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# The Model of the Mission

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Commissioned. Man even the graphic and music is intense, right?

Man last week I'm sitting at Steiner Ranch and I'm listening to the sermon and I'm hearing this incredible challenge, this vision, the theme of the year of Change the World. And to be honest with you there was a little bit, of part of that, you know you kind of hear those things, you know we're about changing the world, the mission, and reaching the city, and every man, woman, and child and all of the great things that were said. But sometimes, you know, you - I know you're not like this, but I'm a little bit like this. I kind of hear those things and I think yeah, yeah, that's what we're going to do and I'm kind of nodding my head along with it. And then afterwards we were tearing down

there are Steiner Ranch and one of the guys came up to me afterwards and he said 'Wow, Tim doesn't have any small visions, does he?' And I said "No, I guess not." And immediately at that point it just reminded me of the weight of this.

I think we talk in superlatives so much, like everything's amazing and revolutionary, and change the world, and we really forget that Jesus Christ has changed the world, right? And that we partner with him, and so just to be reminded of that and just this incredible vision and thinking about at the end of it throwing out numbers like 1.5 billion people could be impacted if we would invest in one or two near us. What a great challenge.

But the weight of that is also the fact that this isn't a half-hearted commitment, is it? I mean this is something that we have to be completely committed to, and I think that's what Jesus is doing when He gives these commission statements in the New Testament. As He looks at His fellas and He says 'Guys, this is what it's gonna take to change the world, to take this, my life, death, and resurrection, to take it to the world. This is what it's gonna take. This is what you guys need to be about.' And He gives these commission statements, and we're going to be walking through them over the next couple of weeks.

If you're got your Bibles, turn with me to John 20:21. As you're turning there, it's the first of these commission statements. We're going to handle them in chronological order, but this first one here - Jesus puts himself on the line. He's talking about himself and modeling this and modeling commitment. And as I think about commitment, as I think about what it looks like to truly be all in, I was reminded of a story I'd heard several years ago about a Kamikaze pilot. They always intrigued me in history, I don't know why. In World War II there was some 4,000 Kamikaze pilots that sacrificed their lives. They would strap themselves into a jet plane and after they had unloaded all of their ammunitions, ammunition, what they would do is then use their plane as the ultimate missile and crash it into their target sacrificing their lives, but there were some that made it. Some survived, some survived because of engine failure, they ended up having to turn around and come back home. Others survived because as they were deployed the mission was canceled, so they were told to come back home. But we all know that the vast majority of a Kamikaze pilot was after they had unloaded everything they had they were to fly their plane in. And I was just always enamored by that thinking. Wow, what commitment.

I came across an interview where a journalist was interviewing one of those pilots after a mission and the journalist said, 'Well how many Kamikaze missions have you flown,' you know, expecting the answer to be a couple, right?

Well the answer was 50. He had flown 50 Kamikaze missions. Well, I mean, the journalist was scratching his head saying 'Well that's a contradiction in terms. How in the world can that happen?' Like I get engine failure once, you know, come back home, the mission's over twice, but 50 times. His response, he says, was this "I was incredibly involved. I just wasn't very committed." (laughing) I was incredibly involved. I think about my favorite breakfast is bacon and eggs. And there's one animal that is involved in that and one that is committed, right? I mean you - committed, the late laughs, I gotcha.

Committed. I mean like, just, can you imagine what that looks like, him strapping on the uniform saying 'Yes sir,' getting in the plane, and by all looks and appearances he's gonna go at it, right? I mean he's flying around he's talking on the radio, he's doing all the right stuff, but 50 times he comes back and lands at home safe and sound.

I think as we think, as I just try to wrap my head around changing the world, commissioned, it's not just about being involved. It's not just about saying the right things and dressing the part and flying around looking busy. It's about being absolutely committed to this deal. And as I just feel the weight of changing the world and all these things that Jesus has commissioned us to do, it's just a challenge in my life to be committed. And the beauty of John Chapter 20 is Jesus is going to model this for us. He's going to show exactly what it looks like to be completely committed to the mission.

Let's start reading in verse 19, John Chapter 20.

*"On the evening of the first day of the week when the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews -"*

And I'm just going to stop right there to make sure we have good context. This is the first statement, the first commission statement of the four that we're going to look at. It's the first time He's going to give an inclination that I've got a task for you to do. And we find out that it happens on the evening of the first day. So that would be a Sunday evening. We know Jesus was crucified on Friday, put in the tomb, He was in the tomb on Saturday, he rose on a Sunday morning hence the reason why we gather Lord' Day, right? To gather to celebrate that. And we know that He's already had an appearance, made an appearance to Mary who's run back to the disciples to tell them that Jesus is alive. And we also know that Peter has already seen the empty tomb, and another disciple, but they're not really sure what to do with it. And so we find out on the evening of this first day, Sunday evening, the guys are hunkered down. They've got the doors locked because they're scared of the Jews.

Here's the angst of the moment. They're scared for their lives because they're thinking 'We just saw Jesus get taken into captivity. We saw Him lied about, we saw Him beaten, we've seen Him crucified, and now the Jews - if they'll do it to Jesus what would keep them from doing it to us. We're next. They're going to start picking us off one by one. They've seen us with him the last few years doing ministry. They've seen us with him.' And so there they are locked behind these doors hearing Mary saying 'He's alive.' Seeing the empty tomb, but not really sure what to do, and then scared for their lives all at the same time. And then in the middle of the verse it says

*"Jesus came and stood among them."*

It doesn't say he knocked on the door, it doesn't say He went in that way, He just appears before them. That would have been pretty cool, right? He just stands there and these are His first words:

*"Peace be with you."*

Can you just imagine what's going on in the room. I'm sure there are a few of them like Mary, 'Mary I'm glad you think you saw Jesus, but I'm not believing it until I see it for myself.' Right? You can imagine some of that going on. You can imagine some of them probably thinking, 'Man his body's gone, what in the world could have happened there.' Some of them haven't put together that everything Jesus said He was going to do He's actually done and just rose from the dead. His first words are, *"Peace be with you."* I couldn't think of more appropriate words, could you? I think the timing is just right. When you're scared, when you're not sure what's happening, you don't have all the facts. It seems like a crazy situation. For these guys 'What are we going to do now? We've given up everything to follow this guy. What happens next.' And here comes Jesus, 'shhhhh . . . Peace.' Isn't that what Jesus has come to do? Isn't that what He came to do is to offer peace? He came to offer peace to our lives that are just marred by sin and all of the mistakes that we've made. He's come to offer peace that we were separated from God and by His death, burial, and resurrection we now have the ultimate peace. To be restored to our Creator. He says 'Peace. Peace be with you.'

And then after this in verse 20:

*"He showed them His hands and side." and "The disciples were overjoyed when they saw The Lord."*

And they're saying, 'Wow it's Him. I can see the hands, I can see the holes in His hands and feet, I can see it all. It's Him.' They excited and then Jesus again in verse 21 has to say,

*"Peace be with you!"*

'Shhhhh . . . calm down. I know it's really cool, I know this is really cool, but just - I got something better to say here.'

*"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

Now I'm not going to lie to you - that just seems to fall flat for me. I was expecting more, weren't you? I don't know, but maybe I was expecting, maybe I was expecting more because I know who these guys are, we know who these guys are. We've been tracing this through, right? These aren't the greatest guys in the room at this point. They've made some mistakes, they abandoned Jesus. You know we've got Peter who did the whole denying Him three times when Jesus needed him the most. I mean these guys couldn't even stay awake to pray while Jesus is sitting there in absolute agony talking with the Father saying 'If this can pass, let it happen.' And, and this is what He says - I'm thinking more of a 'Man I love you guys, I forgive you guys. Man let's all come around.' Or maybe 'Let's get the whiteboard and let's really diagram out how we're going to do this.' But *"As the Father sent me, I'm sending you."* And I guess for me as I got to looking at it I got to thinking, really, those words are pretty incredible when you think about the situation.

The first thing He talks about is the people involved, and the people involved are **"Me and You"**, aren't they? The me and you. *"As the Father sent me*, He's saying myself Jesus, *"so I am sending you*, the disciples, and I think in turn, all of us. You.

What Jesus is doing is He's looking at the guys and I think He's saying, 'Listen, there's more to this. I didn't just come to be, to do a great ministry to be crucified, to die and be buried and then to rise again, but listen, there's still one more thing I need to do. And what that is, is I need to come back to you guys and make sure you understand that there's more work to be done. I've got to send you out. I've got to reproduce myself. The work isn't over yet.' And watch this, 'I modeled how it is done. *"As the Father Sent me, so I'm sending you."* 'I'm not asking you to do anything that I wasn't willing to do myself.' That's pretty cool, isn't it? 'I'm not asking you to do anything that I wasn't first willing to do myself. I'm not. Listen guys, I've modeled the mission of God for you. I just modeled the overall mission of God. That God made creation and we sinned and we blew it and we messed it up, but God loving the world sent me

down here. And it was a long jump, but I came down here, and I came down here to love you, to provide you peace, and holes in my hands and holes in my feet, my side pierced for you.' I think he's saying I modeled the mission for you and I think he's also saying this: 'You're the recipients of this mission.' You are the recipients of it.

'Peter, I love you, I forgive you. No matter how much you've blown it I need you now to turn around and go. The rest of you who fell asleep on me, or all of the others of you who fled from the scene, listen. You are the recipients of grace and mercy in the mission of God. Now turn and go.' And I think if he were standing right here He could look at every one of us, because many of us are saying 'There's no way He would send me because I'm too bad or I've made too many mistakes, or I'm unqualified, or I don't know that.' Listen I think he would look at us and say *"As the Father sent me, so I am sending you."* 'Recipients of my grace and my mercy and my peace. I'm sending you. I'm sending you.'

I think it would do well for us just to be mindful of the fact that as He looked at these scared folks in the room who had made mistake after mistake after mistake, scared to death, He says 'You are the recipients. You have received this incredible gift, now turn and go with it.' Just listen to these words in Philippians 2:

*"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature, God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped; but made himself nothing taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on the cross!"*

If you've put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, you were a recipient of that peace, that love, and that grace, right? He has modeled it for us and He's telling those fellas 'Hey, I'm not asking you to do something I haven't already done. It's time to take that and go. It's time to take it and go.'

The next thing He says though is not just about the people. He now is going to talk about the action. So me and you, he's already done that, but now look at what he says. He says,

*"Peace be with you,!"* Verse 21, *"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*



**“Sent and Sending”** Jesus was sent and now He is sending us. Not only did Jesus model the overall mission of the church, but now He’s modeled sentness. I think it was Spurgeon who said “Jesus stepped out of the robes of divinity and into the overalls of humanity.” He has modeled sentness. He came down here to us and now He’s telling them, ‘You’re gonna go.’ But listen to me, this is a little new. This is a little different from what they’ve experienced. Because Israel took a very passive approach to the mission of God, didn’t they? Very passive approach. Israel has sat around for years and said this, ‘We’re a special race. We’re a special people with the mark of the covenant. We’ve been given this land, not only that, we’ve got a temple with the Holy of Holies, and we worship the God of all creation.’ Now watch this guys, ‘If you want to know who the glorious God of all creation is, just come on down to Jerusalem and you can come see Him.’ Come to us.

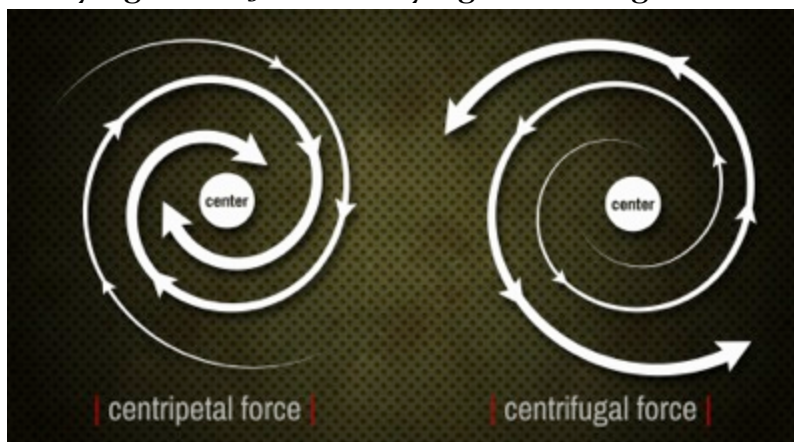


This is what we call “centripetal mission.” Everything is pointed to the in. Their thought was is ‘We have the law. If we live separate, if we’re holy, if we do what we’re supposed to do and we worship on the right day, then guess what? Everybody will just want to know about our God.’ We don’t ever do that, do we?

We don’t ever have that mode, is it? Like ‘If I just do the right thing, pray over my meal at work, pay my HOA dues and be the best neighbor I can be, people are going to want to know about Jesus and me,’ right?

Like if we fill up the parking lot, as people drive they’re gonna be thinking ‘We want to know what’s happening inside Hill Country Bible Church.’ Is that the way it works?

That very passive approach that says come and see is different than what Jesus is saying here. Jesus is saying something different. He’s talking about



“centrifugal force.” That force that goes out. He’s sending, He’s sending out. He’s saying it’s not about ‘Come and see me,’ it’s about rather ‘Go to them. Go to the world. Go to

your neighbor, go across the street, go.’ You are sent, don’t just sit back and home you live a good enough life and think ‘One day they’ll ask me.’ No that’s passive. Jesus is making it clear in the very first commission, this is about going, it’s active, it’s gonna require us to do something here. It’s gonna require us to do something.

So not only here is Jesus talking about sending out instead of just waiting for them to come to us. I think he nuances it even further. Even though it’s translated in the English sending and sent, those are actually two different Greek words. The first one, where it says *“As the Father has sent me,”* that’s actually the word “apostello.” Every time it’s used, it’s used with the idea of authority. You can hear the word apostle in it, can’t you? He’s saying this, when Jesus says ‘Every time that God has sent me,’ basically Jesus is saying the authority that I have to act, to do miracles, the things that I say that all comes from the authority of the Father. ‘I’m being sent with authority. I’m not just some crazy guy down here doing a bunch of miracles to wow you and then saying a bunch of crazy stuff. No, I’ve been sent with authority and everything I do has the mark of approval from God the Father.’

Best way I know to illustrate this is there are times when, we have 13-month old twins at the house. And you can imagine Terry and I have one and we have our hands full, and we have older children and every once in a while I need them, but I can’t go get them because I’ve got my hands full. So I’ll send a brother or a sister to go get them. And I’ll tell Caleb, who’s my 5-year old, to go get Milton, my 7-year old, and I’ll say “Caleb will you go tell Milton to come to the living room.” Now how do you think that conversation goes down? This is what he’ll do – you listen and they’ve learned. So Caleb up front will go, and he’ll walk down to the hallway, and if he says ‘Milton go to the living room.’ How do you think that goes for Milton? Milton’s like ‘You and what army are going to make me go to the living room,’ right? But if, now if you listen it’s funny. I just kind of laugh because Caleb will go back there because I don’t even have to say this, I don’t say “say dad told him.” Don’t do that. Caleb just goes in and says ‘Milton Dad said you need to go to the living room.’ And immediately Milton knows this isn’t Caleb speaking, this is dad speaking. That’s the authority with which Jesus was sent. Dad is sending. Father is sending Jesus.

But now Jesus says He’s sending us, and that’s a different word in the Greek. That’s “pempo”, and it has the idea of participation . . . participation. So it’s the idea that I’m sending you, but I’m not sending you like tag you’re it. I’m going to put my hands in my pants and just kind of watch and hope everything goes out okay. It’s the idea of I’m going with you. I’m participating with you or rather we’re participating with Jesus because Jesus wasn’t sent and now He’s no longer the sent one, but rather He has been sent and He is sent right now and



He is still doing a work in and through the lives of people. And we get to participate with him if we'll take seriously the commission here, right? We get to participate with Him on mission. He has sent us. He is sending us with His work. It's a great thought. This is not about come and see; it's about go and tell. It's not about do it on your own, it's about partnering with the one who is the sent one and will always be the sent one.

So the next thing we see is how, because I know some of us are saying 'Well, that sounds great. I've heard that before, but how? Because I can't die on a cross for people's sins, and I can't walk on water last time I checked, and I've never been able to multiply bread and fish or anything like that. So if I'm supposed to go like Jesus, how am I supposed to do that?'

There's one little word in here I think that helps us. *"As the Father sent me."* Or literally in like manner. The way we would translate that is 'As the Father sent me, so I am sending you.' I am sending you.

**"As and So"** Jesus isn't asking us to do what He did by dying on the cross or living a perfect life or doing all of those incredible miracles, but what he is saying is do it in the manner in which I did. *"As the Father sent me, I am sending you."*

So what are some of those mannerisms of Jesus as he went. Let, let me just read a few verses to you. They're going to be on the screen. I want you to think about the manner in which Jesus was sent.

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

He gives this statement after he's just hung out with Zacchaeus, and Zacchaeus makes this incredible repentance in front of all of his buddies and says, 'I'm going to repay everybody back.' And Jesus says *"I've come to seek and to save what was lost."* What would it look like if we took on the manner of Jesus and we started looking about our lives and said 'You know what, I'm not just here to seek and to save a promotion, I'm not here to seek and save a better retirement, I'm not just here to seek and save a better experience for my children. I'm here to seek and to save those who are far from Jesus.' Like what would it look like if we took on that manner. That'd be pretty cool, wouldn't it.

Or what about Matthew 20:28 *"just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many."*

Like the manner in which we were to go is a manner that says "I'm not just gonna be a consumer. It's not always gonna be about me, but rather I'm going

to look for ways that I can serve people that I can, that I can come alongside and partner just like that small group video earlier. How can I come alongside someone in their time of need and serve them and it doesn't have to always been about me.' That would be a pretty cool manner, wouldn't it?

Or Luke 7:34 *"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.'*

What would it look like if the manner in which we lived our lives was a manner that was friendly to others. So friendly that people counted us as their friends. They counted us as people they could trust in their time of need. I got an email out of the blue yesterday. A guy sends me an email from 10 years ago and he just says "Hey, thanks for being a buddy of mine. And some of the stuff you helped me with 10 years ago I'm still applying in my life." I mean wouldn't it be cool if we just were friends to people, regardless of who they are, that they knew that we were their friends, we were their advocates.

Or John 10:10 *"The thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy, but I have come that they may have life and have it to the full."*

What would it look like if our manner of life was to look at people and to say, 'I have Jesus Christ, who is the absolute answer and I would love to give Him to you. I would love to share with you what He has done, not only for you, but everyone.' If we, instead of criticizing people's lives we jumped in to say 'I've got the greatest thing ever. It's Jesus.'

Or finally my favorite Matthew 9:36 *"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*

I guess this one jumps out to me because this is one I'm terrible at. I look at people and instead of having compassion, I judge. I say 'Aw you got, you got what you paid for on that one. Say man, that's just rough for you, sorry.' Or you know, 'If you want to get that fixed do this, this, and this and good luck with it.' Instead of just opening my eyes the way Jesus saw people and having compassion on them. And seeing that these are people that need the ultimate shepherd, Jesus Christ. How can I come alongside and show them that. How can I do that.

It's amazing that Jesus showed and demonstrated and modeled the mission for us. He modeled sentness for us. He even modeled the manner for us. And if I were just guessing, probably for a majority of us in the room this is something that you've heard many times before, isn't it? It's something that I've heard a

ton of times, it's the issue of will I do it. And so instead of me trying to get up here and give an emotional plea I just thought probably the best way to do it is to share a story. And to share a story of a guy who said 'You know what, I understand that Jesus Christ did something incredible and I'm the recipient of it, and the best thing that I could do is to go out and give it to someone else.' And I want you to see the story of a guy who understands the mission and his sentness, and the fact that he's here to tell other people about Jesus Christ. Take a look.

**(video – Robert Sass speaking)** I came to faith late in life, at about 34. When I came to that decision to trust in Christ and His love that He's had for me I can't help but share that with others. I try to wake up every day and ask God that He would allow me to be a blessing in someone else's life. God, I believe has sent me to work to my neighborhood, where I live, to the gym, for the sole purpose to be His hands and feet and voice to those who are in desperate need to find hope.



Before going into the gym that day I said a, maybe a minute prayer and asked the Lord to just open my eyes to an opportunity to connect with someone. I walked in the gym, and all I can tell you is the Holy Spirit just spoke to me and said "That's the person I want you to share with."

So I went over to Jerry and I said a quick prayer to give me some courage. I would ask him questions that were basically 'get-to-know-you questions.' Where he lived, the things that



he enjoyed doing, the hobbies and sports he liked playing. He was a big fisherman so we talked about fishing. I became frustrated after a few connections with him because I had a difficult time transitioning to spiritual topics with him. I was praying specifically for God to open a door and to give me the question or give me the response that would allow that to happen.

Probably the third time I spoke to him I had asked him, "So what do you do on weekends." His answer was he liked to party, spend time with his kids and wife, and go to church. So when he said church that opened the door for spiritual topics. Over the course of five or six weeks he came to a point of understanding and came in one day and told me that he had made that decision.

**(Jerry Bennett speaking)** So I'm at the light, 183 and Lakeline, and this transformation process starts to take place. And after so many weeks of



seeking truth I had actually found it at that moment in Jesus Christ. And that is when I turned my life over to Him.

**(Robert Sass speaking)** I just remember I was

filled with a tremendous amount of joy that God would use me.



**(Jerry Bennett Speaking)** Robert had this genuine love for people. It was a reflection of Christ.

**(Robert Sass speaking)** When I think about sharing my faith with others it really stems from that deep love that Christ has for me.

**(Jerry Bennett speaking)** Without Robert being sent to me I would not know the hope I have today.

**(end of video)**

Isn't that a great story, right? Man you bet . . . I think it deserves one of those for sure. (clapping)

I love the fact that you could do another video of the people that Jerry has now shared the gospel of Jesus Christ with, and you see the fact that just an easy question 'God who do you want me to speak to today when I go into the gym. Because I know that I don't have to go to the gym today, or I don't really maybe want to go to the gym, but I know I'm sent to the gym.' Or maybe for some of us you know, 'I got a crummy job and I got to show up to work tomorrow.' And instead of saying 'I have to go to work,' maybe what would it look like if we said 'I'm sent to my workplace.' Or 'Golly I've got T-ball practice and the last thing I want to do is go to T-ball practice.' And maybe you would think, 'I'm sent to T-ball practice,' or 'I'm sent to my workplace' or 'I'm sent on that business trip

across the globe' or 'I'm sent to the high school, the field house, wherever.' Jesus has modeled perfectly what it looks like.

And for some of us we're even processing what would it look like to be sent, not just across the street or to a local business or where we work, but what would it look like for God to send us across the globe to live this out there. I think the question each and every one of us have to ask is where are you sent to, and will you live in a manner like Jesus Christ, in such a way that you'll begin to, in that place, tell other people about Jesus Christ. So that's the question I want to leave you with. Where are you sent to?

Let me pray for us. Father I love you and I thank you. I thank you for the commission statements in the New Testament where they challenge us. And this statement here doesn't tell us where we're to go, it doesn't tell us a bunch of stuff about what we're to say or even how we're going to be empowered to do it. That's all going to come later. This one just makes it very clear we're to do what Jesus did, and that's to step out of our comfort and to step out of the comfortable and to move into those places that you have us in, and to be intentional there. To be sent there. To live in a manner and such a way that we would be, our eyes would be open and see people the way you see them. So Father I pray just right now, as I know you're already just putting places and people on folks' hearts right now. And God I pray that they wouldn't be, that wouldn't be brushed off as just a coincidence, but they would begin to think intentionally. Maybe even this afternoon, where are they are headed and that they're sent there.

Just right where you're at, would you just take a moment to think about that. Where are you sent this week? No place too small, too big.

Father I pray that as we scatter from this building, in a centrifugal way that you would just go with them, you will be with them, and you will help them see folks as you see them. You will help them have incredible conversations where they can share the gospel and be friends to all those that are in their path. Thank you for being sent to us. We're the recipients of it, so now let us go to the world. It's in your Son's name we pray. Amen.

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