1 Corinthians 14:16-15:17 pt. 1

Charles Feinberg

Announcer:

This is new standard for living featuring the Bible teaching ministry of Dr. Charles L. Feinberg and produced by Lockman Bible ministry. This cassette contains three messages which are a part of Dr. Feinberg’s verse by verse study of the entire book of First Corinthians. The messages on this tape cover First Corinthians Chapter 14 Verse 16 through Chapter 15 verse 17. Incidentally printed study notes to accompany this tape are available free. By writing new standard for living post office box 5 9 9 9 Sunny Hills California 9 2 6 3 5. Our teacher Dr. Feinberg comes to us with a wealth of experience and education. Reared in an Orthodox Jewish home he trained to become a rabbi until his conversion to Christianity.

Dr. Feinberg has two earned doctorates one in theology from Dallas Theological Seminary and the second a PhD in archaeology and Semitic languages from Johns Hopkins University. He has had a distinguished teaching career including positions of full professor at both Dallas Theological Seminary and at Talbot Theological Seminary where he held the position of Dean. And today a building is named in his honor. He has pastored several churches and been a member of many Christian service organizations. In addition to these credentials Dr. Feinberg is a noted scholar and author and has participated in the translation of the New American Standard Bible. Now here is our teacher Dr. Charles L. Feinberg.
Friends as we come in our continued study of the first letter of Paul to the Corinthian church we're in the 14th chapter you'll remember chapters 12 to 14 constitute a single unit because they revolve around one theme and that is spiritual gifts not natural gifts not natural talents now but spiritual gifts gifts that have been given by the Spirit of God to certain men to accomplish the will of God in the body of Christ and for the testimony of the Word of God throughout the world. In the 12th chapter we had a definition of these gifts and what they are why they are important how they are to be interrelated how they are to form a harmonious unit. And to promote not division not controversy in the body of Christ but rather unity and harmony and concord. The 13th chapter gave us the inspired word concerning the atmosphere or the spirit or the attitude in which these gifts are to be exercised.

Now in the 14th chapter the gifts having been spoken of the attitude in which they are to be used. Having been spoken of. Now Paul comes in the 14th chapter to the very vital and climactic matter of what these gifts are meant to accomplish. And you remember those of you that have been with us in the study will remember that first of all the gift is to be exercised. The matter of speaking in a foreign language which one has not learned before this wonderful gift which was so needful in that day as the message began to go out beyond the bounds of Israel to people of many languages and many tongues and many forms of speech it was needful that there be someone to interpret. Therefore. The first safeguard is if there is such a thing as speaking in tongues there was in this early church and it's not gibberish. It's not some ecstatic speech. It is actual language. Therefore it must be interpreted and all of it is to be done in the second place that the church may receive edifying verse 5.
So we read, greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues unless he interprets so that the church may receive edifying you see the thrust of that verse friends. If a man speaks in a foreign tongue that he's never learned before a gift from God. But there is the interpretation. He interprets or someone else. Then the church is edified. And what do you have as the practical result just exactly what he says in verse three. The one who prophesies the one who preaches proclaims the truth of God expounds it speaks to men for edification. There is the word again building up structuring them nurturing them fortify them in the faith and exhorting them exhortation to put it into practice and Constellation there are times when it is needful to comfort and to console one who has been bereaved. Thus far we have gone through the fifteenth verse. What's the outcome then? I shall pray with us but I shall pray with the mind also there has to be both a combination of the supernatural. And the play of God upon the mind of the individual. I shall pray with the spirit. There's got to be understanding for there to be edifying.

So I'm going to pray with spirit I'm going to pray with the understanding I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also. And what a change that would make in so many of our church services especially in the area of the anthem we may see them singing very lustily very brilliantly very correctly as far as musicology is concerned they seem to be singing with a great spirit of gusto and great effort and great exaltation. But there's got to be singing with a mind also they've got to know what the words are and we have to appreciate what the words are also the words must be vocalized they must be syllabized we must understand what they are and then he shows why it's so needful that understanding be one of the correctives or one of the restraining forces otherwise, verse 16 First Corinthians 14.

If you bless in the spirit only how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the amen at your giving of thanks since he does not know what you're saying. What could be more
logical than that for you are giving thanks well enough? But the other man is not edified. In other words you may have great latitude when you are in prayer in praise in singing exercise of a gift when you were alone before God and you may receive much blessing from the Lord. But when you are in the public assembly remember the assembly is not just for the benefit of one it's not just for your elevation of spirit and your exaltation of heart. It is for all. We come together that all may be edified and so he says in verse 17. You're giving things well enough but the other man is not edified.

And so the question boils down to this how can anyone enter into your giving of thanks with intelligence. If he doesn't understand what you're saying I know some people go to church and they amen and amen and amen I remember the case where a man just interrupted Gypsy Smith's service sat in the front row and totally inappropriately was saying amen after every sentence that irked Gypsy Smith. So he looked down at the man and said my dear man do you pay your bills on time. And the man didn't say another amen for the rest of the service. We must say amen in the appropriate time and with knowledge amen is Lord. May that word may that prayer May that statement be verified. May it be confirmed may it be blessed of thee.

So how can anyone really enter into your giving of thanks knowledgeably if he does not comprehend what you're saying? If it has no meaning for him he can't agree with the sentiments you're expressing. There was a dear preacher he didn't have very much training but he wanted to make a show of knowledge and he was making a point and said now in the Hebrew and the Greek this would be. And then he stopped himself and said is anybody here. Know Hebrew or Greek and they all shook their heads from east to west. No. Well he said I'll go right ahead with my illustration. That is the opposite of what's indicated here. If the people don't know what you're speaking of and if you cannot interpret it.
If you cannot translate it please let it alone says Paul. I am not trying to keep you down to a very low plain. I'm not trying to make it appear that you know nothing about languages or that I'm against languages. I thank God I speak in tongues more than you all Paul says. I know more languages than any one of you it's not a boast but a statement of fact to lead up to his further argument. Verse 19 however in the church here it is in the church. What you do privately or with another individual is another matter. But however in the church I desire to speak five words with my mind that I may instruct others also rather than ten thousand words in a tongue or in a language. So his aim beloved was the proper one of edifying the church. I can't stress that too much because so many have used these passages for disruptive purposes for self-edification for self-glorification and promotion.

But Paul's aim must be the pervading one. It must never be deviated from please. This is not something that you and I at this late date are instituted. It is God's own prescription. Paul's aim then was the proper one of edify the church to do otherwise is selfish show and display. It does not honor God says Paul. Brethren do not be children in your thinking. Yet in evil be babes. But in your thinking be mature what do he mean by being not children. Do not be children in your thinking to desire gifts for purposes other than he indicates is selfish and childish. Just watch children. How even though they may have few abilities. Watch when they get together and begin to boast one over another. And I tell you it gets to the ultimate this one can do this. And then this one can do more. And there's nothing that they can't do. Don't be children in your thinking.

Don't be looking for selfish self-centered attention that's childish. But he says be babes when it comes to malice evil. In other words he urges them to have the kindly spirit of children toward one another. How easily they can forget a slight done to them. So if we treat these gifts in
a way other than indicated in Scripture Paul is saying in so many words you are acting like immature children. It's a sign not of maturity or greater advance or greater attainment in spiritual things but it is just the opposite. Don't be children. There to be showing off someone well said to us once when we've tried to get our children to behave. When some friends were visiting and they said well don't worry about it don't you know with children. If you try to show them off they will show you off. That's true. Have the kindly spirit of children toward one another. Not always there for ostentation display for being the drum major.

Write down the whole parade. Verse 21 in the law it's written by men of strange tongues and the lips of strangers. I will speak to this people and even so they will not listen to me says the Lord. Now says the apostle Paul from Isaiah the twenty eighth chapters and I wish. Those who try to instruct in this very important areas biblical area of spiritual gifts. I wish they would go back to this prophecy of Isaiah Paul himself does and he gives us the actual starting point for the whole matter of speaking in other languages. Isaiah 28 verses eleven. And following he shows from Isaiah how God had to reprove Israel. God was going to speak to them through gentiles. But even so this would not ensure definitely that they would be brought to Christ. Why is it brought here? Well it in a very real sense was anything but complimentary to Israel because if you read back there and Isaiah 28 he kept indicating to them in reproof that they were not heeding the Word of God. While they got tired of it.

They said Isaiah who do you think we are. Do you think we're babies just now weaned from the breast? Why here you keep telling us this you've sinned this you've sinned judgment is coming. And he says you keep telling it and repeating it until we are just nauseated. It's just a line upon line precept upon precept here a little there a little and in the Hebrew is very distinctive. [Inaudible] you just see how they were wrinkling up their noses and finding fault
with what he was saying. But he says Oh you don't like the way time I'm pronouncing this in the language that God has given you Hebrew. I'll tell you I'll speak to you by men of strange languages strange tongues the lips of strangers and you will see that that is an indication of judgment to you it is of God's mercy that he's allowing me to speak to you in a language that you know you should have heeded me in the language that you understand. Then when the Babylonians come along you don't understand their language their people a strange language and strange customs and strange ways and they will conquer you.

So you see God says men are spoken to especially Israel with strange languages when they are in unbelief. And that's why they have such a large place in the Book of Acts. Israel was in unbelief they had rejected their messiah you notice when our Lord Jesus spoke to them all through the Gospels Matthew Mark Luke and John when we have words concerning him. He did not speak to them in language they didn't understand he was speaking to them to draw out their faith but when they by unbelief had rejected then God says I have to speak to you in order that you may see the reality of this here you have confirmation you have attestation you have authentication of what I am saying and you will hear it from others as well. That's why at Pentecost there were godly men devout Jews from every nation practically under heaven and they spoke in languages that others could understand and that's why they were so surprised they said why they're talking our language where'd they ever learn that you say are you sure that's the purpose for which these languages were given well verse Twenty two says so.

So then tongues or languages foreign languages are for a sign not to those who believe but to unbelievers remember the context of Verse 21 in Isaiah 28. It was the one they were unbelieving laughing at Isaiah. So then tongues are for a sign not to those who believe but to unbelievers. Isn't that amazing how in our own day folk have twisted completely around and
think tongues are for believers No they're for unbelievers they're to be used and that's why I say it could well have place and may through years have had place on a foreign field. In the case of unbelievers though we have few if any indications of that in the reading that is available to us. But prophecy preaching for edification exhortation and for consultation or comfort of verse three of 1 Corinthians 14 prophecies for a sign not to unbelievers but to those who believe God has given us a clear line tongues are a mark of the Spirits working in power in the midst of unbelievers it's not for believers at all Pentecost is an illustration of this very thing.

Israel at that time it was one of their feasts remember Pentecost is the feast of weeks. And who were keeping that why Israel and they were in unbelief. So God said I'm going as it were to use a blockbuster. I'm going to do some remarkable thing as the Spirit of God comes and forms the body of Christ in the church. I am going to come with a gift of languages of all these people what would be a better place than in Jerusalem where they are all gathered and from all the scattered places and to show them that this message is from high Heaven it is authenticated by God so tongues are not for believers at all. We have the testimony of the word of God already. We don't need the actual authentication of tongues what do they add to us. Nothing. If therefore the whole church should assemble together and all speak in tongues and ungifted or unlearned men or unbelievers enter will they not say that you are mad. Exactly the reaction of the unsaved to this kind of performance today.

They say well you've just gone off your mind. Some are so blinded they think they're engaging in that which is highly spiritual but it doesn't bring any message to the unsaved at all. And that's what we're to be interested in the church. When the church comes together we are to see that people have a testimony and a united message from all of us. He goes on to say but if all prophesy and an unbeliever or ungifted man enters prophesy means speaking in the language
they know why an unbeliever comes in or ungifted man enters he is convicted by all he's called to account by all the secrets of his heart are disclosed and so he will fall on his face and worship God declared that God is certainly among you if the word of God is spoken in power then the unsaved are convicted and brought to God.

I never cease to thank God for what he was able to do through Charles Finney that dear man of God was so filled with the Spirit of God so gifted in preaching the word in our own country in our own language that they tell us that when his wagon his cart would come into a town reach the outskirts of the town hear it people throughout the city would fall down before God in conviction because he spoke the word in power then the unsaved are convicted and brought to God well look at examples today Moody marvelous man of God I shall never forget that article some years ago in Reader's Digest where the title was the man who robbed hell of a million souls he depopulated hell by a million souls Moody well did he speak in tongues foreign languages. Sunday Billy Sunday. What a message he had.

I remember the first year I was saved in nineteen hundred and thirty I heard him for a whole week in the state of Florida. My what power. There were some things that he conveyed to my heart that as I look at my preaching today there is an impress of the presentation he had of the gospel that Sunday never spoke in tongues. Billy Graham mightily used of God to this hour and we thank God for it for all these men did he speak in tongues. Did Torrey speak in tongues? No. Let us see if the word is spoken in power. Then the unsaved are convicted and brought to God. Don't think you've been robbed of something. Don't think you're less than spiritual. Don't think that you have missed out on something the unsaved when you preach in the power of the word of God will fall on his face and worship God declaring that God is certainly among you.
Now the apostle turns to the question of the practical use of the gifts in the congregation. What is to be the modus operandi what's to be the procedure? How are we to go about it? What are the outcome then brethren? What's the upshot of it all? He'd say. What's the bottom line? When you assemble. Each one has a psalm and this was a gifted church. Let's not forget it. Each one has a psalm has a teaching has a revelation has a tongue that's a language has an interpretation God gave it to them. Don't misunderstand. Tongue was real has an interpretation. Let all things be done. And wouldn't you know what it is for edification. The indication here is that the early believers felt a good deal of liberty in participating in a service they took part as they were moved by their feelings. Well that resulted in much confusion. There needed to be some order brought out as we're going to see even in the very last verse of First Corinthians 14 so let all could be done for edification. That's the principle that should dominate all their activities.

Now if you're not afraid to underline things in your Bible I wish that you would in your quiet time as you reread 1 Corinthians 14 I wish you would go through this 14th chapter and underline every use of the word edify as a noun or as a verb. Here is another one. Let it be done for edification then verse twenty seven and eight. If anyone speaks in a tongue. Suppose God does give as he did then. Suppose God gives it in some faraway area a gift in a very needy area. If anyone speaks in a tongue and was needed there in Corinth it should be by two or at the most three and each in turn let each one do it in turn and let one interpret. Let's not just have the first part of it two or three and forget about it not two or three all at one time no in turn be graciously Christian about it wait awhile and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter as soon as a man begins speaking in a strange language. Stop and say is there anyone who understands what he is saying. If there is no interpreter
No I'm not saying it. Here it is. Let him keep silent in the church and let him speak to himself and to God what he says between him and God is his own affair. Now the rules are sufficiently clear there not to be deviated from. I asked a young man who said that such use of gifts went on in his church. I said very fine. Are they done in the scriptural way? So what do you mean? I said are there at the most. Three two are the most three and they take turns and there's someone to interpret. Always said Of course not we can't go according to that he says that would put the whole thing out of commission. I say well then you better leave it out of commission then you better drop the whole affair do it biblically or don't do it at all. Someone has well said it’s plain that even if one has such a gift if he couldn't interpret he's got to remain silent in the church.

It shows that a tongue is a definite language we insist on that it might be interpreted if another understood it so that all can understand and be edified. There is not to be a large number participating in one service it's distracting and let two or three prophets speak and let the others pass judgment. The number taking part is important because he repeats it once more. You see let two or three prophets who are speaking as in verse three. So let the others do what. Pass judgment let them pass discerning evaluation. Let them judge all that is said by the standard of the Word of God. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated let the first keep silent they had to wait one upon the other. In other words all is to be done in an orderly fashion. We have a God who is not a god of confusion or of disorder or of disarray but we have a God of orderliness. Notice the first thing God did in the first chapter of Genesis is to bring light out of darkness. God wanted order.

He didn't want light and darkness comingled. He wanted them to be separated. There's got to be order. If you don't have order in your home there's going to be havoc. There's going to
be chaos if there's not order in your place of business nothing will be done with the efficiency that the work requires. If there's not order in the church God is not going to be magnified. Souls are not going to be blessed the way they should be friends. God treats us as intelligent human beings. He wants us to have the benefit of his supernatural working but he wants it done not our way but his way. Let's take heed. Friends let's thank God for His gifts and let's use them in the way he's indicated.

Announcer:

Dr. Feinberg's next talk in this series from First Corinthians will begin in just a few moments. In the meantime I'd like to remind you that free printed study notes for this series and a catalogue of other Bible cassette tapes are available free by writing to new standard for living post office box 5 9 9 9 Sunny Hills California 9 2 6 3 5. Now once again here is Dr. Feinberg with his next study in this verse by verse series from First Corinthians.

Feinberg:

We have been in the study of First Corinthians 14. As you know if you've been listening in. If you are a new listener. We welcome you in the name of our Lord Jesus and pray that the broadcast may be a blessing to you and that you may become a regular listener. Every day Monday through Friday to this broadcast the new standard for living. We are in first Corinthians 14 on the matter of the use of spiritual gifts in the church. Verse 31 reads for you can all prophesy one by one so that all may learn and all may be exhorted and the spirits of profits are
subject to profits for God is not a god of confusion but a peace as in all the churches of the saints
is to be one by one as so clearly indicated not more than three in the meeting.

Well what does verse 32 tell us this but it's a prophecy such as prophets? Suppose
someone says the Lord has given me a gift and I must speak out. Paul answers such a word by
stating that the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets that are there to control
themselves. Remember the incident told of G Campbell Morgan who was preaching in our
country and somewhere along in his message a lady got up and began to exhort the congregation
began to speak. He said lady sit down. She said I have something to say. He said lady sit down
she said I must say it. She said I must say it and I will say it. I can't keep from saying it. He said
my dear lady do you want to know the scriptures say the spirit of the prophets is subject to the
prophets. Sit down and he was right. Absolutely right.

The spirits of the prophets are subject the prophets they are to control themselves. This
means friends that you can't say well I said so and so and so and so but I was just carried away.
That doesn't mean that you were carried away by the Spirit of God. You are carried away by
your own spirit because you are to be under the control of your spirit. Any man or woman, hear
it who is under the control of the Spirit of God is under control of his own spirit well you say
how can that be? God. The Holy Spirit can do that very thing. And he says so the spirits of
prophets are subject to prophets. Why. Verse 33 for God is not a god of confusion but of peace
as in all the churches of the saints. He is never God I repeat is never the author of confusion but
of peace and order. If your church is suffering from Division. If there is a schism in the church. If
there is strife if there is envy. If there is disorder you can be sure that that is not of God. But you
say we are on a very spiritual issue we're on a doctoral issue and so on.
Yes that can be true but let it be done without confusion. Let it be done with love. Let it be done with wisdom. Paul tells the Ephesian believers be true thing in love speak the truth in love truth in love. Too many people speak the truth in anything but love. So here verse 33 God is not a god of confusion but of peace as in all the churches the Saints. Oh how I wish folk would put that up as a motto in their homes and elsewhere before their own hearts 1 Corinthians 14:33 remember God is not. The one who authorizes or is the source or origin of confusion he is the origin of peace and that's something the world doesn't know anything about. They know something about everything else but not about peace. Peace such as comes from God alone. As in all the churches of the saints. And remember friends this is not only an encouragement but it can also be a rebuke because if there is not peace in the Church of the Saints there's something wrong. Then he goes on let the women keep silent in the churches.

Why does he bring this in? Well because if order is not maintain along this line as well then there's going to be confusion. And remember in the early church as in some Orthodox Jewish assemblies today Orthodox assemblies are congregations in Judaism not in Christianity. Women are in another area of the assembly. They are usually in the gallery beautifully appointed gallery and they can hear the service and all and the men are on the first floor not because the men are better than the women not at all. And even in some places in the near east today in the Middle East they do have men and women on the same floor but with a partition. Let the women keep silent in the churches for they're not permitted to speak but let them subject themselves just as the law also says.

Now what does this mean? This does not mean that women are never to speak in church. Some folk hold such a terribly strict line that with them a lady even leaving a church can scarcely say Pastor. I was blessed by your message. She is never to speak in church. That's altogether
wrong. That is so extreme that even common sense will tell us that cannot be the biblical meaning when it says let the women keep silent in the churches. This portion has nothing to do with the subject of Chapter Eleven where the subject is women praying or prophesying in some other place. The reference here is to the official meeting of the church when all are gathered together as a worshipping company. Suppose there's something that the wife doesn't understand. And she somewhat loudly begins to ask her husband. My dear husband what is it what do you mean by that. Or what's the meaning of the other. That causes only confusion. And it's in that respect that he means it. And what does he mean by as the law also says.

Probably Genesis 3:16 where women will ask their husbands certain things but let them ask it in a proper way and in a proper place and it's for learning something verse thirty five shows it. And if they desire to learn anything let them ask their own husbands at home for it's improper for a woman to speak in church. In that context. That doesn't exclude those who are not married. They can ask the men of their home as well as the married women. There was to be no confusion or interruption of the public service. Today sadly enough we have to be honest about it. These conditions are exactly reversed. Too often the husband has to ask the wife what he doesn't understand in church. In those days few women had the opportunity in the midst of slavery and general lower level of education.

They were certainly deprived of that which probably belonged to them. They were not able to learn to read or write and there would be some things since they didn't give themselves to training and to study as men do. They would ask their husbands. Now it's not improper for a woman to ask her husband at home. It wouldn't be improper for a woman to ask her husband even in church if they are seated close to each other and she does so quietly. But that shouldn't be an extended thing because it can interrupt others. And remember when you and I get to church.
We're not the only ones worshipping. There are other people too. One thing that has bothered me a great deal is that our churches today knowledgeably and wisely I believe have nurseries. I think that's a wonderful provision. We have used it with our children. We've used it with our grandchildren. It's a wonderful provision but some people are absolutely determined that they are going to keep their children with them. And so they spend the whole time trying to quiet that child and nobody around them can worship.

And even if the one is quiet they hold the baby up or the child in such a way that it's facing not the mother but facing the row behind them and the child begins all kinds of gyrations and all kinds of acts. You tell me how you can worship that way that's wrong friends. But I have to have my child in church. Okay then do it the right way. Don't rob another individual of worship privilege. It's something that some of us look forward to all through the week. And it's as if we've missed our meals. If we don't go to church. That's part of our life. We have to have that spiritual food as well as anything suffer that word of exhortation mother. But don't leave your children at home. There's a way to bring them. But be sure that they do not interrupt the service for someone else. Now that's just an aside and I'm sure you'll understand that that's all free and no extra charge for it if they desire to learn anything. Let them ask their own husbands at home.

For it is improper for a woman to speak in church verse 36. Was it from you that the Word of God first went forth or has it come to you? Only. Are you the origin or the seat of authority? Are you the be all and end all? Are your number one on the totem pole as we'd say you're not the origin or seat of authority and a lot of people read these passages in first Corinthians this passage the 11th chapter and other chapters and they say who does Paul think he is to tell me some folk say does he pay into this church. Is he a regular member in good standing
in this church? Let's not talk that way. It's not Paul speaking. It's God. And if you resist the word of God then question yourself in your quiet time. Was it from you the word of God first went for or has it come to you? Only you're not the origin or the seat of authority and you are not the goal of all Scripture. You're not the only goal. The goal of all Scripture is everyone you're to do what the word of God bids you to do it's not yours to decide what you'll follow and what you will refuse to obey because in the final analysis then you are the authority.

If this suits you you'll do it. And if you don't you will not do it. Too many people I've said many times too many people I'm sorry to say treat the Bible like a cafeteria line. I want some of this book and I don't want that. I'll read Exodus all the way up to the 24th chapter. But after that you can have it. I don't want all that about the Tabernacle and Leviticus excuse me if I absent myself. I'm not interested in those offerings. I don't care about those feasts of the Lord Well it's quite a bit you don't care about now. No no you need a rounded meal. You'll need all of it. Don't take only parts of it because then you are the one even though you claim all of it's the word of God you're treating some of it as though it's not the word of God. And God is not mocked. God is not fooled. God cannot be made to accept that kind of worship was it from you that the word of God first went forth.

No this word of God was in existence before we ever came into it and it came from God himself. Now the word of God was not first uttered by us not by a long way or has it come to you only. No it belongs to all. So we're not the origin we're not the seat of authority and we're not the only goal. We are the goal of the Scriptures insofar as we are concerned but that doesn't mean that others don't have the scripture belong to them as well as others. Everyone else in the world has a right to have the scripture God wants them to have that. I often have told my classes remember men don't become so aerolite and scholarly that no one can understand what you're
talking about because the Bible wasn't given just for theologian’s preachers or missionaries. The Bible was given for everybody. And everybody ought to know.

Announcer:

The remainder of this talk is on the other side of this God said please stop your cassette-

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