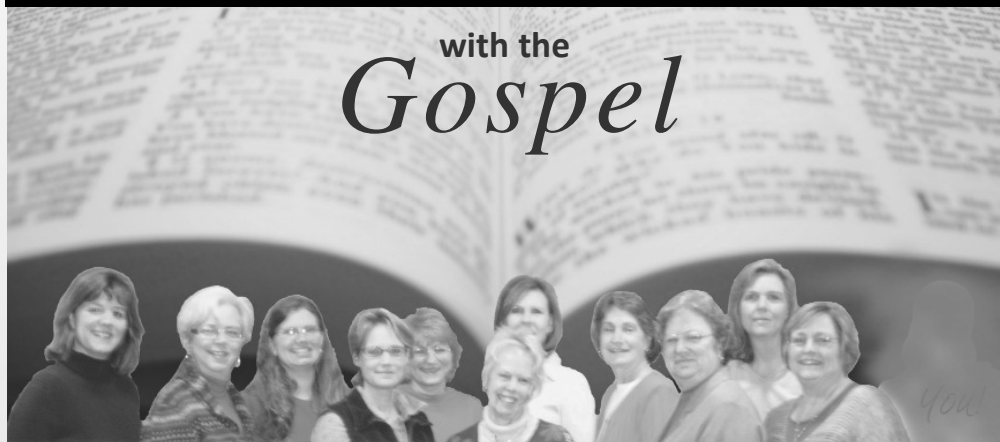


PCA *Women's Ministry* RESOURCE Quarterly

Christian Education and Publications

Bridging the Generation Gap





Introduction


This Resource Quarterly begins a discussion on intergenerational relationships. **CEP, in its ministry to women in leadership, wants to ratchet up this discussion around the gospel of Jesus Christ; to help encourage you to value and affirm the gifts of all your women.**

In a two-part dialogue, Ashley Hall, Director of Women's Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, Mississippi, draws from a seminar she presented at CEP's 2009 Women's Leadership Training Conference.

Don't miss the article on pages 6-7 from Christ Covenant PCA in Matthews, North Carolina. This is a local women's ministry that is working to build intergenerational relationships that reflect the gospel.

 Use these articles as a discussion tool among your leadership team, both locally and in your PresWIC.

 Pray over the things that divide the family of God. Pray for great expectations as the gospel is lived out in our relationships.

 Repent as needed, plead for Christlikeness to govern relationships, and begin building!

GREAT EXPECTATIONS AND GOSPEL REALITIES — PART I

Getting to the Heart of Intergenerational Relationships

In this first issue, Ashley, would you start with the question of why a discussion about intergenerational relationships is needed and set the context for the more specific questions to follow in the next issue?



At twenty-three, almost turning twenty-four, I was interviewed and hired for the position of women's ministry director. Upon beginning my job, I came face to face with the question of what does it look like to have gospel friendships with ladies who are much older than I—friendships that tug both ways, friendships that allowed me to try to minister to them, while then leaning on them to help me grow up in all of the other areas of life? Furthermore, how could I get the younger generation of women to begin being involved and committed to our women's ministry in such a way that brought older and younger into the same room, serving God for His glory, and building friendships with one another. After all, we need one another...but do we really understand one another? A discussion about these relationships is needed because at the outset, we do not understand one another.

When we attempt intergenerational relationships, we often feel the tug of many tensions, varying viewpoints, and differing expectations. Some of the tensions we can attempt to understand, others can cause the other side to have insecurities and frustrations. Getting to the heart of the assumptions and expectations that both the older and the younger have for what relationships and ministry should and needs to look like was my starting place and is now our starting place for this discussion. I desired to understand their hearts and saw this as fundamental if I was going to win them over to a young one. So to that end, I hope to provide a bit of fodder to help readers begin this thinking and dialogue process in their own churches. Let's begin by delving into my generation . . . Generation Me.

Great Expectations of Generation Me: Today's under 40 generation (born in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s) is known as Generation Me. In contrast to the Boomers, this generation has never known a

world that put duty before self. Whitney Houston's No. 1 hit in 1985 summarized it all—"The Greatest Love of All" is loving yourself. Elementary school teachers saw their most important job as helping kids feel good about themselves. Coloring books with the title *We Are All Special* dominated, and you got a sticker just for filling out your worksheet. It is quite typical for a sixth grade project to be called "All About Me." The individual has always come first, and feeling good about yourself has always been a primary virtue.

Generation Me's expectations are highly *optimistic*: they expect to go to college, to make lots of money, and perhaps even to be famous. Yet this generation enters a world in which college admissions are increasingly competitive, good jobs are hard to find and harder to keep, and basic necessities like housing and health care have skyrocketed in price. This is a time of soaring expectations and crushing realities. Generation Me is not self-absorbed, they are *self-important*. They take it for granted that they are independent, social individuals, so they don't really think about it. On the positive side, as long as time spent volunteering does not conflict with other goals, Generation Me finds fulfillment *in helping others*. They want to *make a difference*. But, they want to do it their own way. Generation Me is driven by a *longing for relationship*, yet quite often, they do not know what healthy relationships really should look like. They long *to be known*; hence they share their lives openly on Facebook, via text messages, and through tweets. But what they did not expect was that even though they have hundreds of friends on Facebook, they still feel lonely; and they still don't really know how to make relationships work in the hallway of church with people they don't know. Positively, Generation Me *wants to serve*. They are far more likely to sign up for a service or missions project than they are to come to a lunch. They have a desire for *depth of biblical teaching* and content in their Bible study and discussions that truly engage the Bible. This generation, though they may have some lofty expectations, genuinely wants to be *part of the church*... Welcome to Generation Me!¹

Great Expectations of the Boomers: Classical evangelicalism is what took shape following World War II. What stood out and what still does, is the commitment that Boomers have to *doctrinal*

soundness. A commitment to right doctrine and theology was a pendulum swing from what had occurred in the 1920s (and in the 1970s for our denomination)—a move towards liberalism. The liberals declared that Christianity was about deeds, not creeds—life, not doctrine. The conservative opponents were the ones who said, “wait a minute, it’s about both deeds and creeds—it’s about doctrine and life.”

Boomers have a *great sense of duty*, which is something that Generation Me lacks and which puzzles and at times can frustrate the Boomers. The things that Boomers consider to be duty will be attended to and taken care of, which makes them very reliable within the church ministries. Boomers also have a *sense of accomplishment*. What they have worked for and towards over the course of many years are very significant and important to the Boomers. It can be easy for them to feel like the new ideas of the young ones means that the way that they have done things is wrong and that their sacrifice and accomplishment no longer matters. Likely if I polled the Boomer Generation readers, you would tell me that you know the *value of a solid, biblical program* and the power that it has to affect our daily living. When the Boomers and the generations above them hear of a problem in the church, often times the answer is more teaching, more content, plan a program, or have a retreat. Boomers, you see, value the *some of the parts as greater than the sum of the individual*.

You can already feel the tensions that will be present when you match a Boomer with Generation Me in thinking through ministry ideas! Generation Me’s individualism is difficult for the Boomer to understand, for they have seen important growth within the body and within community. Shared ideas, many hands, and group thinking are how they have known to form community and build commitment to ministry. Of course these ways are good. All are used by God and all instruct, encourage, equip, and edify His people. But, Generation Me will counter that programs do not automatically mean that the “life” and “growth” part of the equation is happening. And that’s where Generation Me comes in and takes on the other side of the equation with full-force.

Gospel Realities: The first reality that we find in every church is that the pews are filled with both age groups. God has designed our church bodies so that we cannot escape the tensions! Our women’s ministries are comprised of Boomers and Generation Me... and the two have to come together to do ministry!

How does the gospel speak to these very different viewpoints and help us to relate to one another?

The posture for intergenerational relationships and ministry involves sacrificial love and humility. Jesus lived a life of humility and sacrificial love. “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:3-7). Paul’s answer to people who are desirous to pursue their own way and to achieve the goals they think are important, is to consider Christ. Women in ministry, mothers with daughters, ladies young and old, do we see this desire in ourselves—to pursue our own way and achieve the goals that we think are important? Consider the Son of God who laid aside everything that He had and took on the form of a servant, a *dulos*, a slave, for our sakes. There isn’t a quadrant of life that Christ didn’t enter into for our sakes to serve us. His life was not about Himself, His agenda, or His rights...though, He above all earthly powers, had genuine access to those rights. Christ counted us as more important than Himself—for us, sinners, Christ laid aside glory to come to this earth to save us. This is the gospel. “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The gospel calls us to die for one another joyfully and willingly. This laying down of our lives for others comes with a call to mortify the temptation to demand that we be related to in the way that we want or the way that we think is best. Sacrificial love seeks to reach out and relate to another generation according to what they need, without insisting upon your own rights.

In intergenerational ministry, there is a tendency for both sides to want to do things “their way.” The gospel says that this is not an option. If you love the younger girls, you are willing to die for them. Younger ladies, if you love the older, you must be willing to step toward them rather than insisting that they change their ways first. We are to be like Christ, to do what He did. Are you willing to lay aside your agendas for your churches, for your women’s ministries, for relationships with other generations, taking on the humble posture of a slave and a servant? In humility and weakness and out of the great love that He demonstrates to us, will you go and do likewise, considering others as better than yourself? Can we set aside our own needs and desires for the sake of another? Is this our posture—humble and sacrificial—with the younger women, with the older ladies?

¹ Some excerpts taken from *Generation Me* by Jean M. Twinge.

A PICTORIAL TASTE OF THE *Presbyterian Church*

Even though many of you are not able to attend a General Assembly of your denomination, what happens there is important to the life and ministry of your local church.



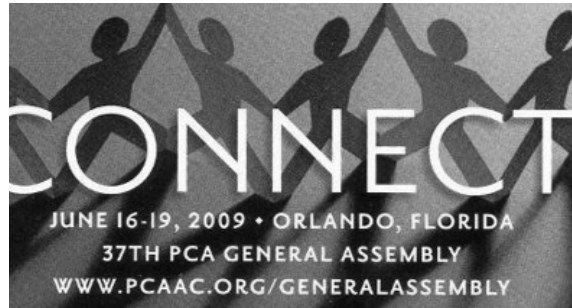
PCA 37th General Assembly in session: Stated Clerk Roy Taylor, Parliamentarians, John White and Sam Duncan, and Moderator Brad Bradley



Love those smiles! RUM coordinator Rod Mays and wife Debbe



Administrative Committee serving . . . behind the scenes



Thank you volunteers!



WASC member Chandra Oliver led the first of several women's seminars



Jane Patete with Dr. Paul Tripp at the women's program

37TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Presbyterian Church



Kudos to Covenant College for overseeing the seminars for the week. Thanks Niel and Kathleen!



An evening forum with Ligon Duncan and Tim Keller



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Women: So You are Disappointed. Now What? Paul Tripp

Loving Your Husband and His Calling to Lead . . . Sally Gleason

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Debbe Mays and Mary Beth McGreevy

What Every Pastor Wishes the Women in His Church Knew . . .

Carol Arnold



Part of the 400 women who enjoyed brunch and program with Dr. Paul Tripp.

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INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS...



Crossing the Great Divide

be completed next year, at a cost of more than \$110 million. The 1900 foot long suspension bridge will be supported by the longest concrete arch in the country. But when it's finished, Arizonans will cross over to Nevada without the long, narrow, winding roadway built in 1936. And Nevadans will pass them going the other way. *

I know it may seem strange to be discussing geology in this publication, and I admit that it is a little unconventional. But as I read the story, it gave me hope for a vision that has long been lingering in the hearts and minds of our leadership.

In my mind's eye, another bridge is being built. It is taking a long time. It is costly and requires a strong, solid support system. But some day, people from one side will cross to the other; and they will joyfully pass one another on the way.

There are mountain ranges on both sides. On the one side stands the generation of women over 40: strong, steady, solid, and secure. Their families are grown. Their careers established. Their homes paid for. On the other side stands the generation of women younger than 40: passionate, purposeful, personable, and powerful. Their friendships are diverse. Their careers are a priority. Their energy is boundless. And between these two mountain ranges flows a river of misunderstanding. Sometimes the river flows at a trickling pace. During other seasons it rages by, carried along by an alarming current. Historically, traveling from one side to the other has seemed tedious and time consuming and, perhaps, hardly worth it.

But I'm so grateful that we're beginning construction of the bridge. We're seeing signs that women are anxious to cross, hopeful that going from one side to the other will be safe. And they are beginning to believe that the travel will be worth the effort.

Paul was *right*. Older women have something to offer their younger sisters, and those younger sisters bring their own value to the lives of their seasoned friends. Our vision is for women to grow in their understanding of the covenant family and specifically in their appreciation for the experience of their sisters. We really believe that God has given us to one another

Susan Shepherd
Director of Women's Ministries
Christ Covenant PCA
Matthews, North Carolina



The Great Divide. I looked it up on *Webster's Web Dictionary* and here's what I learned. "The Great Divide is the name given to the principal, and largely mountainous, hydrological divide of the Americas that separates the watersheds that drain into the Pacific Ocean from those river systems which drain into the Atlantic Ocean." Unfortunately, I am geologically challenged and have no idea what that means...except that it's a bunch of mountains with water running among them that separate that water from other water. Clear?

Arizona and Nevada are building a bridge to cross their piece of the Great Divide. What began more than four years ago will

as a gift. The bridge was His idea. Solomon described it this way: “Two are better than one... if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.” Who better to “help up” a younger woman than one who has fallen in just that same spot?

Three strategic elements comprise the “concrete arch” in the bridge that God is building across the divide between the women in our church.

The deep and serious study of His Word together. We are investing in the lives of women by inviting older to disciple younger in a regular, structured ministry built on the personal and corporate study of Scripture.

Creating natural opportunities for women to “find one another” relationally. Manufactured relationships rarely last. We’re looking for ways to help women discover women, older and younger, who are “like-minded,” around interests, around issues, and around needs.

Encouraging meaningful dialog that leads to understanding. We’re talking a lot about the divide and the bridge that is desperately needed. We’re giving women language to help them understand one another, and we’re working hard to bring clarity to their assumptions and expectations.

Practically, we’ve built a team that represents every season and situation in the lives of our women. We have grown to enjoy and appreciate one another, and we’ve gained so much from each other’s experience and perspective. We’re prayerful on this team that our relationships are a model for women who are hesitating to make their way across the bridge.

We’ve been there.

..... And the view?

..... Breathtaking.



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Women's Leadership Training

February 25-27
Marriott Atlanta Hotel

Pastor and Teacher Jerram Barrs

go online to register
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or call
1-800-283-1357

* New York Times Magazine, June 9, 2009

TRAINING and RESOURCES

Directors of Women's Ministries Retreat

CEP, aware of the growing number and significant leadership role of Directors of Women's Ministries in local PCA churches, continues to provide a defined fellowship aimed at equipping full-time or part-time paid staff women in a local church for ministries that unite with an overall Christian education and discipleship focus. The annual Directors of Women's Ministries Retreat centers on:

- Equipping for Word-centered curricula selection, design and focus
- Beneficial peer relationships
- Spiritual refreshment
- Denominational context
- Informed discussions on key ministry issues

The 2009 retreat took place August 3-5 at the Omni Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia. Nate Shurden, teaching elder at First



Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi, challenged us to let the gospel reorient priorities and motivations, to live out the gospel before our women at the heart level, to *get to the heart of the matter!*

Due to a scheduling change, the numbers were smaller than usual but fellowship abounded! A smaller group led to robust discussions that helped apply the gospel to people's life situations, strengthened peer connections, and brought personal refreshment and equipping tools for ministry.

Time to study your Bible with CEP Resources



Perimeter women going over resources

Representatives of the Women's Ministry Tuesday Morning Bible Study at Perimeter PCA are hard at work at the CEP Bookstore choosing their fall study. Have you found yours?

CURRICULA EVALUATION—Some new, Some tried and true

Getting Today's Teen Ready for Tomorrow

Who is teaching our teen girls what it means to be a woman—the church or the culture?

CEP's discipleship curriculum for girls will help the church to speak biblically and boldly to the issue of womanhood. This 3-year curriculum from author Susan Hunt (*Spiritual Mothering, True Woman*) is available for teen girls.



A Leader's Guide is offered for each year.

Visit www.pcencep.org/wicteenstudy for more details and samples.

* A PRE-TEEN edition of Year 1 is also available

CEP is happy to announce **six new** or updated studies being offered this year.



OLD TESTAMENT –
Job: Lessons in Comfort by Frankie Bennett (See the review in the last *Equip* or online at www.pcencep.org.)

heart of His teaching. Twelve lessons with study guide.

Miracles of Christ by Jim Bland (Coordinator of MNA). A fun and helpful study of twelve of Jesus' miracles written in workbook format.



TOPICAL –
A Woman Looks at the Confession of Faith by Jeanne Patterson. Here are twenty-three lessons that will help your group work through the truths on which our PCA denomination stands. *Available Fall 2009.*

NEW TESTAMENT –
The Sermon on the Mount: Living Life as Jesus Taught It by Gordon Reed. Reed considers Matthew 5-7 to be perhaps the most important part of the Bible because here we see Jesus and hear the



James: An Inductive Bible Study by Deb Sink. Twelve lessons dealing with what was the first New Testament letter, written to Christians having a difficult time with their new lives in Christ. A free Leader's Guide is available at www.cepbookstore.com. *Available Fall 2009.*

Seasons of Change, Seasons of Grace by Georgia Settle. We live in an age where people claim they want change, but change is hard. Georgia helps women navigate through twelve changes we can expect in life. A free Leader's Guide is available at www.cepbookstore.com.



See the Three Year Curriculum available online at www.pcencep.org/resources/3yearcurriculum.htm for additional help as your church plans for spiritual and discipleship growth **800.283.1357** or visit **www.cepbookstore.com**

THIRD & FOURTH QUARTERS 2009

Most ministry budgets have been tightened over the last couple of years. These activities and events below demonstrate stewardship of finances and time by women in churches around the PCA; ideas that you can adapt and use in your church's ministry.

"Making Tough Ministry Choices in Hard Financial Times" was one of the group discussions during the recent **Director of Women's Ministries Retreat** led by Becky Canerday, DOWM of Trinity PC in Montgomery, AL. These five points will help you to plan well for your ministry financially.

1. Prioritize. What fits in with the church's mission? These activities are the ones to consider. Make a list of qualifications an event must have in order for your ministry monies to fund it. Be firm: sometimes the answer to an event request has to be "no."

2. Set a budget and communicate it with the person you have asked to be in charge of an event. Remember, in this troubled economy, many hotels are making the effort to

make events truly affordable. Don't hesitate to approach hotel event managers with the possibility of using their facilities for your event.

3. Allow many the privilege of participating. Many women are very happy to donate an item for an event (a plate of food, napkins, etc.).

4. Simplify. Meet in homes instead of going out; use church members as retreat speakers; stay at church for a day retreat rather than going off-site. Added to the financial benefit of these activities is the building of relationships that occurs as your women get to know each other better.

5. Scholarships: Pursue people to use them.

Trinity PC, Asheville, NC, has a ministry to those who are unable to attend church functions but long for Christian fellowship. The women's ministry keeps a stocked *Traveling Tea* basket available for anyone to check out and take for a visit to one of the church's homebound members. Women are encouraged to incorporate this into their schedule without adding another activity. If women are having coffee with a friend, they may take coffee or the Traveling Tea basket or lunch to the home of a shut-in; a mother and daughter may use this as a chance to minister together while having "girl time;" moms can stop by with their children for a quick visit on the way home from the playground, etc.

"Mocha Mornings: A Series of Gospel Coffee Talks" at **First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS,** are planned around morning carpool time to make it convenient to drop off the children at school and come; however, all ages and stations in life are welcome. The talks focus on day-to-day issues women encounter and ask how the gospel affects the Christian's view and understanding of each topic. Three talks are offered in January with fellowship starting at 7:45. The talk and following discussion is from 8:00-9:15.

"Tuesday Morning Tea with the WIC" consisted of three "mini-meetings" over the summer. These fun and relaxing events allowed the women in **Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, AL,** to reconnect once a month during the

busy summer season. While enjoying fellowship over a glass of iced tea, a short devotion was given. Different ladies then shared, demonstrated, or instructed on various topics.

"Sizzlin' Summer Reads" included favorite summer reads for women, children, and grandchildren. Ideas for quick, easy, and fun "Simple Summer Centerpieces" were presented; and "Super Summer Suppers" featured menu ideas and demonstrations of suppers for summertime that could also be enjoyed in the fall. The sessions were well attended by a completely different group of ladies each time!

The women at **The Kirk of the Hills, St. Louis, MO,** are mindful of the sacrifices and hard work that comes with full-time ministry. So each year, the ladies plan a few days to show their appreciation to the Kirk staff. Over the years *Staff Appreciation Week* has had a varied appearance: an afternoon dessert buffet, a Friday pizza lunch, bags of treats to be kept in a desk drawer and enjoyed over time, and the like. One year, the ladies even brought in a massage therapist and the staff enjoyed 15-minute neck massages. (This was in better financial times!) But one thing that has always been given to the staff during Staff Appreciation Week is a personal, handwritten note. These notes have been written by different ladies in the church who have chosen the specific staff member to whom they want to say something such as, "I thank God for you and appreciate what He's done through you to bless our church." It's been a great tradition at the Kirk.

To Ann Hackenberg is the wife of a ruling elder at Plains Presbyterian Church, Zachary, LA. Here is why she loves the AC.

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH 2009 LOVE GIFT

PCA ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (AC)

When I first learned my husband, Ed, was to serve on a PCA denominational committee, I was so proud of him. When I found out it was the Administrative Committee, I confess that I thought, ‘This will be, as the old saying goes, **dull as dishwater!**’ Over the years I have discovered that serving on the AC is **definitely not dull.**

Why did I think so? —The AC is:

OUR DOT CONNECTOR — Connecting PCA people, churches, and ministries, enabling them to see the big picture as they collaborate in kingdom work.

OUR DEFENDER — Representing the denomination in all legal matters, including those dreaded civil law suits.

OUR DATABASE — Daily dispensing information to individual members, churches, presbyteries, and the public at large on dozens of issues, questions, needs, and requests.

OUR DEMOGRAPHER — Compiling and publishing vital statistics and standards of our denomination and preserving all historical material.

OUR DOOR OPENER — Like Samuel in 1 Samuel 3, who had a grand vision of God’s kingdom work yet humbly went about his duty opening the door of the temple, those who serve on the Administrative Committee go about the diverse and detailed tasks necessary to keep the entire PCA’s household running smoothly.

In the 12 years my husband has served on this committee, **there’s never been a dull moment.**

Help the AC serve you better!

Your 2009 Love Gift will enable the Administrative Committee to serve you more effectively and strengthen the PCA in several areas.

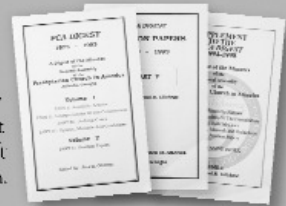


DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

Many of the useful official publications produced in the past by the Administrative Committee cannot be conveniently accessed. Your Love Gift will help by making them available in searchable digital form.

NEW PCA DIGEST

The Digest, a handy reference guide, is a valuable aid to our church leaders and members wanting to know more about PCA positions on different issues, but it has not been updated for ten years. Your Love Gift will help to produce a new edition.



HISTORICAL CENTER IMPROVEMENTS

The Historical Center helps us and our children know how God has worked in the past and so equips us better for ministry in our day. Your Love Gift will help by providing funds for new shelving, furniture, and updated technology to care for the valuable historical records that have been entrusted to us.

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