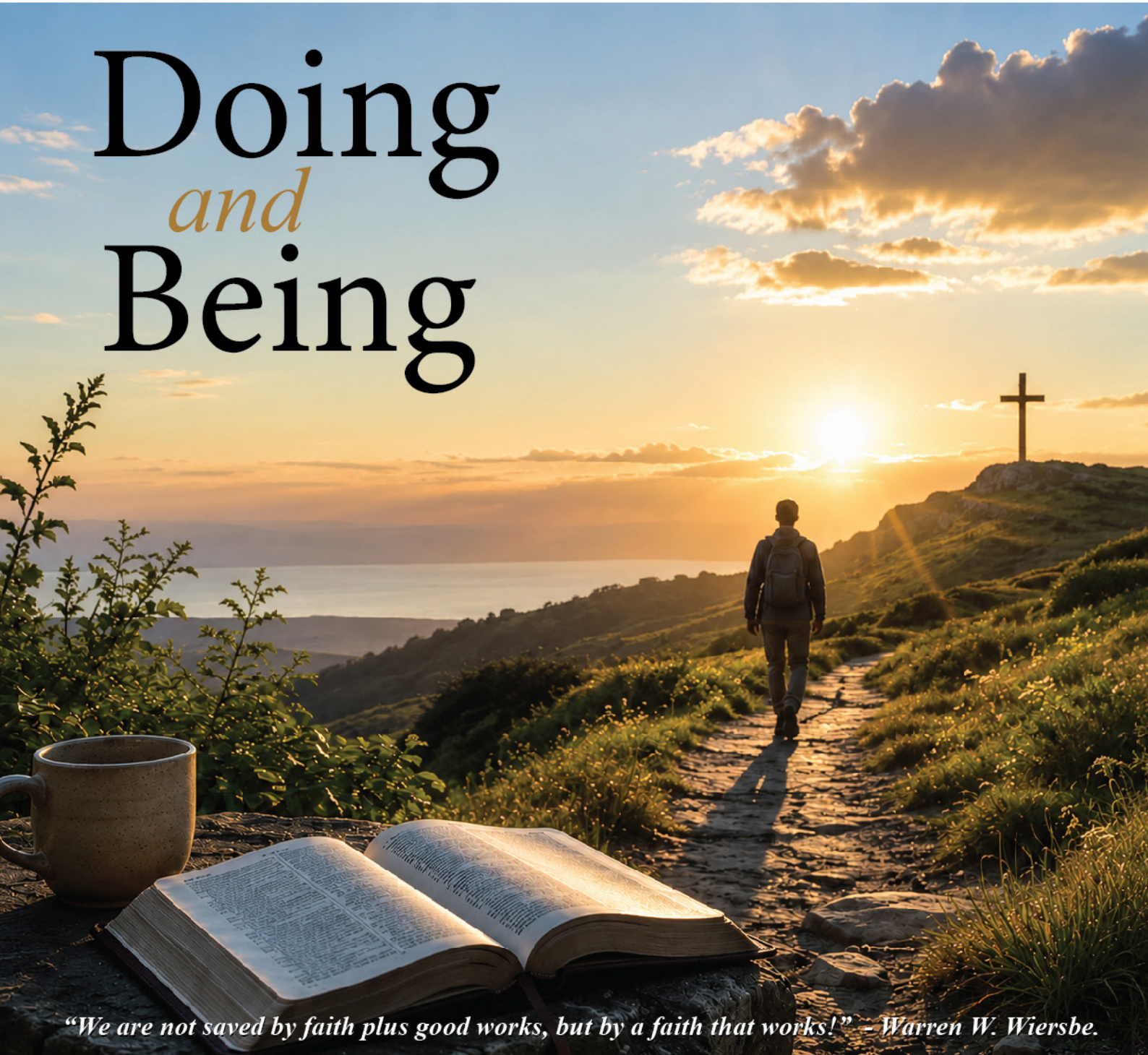


The Herald

· OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH OF SRI LANKA ·

Doing *and* Being



"We are not saved by faith plus good works, but by a faith that works!" - Warren W. Wiersbe.

"THE DANGER OF A 'SET IT AND FORGET IT' FAITH" - SEE INSIDE
ALSO INSIDE - "HELPING YOUR CHILD FIND THEIR IDENTITY"

Trust and Obey -

There is NO other way!!



Sometime back I came across an interesting article with the title "On Doing and Being" – the bottom line was, obedience is what you become, not only what you do! Interesting angle, since most of us think of obedience mainly as something we do! I thought it would be a good subject for a theme for this Quarter issue... so we will see how this takes shape, in the next few pages!!

First and foremost I think, it is all about a matter of priority... it is only when we "become" that true obedience would follow... "Being" and "Becoming" then is a vital part and driving force of what we do!

I thought that Paul's Word to the Romans, would be a good text that would bring this theme out. I am thinking of Romans 12: vss 1 and 2: *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies, as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will."*

These verses basically tell us what God wants from us whilst also putting to rest any confusion, as to what comes first and whether we would have to choose between being and doing to come to a conclusion about the place of obedience. It is not like the chicken or egg question. Becoming and doing are two sides of the same coin as far as obedience is concerned.

Chapter 12 actually is the final section of Romans. And it basically tells us about the response of service and obedience those whom God has saved should offer to him in gratitude for His gracious gift of salvation.

As some of us would know the outline of the book of Romans is basically, Sin, Salvation, Service or better, guilt, grace and gratitude! If we understand these three things and more importantly, if we live them in our own experience, we would know what being a Christian is all about and would not worry about what actually constitutes obedience.

We perhaps know that most people care about living a good life or at least try to improve themselves morally. Many are motivated by guilt or fear, thinking that some day they might be punished if they don't behave better. Others strive for self improvement, wanting to overcome bad habits so they can live happier and healthier lives. But we as the Lord's people, have a different motivation altogether. We want to live good lives not so much for our own sake as for

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God's. We are motivated by gratitude for what the Lord has enabled us to become! God has done so much for us by saving us in Christ, so we want to express our gratitude by living for Him.

In these sentences at the beginning of Romans 12, Paul tells us not only what God wants from us but how to give it to Him

Paul opens this section with a personal appeal to all believers, urging them to respond to the Gospel in a particular way. In other words, it is an appeal to becoming and being ! Though it is an appeal, Paul is not begging or pleading; there is note of authority in what he is saying. The point being, if you understand and accept the Gospel, then a definite response is demanded. You can't have your cake and eat it, as the saying goes. You cannot take all the blessings of God's grace without giving something back in return. The response is not really optional, but it is expressed by way of an appeal. God could command; instead, He asks. And that is because God wants us to respond to His love gladly and freely, making up our own minds to do so. We have to decide if we want to "become" and that is also a step of obedience.

In other words the first question is, to decide what we want to live for. What is it we want most of life? In what should we invest ourselves? How should we choose to spend our time, wealth, abilities and strengths?

Biblical Christians, led by the Spirit and taught by the Scriptures will also want more, once we have "become". We must want not just to be fulfilled but to be transformed. Our ultimate goal will be that God is glorified by our lives. And that would involve and great measure of "doing!"

Notice also that this appeal does not urge us to give our souls to God, nor our hearts, but our bodies! In other words, we must offer every part of ourselves - our physical as well as our spiritual nature must be devoted to God in obedience. So we are His by the double right of creation and redemption, but also through our voluntary obedience and devotion, by being and doing!

So the bottom line, obedience is not only what we do – but more importantly and firstly, what we become. And once we "become" then we also "do"! It is another way of describing a faith that works !! Or in the words of a familiar hymn – trust and obey - there's no other way! And by the way both are acts of obedience!



By Shenaya Schaffter

FAITH That Must WORK !

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” - Matthew 5:16

We often treat faith like a checklist. We measure our devotion by what we do-checking off prayers, attendance, and acts of service. But true obedience shifts the goal entirely. It transforms doing into being.

Consider a lighthouse. It doesn't pace the shoreline, frantically trying to rescue ships or struggling to manufacture a beam of light. It simply stands firm on the rock, anchored and true to its purpose. Because of what it is, it radiates light naturally into the darkness.

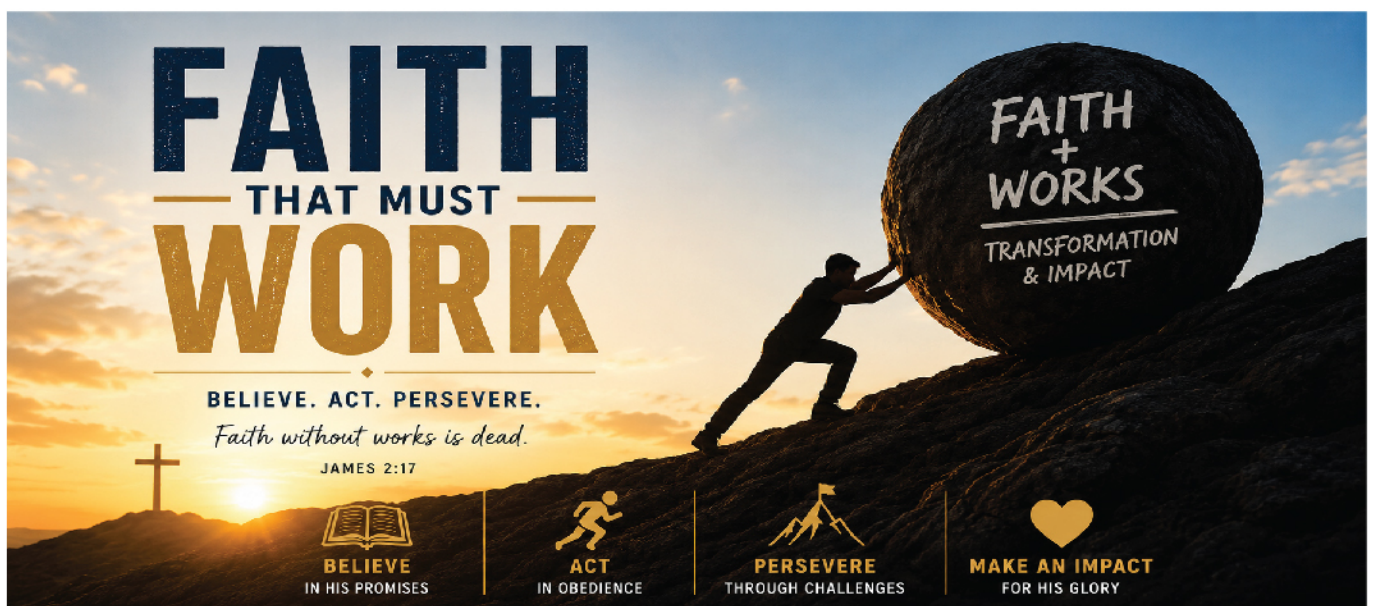
This is the faith that works. When we stop trying to just perform the rules and instead allow Christ to anchor our hearts, obedience ceases to be a chore. It becomes our nature. We no longer just force ourselves to do good things; we become people of love, peace, and integrity

Prayer

Lord, anchor us in Your love. Move us past the exhaustion of performing, and teach us the joy of simply being Yours.

Amen.

(Shenaya is a member of the CRC Dehiwela, involved with the Redeemers Youth Ministry as Asst Sec and also with the Praise and Worship Team.)



The Danger of a 'Set It and Forget It' Faith

by Pastor Gamini de Silva

A friend asked me, "How are you today?" and I replied, "Good, and you?" I didn't have to think to say that; the words escaped my mouth before my brain even processed the question. It is as if the brain is on autopilot. The problem is that this autopilot mode can creep into your spiritual life, too. Without thinking, we say, "By the grace of God," or "Praise the Lord," or we repeat the Lord's Prayer without considering what we are actually saying. I call this a "set it and forget it" mentality.

THE WARNING

This was the problem with the people Jesus was speaking to. He said in Mt 7:21-23

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

JESUS IS saying you have a set-it-and-forget-it mentality when you call me Lord, Lord. He says I have no RELATIONSHIP with you. I don't know who you are.

We may not be doing what the people whom Jesus was speaking to were doing, prophesying, driving out demons and performing many miracles as Jesus said.

But we can fall into a similar trap when we get on **autopilot** with our spiritual lives, such as our devotions, church attendance, tithing and prayers?

A "set it and forget it" faith often leads to a routine-based, autopilot spirituality that lacks a genuine, personal relationship with Christ, as warned in Matthew 7:21-23. To avoid the tragic, unexpected rejection described in Scripture, believers must move beyond mere religious works and prioritise a heart-level connection and alignment with His will.

THE CONSEQUENCE

There is no outcome more tragic than approaching the gates of heaven with total confidence, being able to put forward our credentials of how we lived for Jesus, a 100% confident that He will recognise us for all our good works, only to be met with the words 'Who are you?' 'I don't know you.'

What a terrifying state to spend a lifetime doing good works in Christ's name, yet remain a stranger to His heart.

In John 10:14, Jesus uses this same word 'know' when He says, 'I know My sheep'

But when Jesus says He "never knew" someone, He isn't saying He lacks facts about them; He is saying He never had a personal relationship with them.

The "scariest" part of these verses, according to many commentators, is that the people being rejected are religious ones. They have the "head knowledge" and even the "religious works," but they lack the "heart knowledge" that comes from being truly known by Christ and submitting to His will.

It warns that superficial religious works are no substitute for true intimacy, emphasising obedience over mere verbal profession.

When Jesus says, "I never knew you," He is using a specific Old Testament biblical description. He is saying

- *I don't have **a covenant relationship** with you as I had with Abraham and the others who followed God faithfully. (Gen 18:19).*

Matthew 7:21–23 highlights that true followers of God are defined by obedience, not just by calling Jesus "Lord". Jesus rejected those who practised lawlessness despite their works. "lawlessness or evil doers" refers to living against God's standards. The word for "knew" indicates a total lack of relationship.

These people Jesus speaks of had the works of a believer without the identity of a child of God.

Jesus says that without this relationship with Him, our religious works are iniquity.

Or go away from me, you have worked on the side of evil!" [Phillips]

Or against God's standards.

This is a willful disregard for God's authority and His revealed will.

"What Jesus is saying is what they believed in their hearts when they said to Him, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles.

I am not concerned about God's standards, I am going to serve God the way I want.'"

The people Jesus was talking to were **operating in His name, but not under His authority.**

They were refusing to submit to His authority or obey His will.

That is why He says, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

THE SOLUTION

When Jesus says, "I never knew you," he isn't being mean or kicking them out; he is simply stating a fact. He's saying, "You never actually had a relationship with Me. You were doing things in my name, but we never really met."

This passage in Mt 7 v 21 to 23 argues that you can do all the "right" things—praying, helping others, even performing miracles—without any relationship with Him.

Consider Martha and Mary.

Luke 10 v 41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one.[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

This story teaches that while work and service are important, building a personal relationship with Christ should be the priority.

The ultimate example of a spiritual autopilot can be seen in Martha.

She was doing "spiritual" things (hospitality/service to Jesus) but had lost the "connection"

King David wrote in Ps 37, if you make God your utmost delight, then He will provide what you most deeply desire because what you desire will be in harmony with Him.

A 2-Minute Heart Check

- Do I have a real relationship with Christ, or am I just reciting phrases I know?
- If I stopped my religious “duties” tomorrow, would I actually miss Jesus, or just the routine?
- Is my attraction to Christ so deep that nothing else can take His place?

(Pastor Gamini, served the CRC at Regent-Street a few years ago, whilst also ministering the Word in CRC Pulpits. At present, he is resident in Dubai with the family.)

In Memoriam

Chitra de Alwis

Her birthday was on the 31st of July and the family were making plans for a meaningful commemoration on the 30th night but those plans were not to be as Chitra suffered a stroke that night and had to be hospitalized. It was a stroke that she did not recover from and she passed away on Saturday the 6th of June, to the dismay of her family and all those who knew and loved her.

Chitra was a pioneer member of the ministry at Rukmalgama together with her children and remained active in worship and in ministry when needed.

The Rukmalgama ministry which was which a Church plant of the Local Consistory of Dehiwela, saw a number of CRC families who had relocated to the new housing scheme at Rukmale, being part of this endeavour. Going back in time, after those initial years, some did emigrate, some were called to their Heavenly home, some relocated, whilst some remained and continued to support this ministry. Amongst them were Chitra de Alwis and family. The many Pastors who served this congregation, would be able to give testimony to this.

We can be thankful for her long and fruitful life, comparatively free from any major health issue until the Lord’s appointed time began to take shape, on the day before her birthday this year and ended a week after that on Saturday the 6th of June.

The Wise man put it so well, “Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”(Proverbs 31: 30).

Geoffrey Roberts

Geoffrey passed away in Sydney on the 16th of May, 2026, which was also the day of his birthday! Geoffrey was married to Charmaine Hesse, one of the daughters of the Hesse family who were very much part of the Regent-Street congregation from the days when the family lived in Hunupitiya.

So Geoffrey and Charmaine were also very much part of the Regent-Street congregation and when Patrick was born, he was part of the Sunday School.

Since emigrating to Australia, they continued to keep in touch with the Church in diverse ways and when we were privileged to visit, enjoyed their hospitality. The last occasion was a few years ago, when we met up at a RSL,(a club that retired servicemen could join!) with a few others from Regent-Street and the CRC.

Geoffrey was sadly affected by that terminal illness that has taken its toll on so many. He went through many a medical process, much hospitalizations and there were times when hope was bright and then dimmed again.

The last few years saw Geoffrey eagerly listening to the Sermons through the Online Ministry that began during those Covid years and still thankfully continues. I am told that he looked forward to hear the Word, with much joy.

In a tribute paid to him by the Australian Anthonians, Geoffrey was mentioned “as a kind and gentle soul, who would be deeply missed.” He was a third generation Anthonian. Those who knew him could not agree more. And we can thank God that there are still those whose lives do go against the grain, and are “kind and gentle and would be deeply missed!”

Is being a Christian a 'to-do list' ? Or is there more?

A lot of young Christians grow up thinking faith is mostly about 'doing the right things'.

- Read your Bible.
- Pray more.
- Don't swear.
- Don't lie.
- Go to church.
- Serve.
- Obey.



Those things matter. Obedience matters. But Christianity was never meant to become a checklist where God is only impressed by performance. God is not simply trying to control your behavior — He is shaping your character.

In other words, God is not only interested in 'what you do'. He is deeply interested in who you are **becoming**.

The Difference Between Doing and Being

It's possible to do all the "Christian things" while your heart stays unchanged.

The Pharisees in the Bible were experts at religious activity. They followed rules carefully, looked spiritual in public, and knew Scripture well. Yet The Bible shows that Jesus Christ often challenged them because outward obedience had not transformed their inner lives.

God's goal has always been transformation from the inside out.

Anyone can fake actions for a moment. But eventually, who you truly are will shape what you do.



A kind person doesn't merely 'perform' kindness occasionally. Kindness becomes part of their nature.

A humble person doesn't just *act* humble when people are watching. Humility grows in their heart.

A faithful person doesn't obey God only when it feels easy. Faithfulness becomes who they are.

That is the deeper work of God.

God Uses Obedience to Shape You

Sometimes God asks us to obey in ways that seem small or uncomfortable.

Youth Page..... Contd.....

- Forgive someone.
- Tell the truth.
- Apologize first.
- Stay pure.
- Be patient.
- Serve quietly.
- Keep going when nobody notices.

At first, it may feel like God is only asking you to do something. But often, through those moments, God is actually shaping what you become.

When you repeatedly choose forgiveness, you become more merciful.

When you choose honesty, you become trustworthy.

When you choose courage, you become stronger in faith.

When you choose to surrender to God, you become more like Christ.

Obedience is not just about completing instructions. It is spiritual formation.

God Cares About the Heart

In today's world, image matters a lot. People can build entire identities online that look perfect while hiding loneliness, pride, insecurity, or anger inside.

But God sees deeper than appearances.

In 1 Samuel, God says that people look at outward appearance, but He looks at the heart.

That changes everything.

You may impress people with talent, popularity, achievements, or even spiritual activity. But God is asking bigger questions:

- * Are you becoming loving?
- * Are you becoming truthful?
- * Are you becoming humble?
- * Are you becoming holy?
- * Are you becoming more like Christ?

Christianity is not acting spiritual. It is becoming transformed.

Jesus Didn't Just Teach Rules — He Formed People

When Jesus Christ called His disciples, He didn't simply hand them a rulebook and say, "Behave properly."

He walked with them. Corrected them. Challenged them. Loved them. Changed them.

Over time, fearful people became courageous.
Proud people became humble.

Youth Page..... Contd.....

Selfish people learned sacrifice.
Doubters grew into faith-filled leaders.

Jesus was forming disciples, not just managing behavior.

And He still does that today.



Who you are determines your priorities. Not the other way around !

Many young people try to "fix" their lives only through effort. They focus on stopping bad habits without allowing God to change the heart underneath.

But lasting obedience grows from identity.

When you know you are loved by God, you obey differently.

When you know you belong to Christ, purity becomes personal.

When your heart changes, your actions begin to follow naturally.



A healthy tree produces healthy fruit because of what it *is*.

God wants your obedience to flow from relationship, transformation, and love — not fear alone.

The Goal Is Christ-likeness

The Christian life is not about becoming more religious than everyone else. The goal is becoming more like Christ.

That process takes time.

Some days you will fail. Some days obedience will feel difficult. Some days growth will seem slow. But God is patient while He shapes His people.



Every moment of surrender, every hidden act of faithfulness, every difficult choice to obey — God uses it to form Christ within you.

So the next time God calls you to obey, remember:

He is not only asking, "What will you do?"

He is also shaping the answer to a deeper question:

"Who are you becoming?"

God Bless,
From Joshua Aldons.

Youth Page

Edited By: Joshua Aldons

Just For Laughs

Pastor: "What should be done before eating a meal?"

Teen: "Prayer."

Pastor: "Excellent!"

Teen: "Because if I don't pray first, I fall asleep after eating." 😊 😴 🛏

Peter denied Jesus three times. 🙅

Modern Christians deny knowing the worship song when asked to sing solo. 🎤 🎵

A young teen said, "I'm on fire for God!"

His mom replied, "Good. Now be on fire for cleaning your room too." 🍽️ 💡

A teen fasted from social media for one day. 📱 📵

His friends held a prayer meeting for his survival.



A teen said he wanted to wake up early for devotion.


So he set 7 alarms... 🕒

...and ignored all of them faithfully. 😊



Children's Page

Edited by Amanda Fraser.



Hi Boys and Girls,

I love making chocolate chip cookies with my kids, especially on rainy days. We have so much fun together! My kids love the cookies so much that they are usually gone before I can even put them on a plate!

But I wasn't always good at baking cookies. For a long time, my cookies did not turn out right. Sometimes they were too flat, and sometimes they were too fluffy. I felt sad and frustrated. Then one day, a friend shared a simple recipe with me, and now my cookies turn out delicious every time! I learned that it's important to follow the recipe carefully.

Before, I thought I could do things my own way. I would say, "How hard can it be?" But I learned that following instructions really matters!

Sometimes we think we know best, but things don't always go well when we ignore good instructions.

The Bible is like a recipe for living a happy and good life. God loves us very much and wants what is best for us.

The Bible teaches that if we love God, we will listen to Him and follow His instructions. Our parents and teachers also help guide us, so it is important to listen to them too.

When we obey God and follow His ways, our lives can be sweet and wonderful — just like a yummy chocolate chip cookie!

lots of love,
Aunty Mandy



Happy Barnaby

Barnaby was a little brown puppy with long, floppy ears and a nose that loved to sniff. He lived with his owner, a kind boy named Caleb, in a house with a big backyard. Caleb loved Barnaby, and Barnaby loved Caleb.

Because Caleb wanted to keep Barnaby safe and happy, he gave him three important rules: stay inside the fenced yard, come when called, and do not eat things off the ground.

One sunny afternoon, a bright yellow butterfly fluttered right past Barnaby's nose. Barnaby forgot all about the rules. He chased the butterfly across the yard. The butterfly flew right through a small gap under the back fence. Barnaby squeezed through the gap, too.

Suddenly, Barnaby was out in the big neighborhood all alone. The butterfly flew away, leaving Barnaby by the busy street. A loud truck rumbled past, making the ground shake. Barnaby whimpered and tucked his tail between his legs. He was scared.

Just then, he heard a familiar voice calling out, "Barnaby!

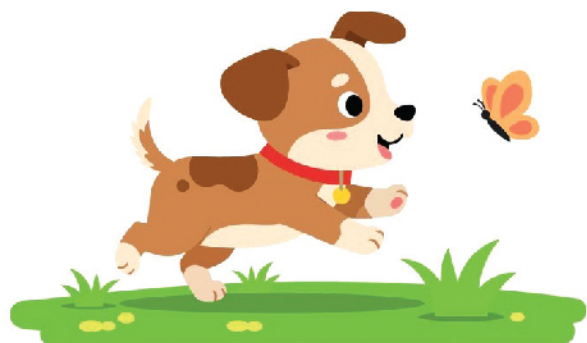
Come here, boy!"

Barnaby looked across the street and saw Caleb. Barnaby wanted to run straight to him, but he remembered the rule to listen. He stayed put and waited. Caleb safely crossed the street, knelt down, and scooped the shivering puppy into his arms.

"I was so worried, Barnaby," Caleb whispered, hugging him tightly. "I give you rules because I love you and want to protect you."

As they walked back to the safety of their yard, Barnaby licked Caleb's cheek. He realized that obedience wasn't about missing out on fun. It was about trusting the person who loved him most.

That night, as Barnaby curled up in his warm bed, he thought about how Caleb was a lot like God. God gives His children rules in the Bible, not to hold them back, but because He loves them completely and wants to keep them safe. From that day on, Barnaby decided that living a life of obedience was the happiest, safest place to be.



OBEY WITHOUT DELAY



Obedience Counts

Count the number of times you find the word OBEY in the wordsearch below. The word may be found up, down, backwards or diagonally, but it is always in a straight line. Finally, write that number in the blank below.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B | O | B | E | Y | B | O |
| O | B | Y | E | B | O | B |
| B | E | Y | O | B | Y | E |
| E | Y | B | O | B | E | Y |
| Y | O | B | E | Y | E | Y |
| Y | E | B | O | B | A | Y |
| B | O | B | E | Y | E | O |

I FOUND OBEY _____ TIMES.

Helping Your Child Find their Identity

By Marsha Navamanie

Today there are many messages about who we are and who we should be. Young people have to process a lot of messages about their identity, especially as teenagers. How can we as parents help them develop a true identity that is found in Christ and help them answer the question. Who am I?

Just for fun, start with yourself. **How do you answer the question, "WHO AM I?"**

Do you define yourself by what you do, by what you are good at, by what others say about you, or by what God says about you? Many men define their identity by what they do. If you ask them, who are you? They would say, "I am an engineer", or "I am a businessman". Or do you define yourself by what others say, trying to live up to the "latest" trends, or are you trying to be what everyone else says a "good" mother should be. What are your children learning from that? Are we forcing them into roles that we think will be good for them, regardless of how God has made them? As parents we need to help our children develop a strong identity based on the truth of who God created them to be. If we don't do this, there is a very good chance they will crack under the strain during the years of adolescence and early adult hood. We may become their enemies, and worse, they may reject their faith in favor of fitting in to the latest identity issue or having a "good time".

So how can we help them form an identity based on how God has made them?

Finding our identity in Christ

From a young age we need to remind our children that they are created unique in every way by God and for God (Ephesians 2:10, Ps. 139). He has made them that way to be useful in his Kingdom, to fill a role that only they can fill. Only this will give them a full and meaningful life (John 10:10). We are created for God and redeemed by him through the death of Jesus (Gal. 3:13-14, 1 Peter 1:18-21, 2

Cor.5:14-21). We are called to live on this earth as God's precious child (1 Peter 2:4-10). This is something you can tell your children from the time they are born. Don't worry,



they won't get conceited. It is God's work, not theirs and not ours as parents either. You cannot tell your children enough that they are special to God. It will help them in the future when they will definitely hear other messages about their value.

We need to treat each of our children as an individual. No comparing with siblings or our friend's children. Everyone has special gifts and abilities. Our role as parents is to uncover these, much like digging for buried treasure. We need to be careful not to make our children "in our image", but look for ways they are different from us and encourage those areas too. God knows who they are, so let us ask him for his help in discovering this. This is especially true here in Sri Lanka, where kids have to make decisions very early about what career to follow. We want them to find work that fits their personality and temperament, not just something that will make them economically successful.

However, it is not all about being an individual either. We are fortunate to live in a culture that **values community**, both extended family and faith community. One of the ways to help develop a faith in our children that sticks, is to help them develop meaningful relationships with other mature Christians, whether this is through friendships in church or family, or a small group fellowship, or informal relationships. If you belong to a small group fellowship, make sure the children know that they are part of the group too. We can mentor each others

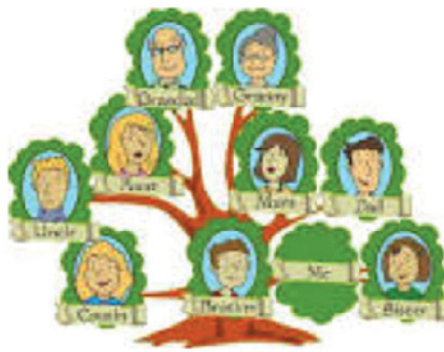
For we are God's **Masterpiece** (handiwork), created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

kids, remember their birthdays, help them to grow as believers in Christ. We can be a support for parents when they are having hard times.

Family. For our children, identity is also related to

where they come from. A fun activity is to develop a family tree. Get a big sheet of paper and actually draw it out. I remember visiting relatives in India who had a beautiful one

someone had painted hanging on their wall. It was helpful for us to see where we fit as part of the family. Have your children talk to grandparents or great grandparents about the “good old days”. Who they are has a lot to do with genetics and how they are brought up, so help them to understand this.



Rituals - Our children are going to get a lot of negative comments about themselves from bullies, teachers and even their friends sometimes. It is good to have special times to remember why they are special to us and to God. You can build these rituals into everyday events and holidays, birthdays, and special occasions. Every day you should have a time for debriefing, asking how the day went, were they able to be themselves? Did they do anything that stretched them or helped them understand better who they are. This could be after school, or at dinner or bedtime. Pray with them before bed and thank God for his gift of your special child. At their birthday party, take some time to have people pray and thank God for special abilities, gifts, and character qualities they see in their life. Emphasize the Christian virtues you see in them. When they do

Profession of Faith, make it a special time to talk about what God is calling them to do in the church, how this relates to their identity.

Activities - Another way we help our children discover who they are is by getting them involved in various activities. Sports is the most common activity, which is not only good for their bodies, but helps them learn to work with a team, to follow orders, and many other valuable lessons, but if the emphasis is to win at any cost, then the lessons won't help our children in the long run. We need to be careful not to overdo activities either. Our children need balance, time to study, time to relax, time to play. Treat every activity as an opportunity to use our gifts, passions and talents for the building of God's kingdom. Talk to your children about how they can do this in their activities. For example, they can use their musical gifts in church.

We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. Romans 5:3,4

Character Development. Although most adults would say that character growth is more important than academic achievement, you don't see this in the way many bring up their children. How much time in a week is spent on tuition for classes, and how much time is spent on character development? Do we have a plan for how to make this a reality for our children? Are we

working on spiritual growth in our home, making time for devotions with our children, talking to them, teaching them lessons on character or our Christian values, our worldview? These things are vital to understanding who we are. In the end they are more important to how we feel about ourselves than the scores we got on our O Level exam.

Modeling. As parents we need to model a vital relationship to God as our Father. Our children need to see us pray and read the Bible for ourselves, and meet with other Christians for spiritual growth. When there is a problem, do we go first to God for help? Ultimately, we are children of God, just like they are. Do our children understand this.

We need to teach them to deal with hardship and adversity. Making things too easy for our children is not good for their growth. Being there and listening to their problems, helping them come up with solutions for themselves, these are the keys to a solid identity. When they fail or are disappointed, model a tenderness that mirrors God's love and purpose for them. Encourage them to learn from their failure and

know that God has a good plan for their life.

Identity formation takes a long time. Most psychologists think that most adults today don't have a solid identity until they are in their mid-twenties. So, we have to go the distance with our children. Don't give up. Make a plan and keep working on it.

If our children are going to follow Christ for the rest of their lives they need to understand their identity in Christ.

*This article is written by Marsha Navamanie who worked with the Christian Reformed Church in Sri Lanka. It is based on a chapter from a book, **Sticky Faith**, by Dr. Kara E. Powell and Dr. Chap Clark, Zondervan, 2011.*

+++ CHURCH NEWS+++



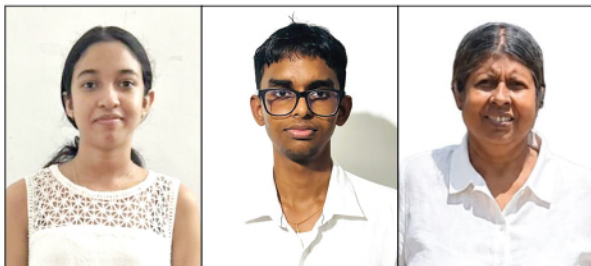
❖ GOOD FRIDAY / EASTER SERVICES.

In view of the renovations being carried out on the Wolvendhal Sanctuary, the traditional Profession Of Faith Service on Good Friday was held at the CRC Regent-Street, with a representative gathering and with the participation on Pastors Ananda Jayawardena, Christian Jeshuran. Revd: Stanley Nelson and Revd: Charles Jansz. Pastor Lakmal Wijeratne preached the Sermon. A Service was also held at the CRC Dehiwela in the Evening. Easter Sunday Services were held in all the local Churches, with the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. An increased attendance was evident in all such services.

The "Little Lambs" Montessori held its Annual Easter Service on Thursday the 26th of March with the active participation of the Children and a good attendance of the parents and those of the Montessori Community.

❖ PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

Sachin Esher Bandara Dissanayake of the Bambalaptiya Congregation, Publicly Professed Faith at the Service on Good Friday at the CRC Regent-Street, whilst Samudrika Friskin and Petty Rona Fairy, Professed faith at the CRC Kohuwela and were administered the Sacrament of Adult Baptism.



❖ FROM THE CRADLE TO THE CROWN !

- Revival of the CRC SL Choir.

After a lapse of about ten years, this Easter saw the revival of the CRC SL Choir come together for a service on Holy Saturday, the 4th of April, 2026, at the CRC Bambalaptiya.

The programme entitled, "Cradle to Crown," focussed on the life of Jesus through Scripture, traditional; hymns and contemporary songs. It was a step of faith, with a decision to go ahead, even if the choir had five members. However, the Lord made all things possible, blessing the ministry with a choir of thirty members from the different CRC Churches. The next programme will be held in conjunction with the CRC SL Foundation Day Anniversary in early October, 2026. Soli Deo Gloria! *(Written by Lisa Perera).*



❖ WOMEN'S FEDERATION OFFICE BEARERS – 2026.

At the Annual General meeting held on Saturday the 25th April, 2026, the following were elected to Office...

President – Mrs. Winfreda Fernando.

Vice-Presidents – Mrs. Ruth Abinaya Anthony (T), Mrs. Vino Schubert (E).

Secretary – Mrs. Gayathri Duckworth.

Asst Secretaries – Mrs. Dinushika Fernando (S), Mrs. Darsanie Fernando (T).

Treasurer – Mrs. Sherine Bocks.

Asst Treasurer – Mrs. Rochelle Ratnayake.

❖ BAKE SALE - WMU CRC

REGENT-STREET.- a sweet success !

A very successful Bake Sale was held on Sunday 3rd May, 2026, with the ladies willingly

contributing a variety of homemade treats... Segu Kanchi, Fresh mango juice, Manioc, Minis fish buns, Chinese rolls, Butter cake, and much more were available. There was something for everyone and the response to purchase was speedy and overwhelming. The joy, laughter and team work, made this occasion all the more memorable.



❖ **CRC YOUTH FEDERATION OFFICE BEARERS – 2026.**

At the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd May, 2026, the following were elected to Office...

President – Pasindu Matukumara.

Vice-President – Nimrod Thomas.

Secretary – Chanuli de la Zilwa.

Asst Secretary – Thedassi Piyasena.

Treasurer – Rohith Gunaratne.

Asst Treasurer – Joanne George.

❖ **RESIGNATIONS AND APPOINTMENT.**

Pastor Amila Elpitiya who served the CRC Sinhala Ministry for many years, resigned from the 31st of December, 2025 whilst Bro Vijith Kumara who served the Kaduganawa Sinhala Ministry also resigned as from the 31st of December, 2025. In the light of these resignations their services have been discontinued.

The Revd: Charles Jansz, has been appointed as Minister of Pastoral and Leadership Development and would continue in this role till December 2026. Whilst fostering relationships within the Church, he would continue as a Visiting Preacher and his responsibilities includes overseeing Teaching and Training initiatives, engaging in mentorship, supporting vocational development, working on the Dinominal Preacher's plan, whilst continuing as Editor of the Herald.

❖ **CHURCH REGISTER**

❖ **PROFESSION OF FAITH / ADULT BAPTISM.**

"As you have received Christ, so walk..."

Sachin Esher Bandara Dissanayake, on Good Friday 3rd April, 2026, of the Bambalapitiya Congregation.

❖ **ADULT BAPTISMS**

Samudrika Friskin, on Good Friday 3rd April, 2026, of the Kohuwela Congregation.

Petty Rona Fairy, on Good Friday 3rd April, 2026, of the Kohuwela Congregation.

❖ **In Memoriam**

Delano Dias

It was with much sadness and distress that we did received the news of the sudden passing away of Delano Dias. Delano was associated with the Regent-Street congregation, with his marriage of Tamara the only daughter of the late Dulcie Peiris, who together with her family were and are pillars of the Regent-Street/Maligakanda congregations.

Delano who faced a key hole by pass surgery was making fair recovery. In fact, he worshipped with the family on the third Sunday in April and even though the surgery had taken its toll to some extent, he still seemed on the road to good recovery, when an infection entered his body, which ultimately resulted in his sad and sudden demise.

Although quiet and unassuming he was full of life and humour and was the mainstay when it came to the glad and sad occasions of the Peiris family in particular. It is also well known that he went out of his way to extend any help necessary to those who did need it.

Delano, being a devout Roman Catholic and also being nurtured in the Scriptures through his association with the Reformed Church, had his faith and hope in Jesus, which in turn can assure, Tamara, Ruveen, Tiara and the rest of the family, that Delano is now in that prepared

placed that the Lord has prepared for His prepared people, enjoying eternal peace and rest.

We do give God thanks for Delano's life, the

relationships enjoyed, the love that was given and received and the rich memories left behind.

(The "News" in these pages is gathered from the Bulletins published by the respective local churches and available in the Church office. Any other news of events or involving the membership worthy of publication, could be sent directly to the Editor of "The Herald," for publication according to the established criteria. — Ed.)

This We Believe

The teachings in the confessions are teachings that we, as a body, agree on.

EVEN IF YOU HAVE been barely listening to decisions made in the Christian Reformed Church over the past several years, you have heard the term "confessional church" tossed around. You might have quietly wondered what exactly this means. What does it mean to be "confessional"? What are these documents we refer to as "confessions"? Perhaps you already know the answers to these questions but, if not, I hope to offer a brief introduction suggesting that confessions are historical, biblical, communal, and ecumenical.

Each of the confessional documents we will examine in this column—The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt—arose in a particular historical situation. Quite often, after the Reformation began, the purpose of these documents was to clearly point out differences between the beliefs of the Reformers and those of the Roman Catholic Church. The historical nature of these documents, however, in no way suggests that they are irrelevant to the church today.


These documents, which were often born in times of conflict, summarized various biblical teachings—doctrines—to clearly demonstrate that their answers to the questions of their time were grounded in Scripture. As summaries of biblical teaching, the confessions are not more important or even have the same importance as the Bible. Rather, they are based on the Bible. Thus, insofar as the teachings in the confessions accurately reflect the teaching of the Bible, we continue to affirm them as doctrines we believe.

Confessions—doctrines we believe—are also communal reflections on theological topics. We are not lone wolves. We are part of a community known as the Christian Reformed Church, a little denomination that is part of the larger body of "Reformed"

churches, which are part of the still-larger body of Christ. Our confessions reflect a sort of "group thinking" on important issues, a consensus among us regarding how to understand particular theological topics. For example, the Canons of Dort were composed to defend the Reformed emphasis on the sovereignty of God in salvation against a perceived challenge to that doctrine by the followers of Jacob Arminius. The Canons were not written in isolation, but by a consensus of Reformed thinkers coming together to consider what exactly "we believe" about these teachings.

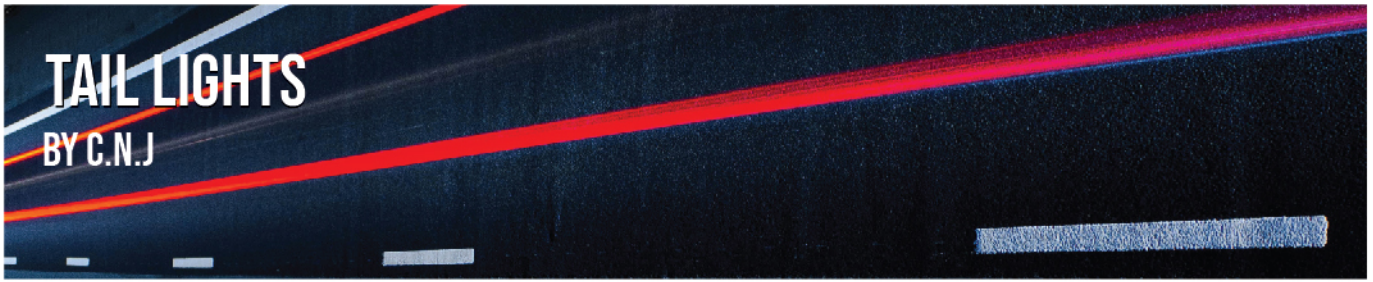
The teachings in the confessions, therefore, are teachings that we, as a body, agree on. They help identify us by telling us who we are and are not and what we do and do not believe. In that way they also form a boundary around us, offering a standard of orthodoxy for our group.

It is worth remembering that this sort of thinking can be abused. It is good to affirm together that our interpretation of various biblical truths is correct. But particularly at the confessional level, we must do so with humility, what Richard Mouw calls "convicted civility." In other words, we should not suggest that those who interpret Scripture differently than we do are either not Christians or, worse yet, going to hell. That knowledge belongs to God alone.

The final aspect of confessions is that they are ecumenical. That is, we hold some of the teachings in our confessions in common with others in the wider body of Christ. For example, most of the first half of the Belgic Confession is widely shared throughout the Christian Church. Thus, our confessions are communal in the sense that they draw us together as Reformed, and that they bring us together with Christians from many different backgrounds who confess with us, "We believe!" 



Mary L. Vanden Berg, Ph.D., is a professor of systematic theology, emerita, for Calvin Theological Seminary. She lives in Byron Center, Mich., and attends LaGrave CRC. She is author of *Aquinas, Science, and Human Uniqueness*.



THE NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE, ADVERB AND PREPOSITION !!



Sometime back I received a post that highlighted the one word in the English Language that could be all the things that this caption indicates!! It was the little two letter word "UP!"

The post also mentioned that this two letter word has more meanings than any other two letter word in the English language.

It gave some examples and I had a good laugh about it, as I read on. For example, it's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awake in the morning, why do we wake UP?!

We call UP friends, brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver, warm UP the left overs and clean UP the pantry! Then people stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite and think UP excuses! The post goes on and on. Hilarious. But it is time to Wind UP this part of the tail!

Thinking about this little versatile two letter – my mind went to a familiar verse of Scripture, in the book of Psalms, 121 vs 1. The Psalmist perhaps not knowing the versatility of this two letter word then, said, "I lift UP my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come from... my help comes from the Lord..." Of course the hills of Palestine, were also sites of pagan shrines, seemingly alternate sources of help, so he makes it clear that his UP look for help, involves the One Who made the hills!

We too need to do just that in our varied circumstances. Lift UP our eyes to the maker of the hills, from where our help does come, staking our lives on His faithfulness to fulfill His promises. But then, ultimately, all of this also would be UP to you and me! And now it's time to finally Wind UP!!

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