kratz's email



Ask ten different people to define Christian and you may get ten different answers. One might say, "A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus." Okay. But the demons believe that Jesus exists and is the Son of God. So is that definition adequate? Another person might have a more negative view. He says, "A Christian is someone who believes he is better than others." Is that completely false? And if you aren't humble, does that mean you aren't Christian?

In our next worship series Christ himself defines the term Christian and describes what Christians do. We will be struck by how often we do not do all those things. There likely are times when people could look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Yet throughout this series Jesus will demonstrate that ultimately a Christian is one who runs to Christ for forgiveness precisely because he has failed to live like what he is—a Christian. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to better fit Christ's beautiful definition, doing all the things Jesus says that Christians do.

The Christian Loves God Above All

Not all love is good. It is self-destructive to love bad things. However, it is just as harmful to love good things in a bad order. For example, it would seem to be a good thing that a man loves his dog. But if he loves his dog more than he loves his wife, his "love" for both is disordered. That is not in the best interests of the man, his wife, or even his dog. For love to be healthy, it needs to be properly ordered.

The Christian loves God above all things. For the Christian understands that everything in this present world is transitory. Relationships fail. Empires fall. Accomplishments are quickly forgotten. But nothing about God is transitory. God's love is eternal. He promises the Christian everlasting life. And so the Christian struggles not simply to avoid loving bad things. The Christian struggles to love God above all other good things too. Because the Christian understands that God is of ultimate value.

As you prepare to worship your Lord today, spend a few quiet moments in prayer before the service. Review the Scripture readings, the service notes, and pray this prayer:

God of all power and might, you are the giver of all that is good. Help us love you with all our heart, strengthen us in true faith, provide us with all we need, and keep us safe in your care; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Ushers: Braden Keel, Eva Keel Audio/Video/Livestream: Roberson Service Leader: Pastor Ben Kratz



Hymn

704 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

Stand

Invocation

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Confession

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Psalm 32:1-2

Let us confess our sins to the Lord. Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts. We have offended you and sinned against your holy law. We have done those things that we should not have done and we have not done those things that we should have done. Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,

according to your promises in Christ Jesus.

Silence for meditation and reflection

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy Kyrie

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory to God in the Highest Gloria in Excelsis





Tune: David Kauffman; William Gokelman

Tune: © 2010, 2021 GFTSMUSIC Publishing Company, Inc., admin. Music Services. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 702194

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

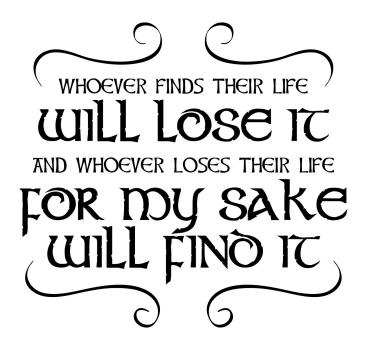
The Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

God of all power and might, you are the giver of all that is good. Help us love you with all our heart, strengthen us in true faith, provide us with all we need, and keep us safe in your care; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated



First Reading

Exodus 32:15-29

Aaron's feeble excuses for why the Israelites fell into idolatry remind us of our own shallow rationalizations for failing to love God above all things

¹⁵ Moses turned and went down the mountain with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands. They were inscribed on both sides, front and back. ¹⁶ The tablets were the work of God; the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷ When Joshua heard the noise of the people shouting, he said to Moses, "There is the sound of war in the camp."

¹⁸ Moses replied:

"It is not the sound of victory,

it is not the sound of defeat;

it is the sound of singing that I hear."

¹⁹ When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ And he took the calf the people had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹ He said to Aaron, "What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?"

²² "Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil. ²³ They said to me, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him.' ²⁴ So I told them, 'Whoever has any gold jewelry, take it off.' Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!"

²⁵ Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughingstock to their enemies. ²⁶ So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, "Whoever is for the LORD, come to me." And all the Levites rallied to him.

²⁷ Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.'" ²⁸ The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died. ²⁹ Then Moses said, "You have been set apart to the LORD today, for you were against your own sons and brothers, and he has blessed you this day."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day



Text: tr. and original verses by Hal H. Hopson; South African

Tune: Zulu melody, adapted by Hal H. Hopson Text and tune: © 1994 Hope Publishing Co. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 702194

Second Reading

1 Timothy 6:11-16

Mark 8:34

St. Paul describes the man of God in action, struggling to love God above all things

¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand



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Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Refrain

10

Gospel

Jesus calls us to love him above all—more than family or friends, more than personal safety or even life itself

³⁴ "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn

" 'a man against his father,

a daughter against her mother,

a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-

³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'

³⁷ "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

⁴⁰ "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward. ⁴² And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Children are invited to assemble at the front for a children's message.

Hymn of the Day

702 Come, Follow Me, the Savior Spake

The Hymn of the Day is assigned to this day because of its rich content and connection to the day's Gospel.

Sermon

The Sermon is the Word of God, proclaiming the living voice of the Gospel to God's people. The preacher is the appointed representative who illuminates the Scripture for the congregation and applies it to our contemporary situation. He is neither lecturer nor entertainer, but a link through whom the Holy Spirit brings law and gospel to bear upon the hearts and minds of the worshiper and enlivens their faith and life.

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NOTES:



HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR IMPORTANT?							
A CI	nristian	God,	God, above	all else.			
		lse doesn't bring nes with my own		with			
Lov	ing God above all m	ieans Spirit-driven	in	to our Savior			
NOTES:							

Stand

Creed Credo

Public confession is faith's response to God's saving Word. Christian's composed the Nicene Creed in the fourth century to defend the Bible's teachings that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are true God, equal to the Father in one eternal, undivided Trinity.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

In the prayer of the Church, we pray for those in our congregation and for the needs and struggles of God's people around the world.

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Eternal God, with your almighty power and wisdom you guide and guard the universe you created. Every planet and every star remain in place according to your design. You know the far reaches of space and observe even heavenly lights we cannot see.

Lead us to marvel every day at the wonders of your creation.

You created our planet to proclaim the depth of your majesty and love. At your command the world turns, the breezes blow, and the waters surge. Here you placed the crown of your creation, your human creatures, and gave us the bounty of the earth for our provision and pleasure.

Help us to value and protect the blessings of nature you have given us.

You have created the family, arranged society, and established governments to provide order and stability in our lives. You command us to respect and support the authorities that function with your permission. You teach us to love all people, those who are like us and those who are not, and to care for those in need of help. **Move us to love others as your Son loved us.**

Guard and guide us when you allow serious diseases, financial uncertainty, and social unrest to torment our country. You surely punish the wicked in troubled times, but you also call people to turn away from sin to your forgiving love.

Lead us to repent and examine our thoughts, words, and actions.

Enable the medical community to discover cures for diseases and plagues that afflict our planet. Preserve the lives of your people that we may continue to share your love with others. Spare the lives of those who do not know you so they may find you and be saved.

Give us confidence to place our bodies and lives into your protecting hand.

Allow farms and factories, businesses and institutions, schools and communities to prosper and provide the blessings you desire to bestow on us. Use the blessing of wealth to enable us to spread the gospel throughout the world.

Teach us to be faithful stewards of your blessings and lead us to manage them according to your will.

Free us from all thoughts, words, and actions of prejudice and pride. Help us to see in all people the faces of those who have been redeemed by the innocent life and precious blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, who died and rose for everyone from every nation under heaven.

Help us to overcome the racial tensions that plague our land.

Give wisdom to the leaders of our land and bend their will to yours. Drive away party spirit and harsh rhetoric that often deepen the divisions among people. Help our nation find contentment in helping and protecting one another.

Guide us so we may avoid the pitfalls of anger and arrogance.

Keep in your care all those who are sick and suffering in these troubled times. Restore health according to your will. [*Especially bless...*] Comfort those you are leading to heaven with the anticipation of their eternal home. **Move us to pray fervently for those in need.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

We come to you on behalf of the people and nation we love. Hear us for the sake of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.

Offering

Our offerings are a response to the Lord for his goodness to us, which we heard about in the readings and sermon. They are to be given on a regular basis and be the first fruits of what we receive. If you are a guest with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate.

Hymn

711 Jesus Call Us o'er the Tumult

Stand

Prayer

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Mission Statement

The Lord has refreshed us with His Word. Let us head into this new week equipped for lives of service.

Our mission is to worship God, to spread his Word to our community and to all nations, and to nurture all believers to prepare them for lives of Christian service.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor + and give you peace.

Amen.

Closing Hymn

710 Beneath the Cross

Be seated

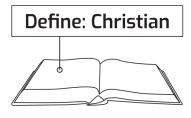




Week of July 2, 2023

NEW WORSHIP SERIES: DEFINE CHRISTIAN

Ask ten different people to define Christian and you may get ten different answers. One might say, "A Christian is someone who believes in Jesus." Okay. But the demons believe that Jesus exists and is the Son of God. So is that definition adequate? Another person might have a more negative view. He says,



"A Christian is someone who believes he is better than others." Is that completely false? And if you aren't humble, does that mean you aren't Christian?

In our next worship series Christ himself defines the term Christian and describes what Christians do. We will be struck by how often we do not do all those things. There likely are times when people could look at our behavior and assume we were unbelievers. Yet throughout this series Jesus will demonstrate that ultimately a Christian is one who runs to Christ for forgiveness precisely because he has failed to live like what he is—a Christian. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to better fit Christ's beautiful definition, doing all the things Jesus says that Christians do. Our worship follows this path:

- July 9 The Christian Finds Rest in Jesus
- July 16 The Christian Is Planted by the Word
- July 23 The Christian Lives as Wheat among Weeds
- July 30 The Christian Seeks Spiritual Wealth
- August 6 The Christian Trusts God to Provide

OUR SAVIOR KIDS MINISTRY

Are you looking for a fun and engaging way to help your children grow in their faith? Look no further than Our Savior's Kids!

Our kid's ministry is designed specifically for children, with age-appropriate lessons and activities that will help them develop a deeper understanding of God's love, their Savior Jesus, and his plan for their lives. Our team of experienced and passionate leaders are committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment where children can learn and grow together.

We invite you and your kids to join us and experience the joy of learning and growing together in community. Come see for yourself why our kids ministry is the perfect place for your child to thrive!

Our Savior's Kids—Preschool & Elementary - Sundays at 9:00 am

THIS WEEK @ OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN Week of July 2, 2023

Sunday	10:15 am	Worship Service
Monday	7:00 pm	Holy Spirit Bible Class <i>(online)</i>

Sunday (7/9)	9:00 am	Sunday Morning Bible Class / Our Savior Kids (Preschool & Elementary)
Sunday (7/9)	10:15 am	Worship Service

SERVING NEXT WEEK:					
Usher: Braden and Eva Keel					
Greeter:					
Church Family:	Clean: Boyce-Sauer/Cheek/Densmore/Hudd/Kratz/Panell/Smith Snacks: Adams/Cox/Morris				
Sanctuary Care:	Kratz				

SUMMER YOUTH / FAMILY OUTINGS

There are two fun youth/family outings planned for this summer.

On Saturday, July 15th, we will try out Hooligans Family Fun in Alabaster. For \$12/person, kids and grown-up kids can play over 100 arcade games and pinball tables, and all games are on FREE PLAY! We will plan on meeting at Hooligans at 1 pm.

Hooligans Family Fun 519 1st St SW, Alabaster, AL 35007 https://hooligansfamilyfun.com/ All Day Pass: \$12





We will have a *cookout and nerf gun war* at church on Friday, July 28th at 6pm. We have 1000 nerf darts ordered—so bring your nerf gun and get ready for a great evening of family fun. There will not only a variety of nerf gun games, but a movie on the big screen in the fellowship area as well. Brats will be provided as well as beverages. You can bring a side or dessert to share. (The grills will be available if you didn't want to have a brat and wanted to bring something else to grill).

PASTOR KRATZ RECEIVES A CALL

I have received a "call" from St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Fond du Lac, WI to serve as an associate pastor. They have about 1000 members and a school with about 160 kids. They have called me to serve as the Administrative pastor. You can check out their website here: https://stpetersfdl.net/.

Here is what you can expect during the coming weeks as I deliberate and come to a decision about where I think I can best serve in God's kingdom.

June 18 - call received to serve at St. Peter's Lutheran Church and announced call to the congregation via email

June 18—July 8 - talk to leaders and members at both St. Peters and Our Savior Lutheran Church to discuss ministry at both congregations

July 9th - special Bible Class/Discussion after our worship service in Fellowship area to discuss the ministry at Our Savior Lutheran and the call and ministry at St. Peter's Lutheran Church/School

July 16 - anticipated decision announced

As always, I welcome your thoughts and advice about the ministry here at Our Savior and where best I can serve in God's kingdom. More importantly, I treasure your prayers for me and my family.

-Pastor Ben Kratz

JAN LAKAS

Jan Lakas, a former member here at Our Savior, died this past week and received her crown of life. Please keep her family, and especially her husband, Joe, in your prayers.

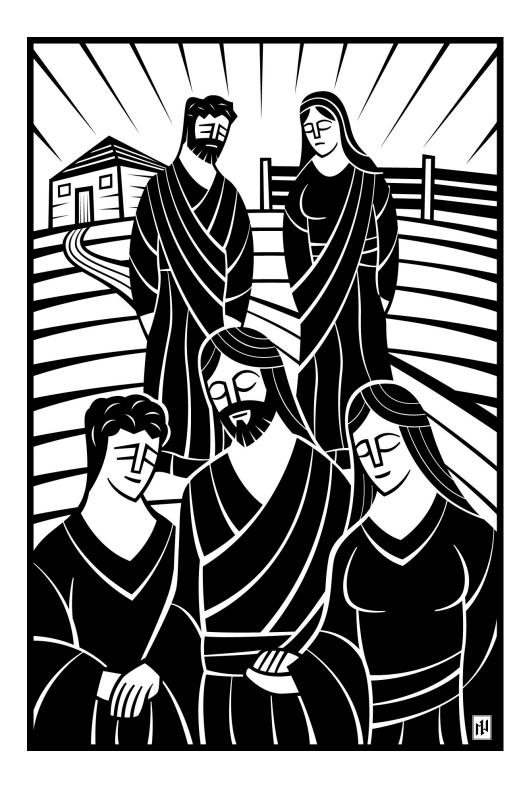
Acknowledgments

Setting Two from Christian Worship

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ABOUT US

OUR MISSION

Our Savior Lutheran Church was established in 1969 as a mission church in Birmingham, AL. Our mission is to worship God, to spread his Word to our community and to all nations, and to nurture all believers to prepare them for lives of Christian service.

OUR CONTACT INFORMATION

1074 Dunnavant Valley Road Birmingham, AL 35242 OurSaviorBirmingham.com

LET US KNOW YOU WERE HERE!



OUR MINISTRY

Sunday Worship: 10:15 am Sunday Online Worship: 10:15 am on Facebook and Youtube Bible Classes: held online and in-person throughout the year Our Savior's Kids Ministry: online year-round

OUR PASTOR

Pastor Ben Kratz Pastor@OurSaviorBirmingham.com (205) 478-6843

OUR CHURCH BODY

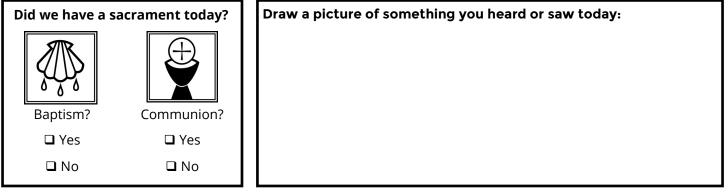
Our Savior Lutheran Church proclaims the truth about Jesus throughout the world as a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We have sister congregations serving the United States, Canada, Mexico, the

Caribbean, and over 25 countries through world missions. We are united in faith and teaching with the other churches of the Wisconsin Synod as wells as the churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).



Personal Worship Notes for Kids

What is the name of the church season or special day?								
What is the color of the church today? □ Blue □ White □ Purple □ Red □	Green							
The sermon was based on these Bible verses:								
What was the sermon about?								
My Favorite Song was:								



What did you learn about God today?

- 1) What did God tell you about himself?
- 2) What did God tell you about yourself?
- 3) What did God tell you to believe?
- 4) What did God tell you to do?



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