

Thy Perfect Light

By Chad Huber

Note: Most of the songs in the drama are either from the hymnal or in public domain. All songs can be replaced with other songs your congregation is more familiar with. Before using any songs, be sure that you have permission from the copyright holders.

(A spotlight hits the manger on an empty stage. A mysterious, haunting voice begins singing a cappella very slowly. Throughout the program this anthem will refrain again and again.)

We Three Kings Refrain – Soloist

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

(Slowly Luke enters approaching center stage. He should begin slightly nervous, but gaining confidence as he begins telling the story. Ultimately joy should fill his voice by the time he finishes.)

Luke: Hi, I'm Luke...a servant of God. I'm sorry, I haven't done this in years, and *never* in an auditorium. Well, I guess I should start from the beginning. I had heard of Jesus, and I was always intrigued. He knew love; He taught love. He performed miracles, and challenged Pharisees. I had to know more about this man that had everyone talking. He changed people. I wondered...could He change me? Since then I have spoken with His disciples, His mother, and as many people as I possibly could. I wanted to make sure His story was perfectly clear to me before I presented it to you. *(smile)* I wanted to be sure that my historical account was completely accurate and at the same time completely inspiring. I want to share with you God's glory the way Paul first shared it with me. It's God's story and I never get tired of telling it. It's God's glory and I never tire of sharing it. It's the most important story you'll *ever* hear...because it's His. His story. Our salvation.

Processional – *(A smaller selected choir should enter with candles)*

Before the marvel of this night – Small Choir

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda © 1981 Jaroslav J. Vajda; Tune: Carl Schalk © 1979 GIA Publications, Inc. *(With One Voice 636)*

Before the marvel of this night
Adoring, fold your wings and bow.
Then tear the sky apart with light,
And with your news the world endow.
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace,
That fear and death and sorrow cease:
Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace,
Sing peace, sing gift of peace!

Awake the sleeping world with song;
This is the day the Lord has made.
Assemble here, celestial throng;
In royal splendor come arrayed.
Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss,
A teasing taste of what they miss:
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss,
Sing bliss, sing endless bliss!

The love that we have always known,
Our constant joy and endless light,
Now to the loveless world be shown,
Now break upon its deathly night.
Into one song compress the love
That rules our universe above:
Sing love, sing love, sing God is love,
Sing love, sing God is love!

(Lights return to the stage where Mary is scrubbing clothes in a washing basin. She should be whistling or humming until she is suddenly surprised. She should whistle an unfamiliar tune. Gabriel suddenly appears behind her.)

Gabriel: Greetings. *(Mary screams and back away, then realizing who it is she kneels.)* Do not be afraid, Mary. *(Mary looks up slowly.)* You are highly favored with the Lord. The time is now. He has chosen you. You will give birth to the promised Messiah.

Mary: *(confused)* What?

Gabriel: His name is to be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

Mary: How can this be? I am a virgin.

Gabriel: The Holy Spirit has planted the seed in you. This is the holy one that will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth, your relative, is going to have a child in her old age. Remember Mary, nothing is impossible with God.

Mary: I am the Lord's servant, and I will do as the Lord asks.

(Lights dim as a spotlight appears on the first Bible reader. The reader should be holding a Bible, and should not mention where the text is from. Texts can be listed in the program.)

Psalm 119:105-107, 111-112

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. I have taken an oath and confirmed it, that I will follow your righteous laws. I have suffered much; preserve my life, O Lord, according to your word. Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end."

(A spotlight hits the manger on an empty stage once again. The soloist should sing just as slowly as before.)

We Three Kings Refrain – Soloist

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

(Now Matthew enters and approaches the manger speaking as Luke did before.)

Matthew: Good Evening. I'm Matthew, a servant of God. I first met Jesus while I was working in Capernaum. I had heard about Jesus...and just hearing of Him stirs something up inside you. I looked at how He lived His life, and I looked at how I lived mine. *(pause)* I was rich; I was supposed to be happy. I had heard of the principles He taught, and I was curious, so during that week before I met Him I tried charging people only what was owed the government and nothing more. That was the first time I actually remember truly experiencing happiness...seeing those smiling, joyous faces as they asked, "Is that all?" and thanked me as they continued on their journey.

When Jesus came and asked me to follow Him I was floored. People hated me! I was a sinner and He not only *knew* me, but He *wanted* me. He wanted *me*. He saw me not for who I was, but for who I could become.
I changed; I was a new man. Jesus chose me and now He's choosing you.

(Matthew backs off as the light shifts to Joseph who is saying his bedtime prayers.)

Joseph: *(kneeling at his bedside)* Lord, Help me to find your strength. *(pause)* Help me to do the right thing. Mary is pregnant, and though I am hurt I don't want to shame her. I want to glorify you with my life. Help me to make the best decision, Your decision. Amen.
(Joseph crawls into bed and goes to sleep.)

Gabriel: *(He appears at Joseph's side and speaks to him as he sleeps.)* Joseph, don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The child in her is truly from the Holy Spirit. You have been chosen to raise the Savior of the world. This is all taking place to fulfill the prophecy, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" – Immanuel, which means "God with us." He is with you, Joseph – all of you.

(Lights fade to spotlight the reader)

John 9:4-5

"As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

Savior of the Nations, Come (sts. 1, 4, 7) – Large Choir

Text (sts. 1-2) and tune: Public domain; (sts. 4-5,8) © 1978 Concordia Publishing House. Text (sts. 3, 6-7) and setting: © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. (LSB 332)

Savior of the nations, come,
Show yourself the virgin's son.
Marvel, heaven, wonder, earth,
That our God chose such a birth.

Then stepped forth the Lord of all
From his pure and kingly hall;
God of God, becoming man,
His heroic course began.

From the manger newborn light
Sends a glory through the night.
Night cannot this light subdue,
Faith keeps springing ever new.

(Joseph yells from offstage to Mary as she sits onstage with her head in her hands.)

Joseph: Mary! Are you ready?

Mary: *(looks up and mouths "No")*

Joseph: *(peeks his head in)* Mary, this trip is going to take us a few days, so we'd better be going.

Mary: Why couldn't we have done this three months ago? We could have stayed *somewhere* in Bethlehem.

Joseph: You know we don't have that kind of money.

Mary: I just thought things would be easier with...you know.

Joseph: Maybe one day it will be, but right now we have to do what's best for us and the baby.

Mary: Joseph, I don't know if I can do this!

Joseph: *(moving in to Mary)* Honey, it's going to be okay. God will be with us. He will protect us.

Mary: I don't doubt that. It's just that I don't feel like traveling by *donkey* right now.

Joseph: I know, but we're going to have to.

Mary: Can you give me a minute?

Joseph: *(putting his arm around her)* We'll take it slowly even if it takes an extra day to get there. Okay? *(Mary nods)* I'm going to go finish packing for our trip.

(Lights fade except for a spot on the reader and the manger.)

I John 1:5-7

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin."

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful – Large Choir with Congregation

Text and music: Public domain. (LSB 379)

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!	Highest, most holy, Light of light eternal,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;	Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Come and behold him	Son of the Father
Born the king of angels:	Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him,	Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,	Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,	Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!	Christ the Lord!

(Luke and Matthew should both be next to the manger speaking conversationally.)

Matthew: The Roman Empire took a census every 14 years to assess taxation and register those liable for military service.

Luke: The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 80 miles. A long way for a pregnant woman on a donkey. A long way for anyone really.

Matthew: The Innkeepers were ready for all the travelers, but you really couldn't make reservations back then. It was first come, first serve.

Luke: Joseph and Mary's travels took longer than expected, and when they arrived the inns were all filled.

Matthew: There was no room for Jesus.

Luke: The world didn't leave room for Jesus. In fact, there would be no room for Jesus until he was laid upon the cross.

(Luke and Matthew exit, but the spotlight remains on the manger while the reader reads and as the soloist sings. The soloist should be accompanied by a second vocalist on the last line of this refrain.)

John 8:12

“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”

We Three Kings Refrain – Soloist & Duet

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Innkeeper: *(enters)* Boy, am I hungry!

Inn Wife: Dinner’s almost ready.

Innkeeper: I’ve never seen anything like this. *(Joseph is heard knocking at the door.)* Can you get that?

Inn Wife: Can’t they see the sign?

Innkeeper: They’ll just have to continue on tonight.

Inn Wife: *(She opens the door and Joseph pops in.)* I’m sorry, but there’s no vacancy.

Joseph: But Ma’am, my wife, she’s pregnant. We have no place else to go.

Inn Wife: *(thinks for a moment)* We’re all filled up.

Joseph: Please, anything!

Inn Wife: *(sighs and then yells behind her)* Frank! *(pause)* I’m sorry, I really am. I just don’t know what to do.

Innkeeper: *(entering)* What?

Inn Wife: These folks need a place to stay.

Innkeeper: *(matter-of-factly)* That’s not my problem.

Joseph: Sir, please have compassion. My wife is pregnant. We have no place else to go.

Innkeeper: Look, all I have room for is animals. I can take your donkey, but not you.

Mary: *(from offstage)* Joseph!

Joseph: *(hoping)* Can we stay with our donkey?

Innkeeper: What?

Inn Wife: You want to take your pregnant wife to a stable?
Joseph: *(looks back at Mary)* Do you have enough room for three animals?
Innkeeper: *(hesitantly)* I guess.
Joseph: *(shaking his hand)* We'll take it!

Love Has Come! – Small Choir

Text: Public domain.

Love has come – a light in the darkness!	Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.
Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.	Love is God now asleep in the hay.
See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;	See the glow in the eyes of his mother;
Hear how their song of joy arises:	What is the name her heart is saying?
Love! Love!	Love! Love!
Born unto you, a Savior!	Love is the name she whispers;
Love! Love!	Love! Love!
Glory to God on high.	Jesus, Immanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us!
Love is life everlasting and free.
Love is Jesus within and among us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
Love! Love!
Love is the gift of Christmas;
Love! Love!
Praise to you, God on high!

(Joseph and Mary are now kneeling next to the manger. Mary is smiling at the Baby Jesus while Joseph looks uncertainly at Mary.)

Joseph: *(hesitantly)* Mary?
Mary: Hmm?
Joseph: Oh nothing.
Mary: *(looking up)* What is it?
Joseph: I don't know, I'm just a little scared is all.
Mary: Me too.
Joseph: Yeah?
Mary: I mean, it's not about us anymore. It's about Him. We have the responsibility of raising the Savior.
Joseph: Why were we chosen? I mean look at us. We're in a stable.
Mary: *(smiling)* You're going to make a wonderful father.
Joseph: I know we'll do our best, but is our best going to be good enough?

Mary: It must be.

Joseph: I mean...I'm going to have to put in extra work so we can get by.

Mary: Joseph, we just had this baby, and look at what God already has you thinking about. It's like you said. God will be with us.

(Again, the spotlight remains on the manger scene as the reader reads and the soloist sings. The soloist should again be accompanied by a second vocalist on the last line of this refrain.)

Isaiah 60:19

"The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory."

We Three Kings Refrain – Soloist & Duet

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

(Matthew and Luke enter looking over the manger scene but speaking to the audience.)

Matthew: A European monarch used to worry his court by walking incognito among his people. His response? "I cannot rule my people unless I know how they live."
Jesus became one of us. He knows how difficult life can be. He understands us, and it's through this understanding that He seeks to change us.

Luke: The Messiah was here! Heaven rejoiced! Angels sang Hallelujah! But who was the first to hear? Rabbis? Kings? *(shakes head)* Shepherds. Not exactly a respected profession. They probably felt unworthy. Even though I'm a doctor, I know I would have felt unworthy. But that's exactly why God reached down to us by sending His Son; to tell us that we are worthy. Jesus was here, and He wanted all to know!

I John 3:1-3

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

The First Noel – Large Choir with Congregation

Text: Public domain.

The first Noel, the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep:
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the East, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night:
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went:
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his blood mankind hath brought:
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, Born is the King of Israel.

(Shepherds burst into the stable.)

Shepherd 1: We got here as soon as we could!

Joseph: *(jumping up)* Are you here for your animals?

Shepherd 2: No, we came to see our Savior. The Messiah!

Shepherd 3: We left *everything* to come and see.

Mary: *(surprised)* But, how did you know?

Shepherd 2: *(in awe)* Thousands of angels came to us.

Mary: *(looks at Joseph then smiles)* Well come in.

Shepherd 3: *(approaching)* Is this the One?

Shepherd 1: Is this what those angels were singing about?

Shepherd 2: He's so little, and yet He will be the light of the world.

Shepherd 3: *(smiling)* He *is* the light of the world.

(Again, the spotlight remains on the manger scene. Now, the refrain should be a joyous duet. It should be sung at normal speed, but still slow down on the last line.)

Acts 4:12

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

We Three Kings Refrain – Duet

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Luke: Three kings also heard the message and came to see Jesus. Kings came to a stable with animals and shepherds – to worship! Christ came for kings, shepherds, rich, poor; Christ came for All.

Matthew: The kings were led by a star. A simple light guided them to our Savior. Their hope took them to the perfect light. Christ was here, and He would change them too. So much so that they would take a longer route home.

King 1: Hello?

Joseph: *(looking back)* Welcome.

Shepherd 2: Come in and see. The Savior is here!

Shepherd 1: The wait is over! He is finally here!

Shepherd 3: Over? Why our journey has just begun. *(Shepherds continue to discuss as they exit. The three kings present their gifts, worship, and leave all during the following dialogue and song.)*

Luke: How right he is! My journey certainly began when Christ entered my heart.

Matthew: My life was turned upside down. I went from a hated tax collector to a...well a hated disciple. But joy, peace, and love now filled my life. I knew I'd never feel the same.

Luke: Like me, these shepherds discovered that our worldly desires were no longer first in my life. Christ now fills the holes that we had been trying to fill ourselves.

Matthew: I left my money and job behind. I learned what life was really about, and now I just want to help others find what I have found.

(A spotlight should come up on the manger once again as the Bible verse is read and through the following song.)

Romans 12:2

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this 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."

What Child Is This – Large Choir

Text and music: Public domain. (LSB 370)

What child is this, who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the son of Mary!

Why lies he in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be born for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The virgin sings her lullaby
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The babe, the son of Mary!

(The lights come up to see both Mary and Joseph in the stable and the Innkeeper and his wife in their place.)

Mary: Two years ago, could you have imagined this in your future?

Joseph: I'm still having a hard time imagining it.

Mary: Would you change anything?

Joseph: *(looking around)* Mary, I can't see how life could be any better. I mean, how could our plans be better than those of God? Little Jesus, our Immanuel...He will be the one to change everything!

Inn Wife: Those kids must be miserable out there.

Innkeeper: I can't believe they had a baby in that stable.

Inn Wife: What choice did they have?

Innkeeper: I told them they could move into one of the rooms as soon as there was a vacancy.

Inn Wife: Oh good, they should be able to do that later this evening. We should help them.

Innkeeper: You just want to see that baby again.

Inn Wife: And what's wrong with that?

Innkeeper: *(smiles)* I'd like to see him too.

Inn Wife: How those two keep their spirits up at all, I'll never know.

Innkeeper: I'd be in a bad mood, that's for sure.

Inn Wife: *(teasing)* You're always in a bad mood.

(Again, the spotlight should come up on the manger scene. After the Bible verse the refrain should be sung with joy at a normal speed throughout.)

Jeremiah 29:13

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

We Three Kings Refrain – Duet

Text: Public Domain

Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Matthew: Herod's biggest fear was losing his power. This kept him paranoid about anyone and everyone. So when he heard of a baby that would eventually deliver Israel, he took extreme measures.

Luke: What is your biggest fear? *(pause)* Mine is a family member dying before they've come to believe in Christ as their Savior. I too will go to extremes so that this doesn't happen.

Matthew: Mary and Joseph now had to travel to Egypt to protect their baby. From birth in a stable in a strange town to a journey to a foreign land, His troubled life had begun. The world was already trying to get rid of Him.

Luke: It wasn't about to get easier. The worst was still to come. And that's why we rejoice! He came to suffer for us! He came to die for us! *He came for us*, and for that we exalt Him.

We Will Exalt You – Large Choir

Text and tune: Terry Butler © 1999 Higher Praise.

We will exalt you oh Lord,
We will exalt you oh Lord,
We will exalt you oh Lord, Emmanuel.
We will exalt you oh Lord,
We will exalt you oh Lord,
We will exalt you oh Lord, Emmanuel.

You are the child born to us,
You are God's Son giv'n to us,
Counselor, Prince of Peace, Mighty God.
You are the child born to us,
You are God's Son giv'n to us,
Merciful Savior of love, Emmanuel.

I Peter 2:19-24

“For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth. When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.”

Shepherd 1: Do you think the sheep are all right?

Shepherd 2: They've probably all wandered off in different directions.

Shepherd 3: How can we go back to sheep after what has happened to us?

Shepherd 2: We're probably fired anyway.

Shepherd 3: Angels! From Heaven! We were destined for something bigger. God has chosen us! I can't just go back to my old life now. I can't just sit on this information. I need to tell people. I want others to feel the joy that I do. I want others to rejoice now that the promised one is here. He is here for them, and they need to know about it.

Shepherd 1: Who said anything about our "old lives" being the same?

Shepherd 2: Yeah, and maybe God has protected the flock so we wouldn't lose our jobs.

Shepherd 3: I just feel so overwhelmed by everything that's happened. I don't want my life to be pointless.

Shepherd 2: Our job is not pointless. We may not be smart or rich or popular, but that doesn't mean that we have nothing to offer.

Shepherd 1: God chose shepherds because He wanted shepherds to know. He wanted shepherds to reach people that other professions may never reach. Yes, we *were* chosen for

something much bigger. We were chosen to be God's voice to the poor. We have been blessed, and you're right; our lives will never be the same.

(The spotlight should come up on the manger. The verse should be sung by the duet and the entire choir should sing the refrain with joy.)

We Three Kings Refrain – Duet & Large Choir

Text: Public Domain

Glorious now, behold Him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
Heaven sings "Hallelujah!"
"Hallelujah!" earth replies.

Oh, Star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Matthew: I followed Jesus for three years learning more from Him than I ever thought possible. Then when He was arrested I ran and hid. I was confused by all that was happening, and afterwards I was ashamed of myself. How could I have been such a coward? When our risen Lord appeared to us my hope was restored. Again, I was renewed. Again, I devoted my life to Jesus. Again, I learned why He came to this earth. He is our Savior, our Redeemer, our Life. He is here! This is the beginning for Him, and it's the beginning for you. Go and teach others so they can teach others. Christ will be with you till the very end.

Luke: I didn't know Jesus until after His ascension, but that doesn't mean I missed out by not being chosen as one of the twelve. My time came later, and Christ lead the way as I began my ministry. I studied, I researched, I interviewed, and I wrote, all with Christ by my side. I was amazed at all the work the Lord had done through me. I was amazed that He even chose to use me. But then I thought about all the people that He has chosen. He chose Paul, a persecutor; Peter, a fisherman; Matthew, a tax collector. He chose shepherds, kings, and even a thief on a cross. That's the joy of the Christmas story. Christ chose us all! He's still here, your Perfect Light, hoping one day you will kneel before Him – kneel in the presence of His never-ending glory!

Immanuel – Large Choir with Congregation

Text and tune: Andy Park © 1990 Mercy Publishing

Chorus

Immanuel, unto us a Son is given.
Immanuel is God with us.
He is born for us,
Christ the long awaited Messiah,
Immanuel has come to dwell with us!

Now a light has dawned in the land of darkness.
Now the chosen One has come to us.
We have seen His light, we have seen His glory,
Shining in the dark like the rising sun. (Chorus)

Born in a manger; a baby poor and lowly.
Born of a virgin is Christ the Lord.
Glory to the Lord; all glory in the highest.
Peace on Earth to men who will follow Him. (Chorus)

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