

## Principles on Truth: Emeth & Aletheia; Believer's Must Choose between the Divine or Cosmic Systems; Truth Is Absolute & Determines Right from Wrong

### VI. Principles on Truth:

1. The biblical words for truth are, in the Hebrew, אֱמֶת  **emeth**, and in the Greek, ἀλήθεια, **alētheia**. They are defined by:

**Kittel, Gerhard (ed.). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), 1:232-33; 242; 244-45:**

**The Old Testament Term אֱמֶת.** The word is used absolutely to denote a reality which is to be regarded as "firm," and therefore "solid," "valid," or "binding." It thus signifies what is "true." When used of persons, it sometimes expresses that which predominantly characterizes their speech, action or thought. ... one whose conduct falls under the norm of truth and therefore a man of integrity. (pp. 232-33)

**The Early Christian Use of ἀλήθεια.** ἀλήθεια is that "on which one can rely." It signifies "reliability" or "trustworthiness." (p. 242)

ἀλήθεια can also be used for "true teaching." The Christian faith can be called ὑπακοή τῆς ἀληθείας [*hupakoē tēs alētheias*: "obedience to the truth"] in 1 Peter 1:22. The preaching of the Gospel can be called λόγος ἀληθείας [*logos alētheias*: "the word of truth"] in 2 Corinthians 6:7; Colossians 1:5 and Ephesians 1:13. In 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 the ἀλήθεια is the Christian revelation as opposed to the revelation of Antichrist, which is called ψεῦδος and ἀδικία [*pseudos* and *adikia*: the "lie" and "unrighteousness"]. (p. 244)

ἀλήθεια and ψεῦδος are understood as genuine possibilities of human existence rather than substances. It is in keeping that revelation is determined by the thought of the Word and of hearing the Word, so that we again have a genuine possibility of existence. The reception of ἀλήθεια is conditioned neither by rational instruction on the one side nor physical preparation on the other; it takes place in obedient faith. (p. 245)

2. The issue in the Angelic Conflict is not that truth is reality and the lie is an illusion. Both are real, both function and operate within a system. Thus, the challenge for the human soul is not the choice of reality over non-reality but the choice of one system over another.
3. The believer must make a choice to function within the reality of God's system called truth or within the reality of Satan's system characterized by the lie.
4. The soul will accept either system but not both simultaneously. Ephesians 4 notes that we are born into Satan's system but through the assets imputed at salvation we have the power to make the transformation over to God's system:

**Ephesians 4:22 -** With reference to your former manner of life, rid yourselves of the **old man** [ **reversion into cosmic living under the sinful nature's dominance**], who is being corrupted according to the lusts from the source of deceit,

**v. 23 -** and that you be restored again by the Holy Spirit by means of your mind,

**v. 24 -** for the purpose that you clothe yourself with the **new man** [ **the believer functioning in the divine power system** ], which according to the standard of God has been created in God's image in the sphere of righteousness and integrity that comes from truth.

**v. 25** - Therefore, having stripped off the lie, each one of you keep communicating the truth to those near to you [ **fellow believers** ], for we are members of one another [ **royal family** ].

5. Truth is the sine qua non of the Christian way of life. It refers to the content of all biblical standards. These standards of truth are unalterable, unchangeable, and undeniable. These standards may be summarized as follows:
  - 1) God did not discover truth and then adopt it as His righteous standard. God *is* truth, and thus truth finds its source in the perfection of God.
  - 2) Consequently, man in his imperfection is not qualified to establish the content of truth.
  - 3) Man, in grace, may be privileged to discover truth and then subscribe to its standards.
  - 4) God in His justice uses truth as the lone criterion in determining whether mankind is to be blessed or disciplined.
  - 5) Man may adjust to the justice of God by adopting truth or suffer the consequences for maladjustment.
  - 6) Hence, man is not permitted to decide what is truth and what is not. Truth *is* and man may either accept it or reject it.
  - 7) In order to provide the human race with accessibility to truth, God has reduced to writing that portion of it He wishes man to know and has faithfully preserved its revelation in the Bible.
  - 8) Since the Bible is the singular source of truth then its instruction becomes our guide in the identification of perfect standards by which we may determine right from wrong.
  - 9) Therefore, truth is permanently linked to divine righteousness.
  - 10) Since God is truth, His Word is truth and the standards which emerge from His truth become identified with God's perfect essence.
6. Development of an honor code in the soul results in a system of integrity based on Bible doctrine. It is designed to enable the believer to relate to others, believers and unbelievers alike, from the source of personal integrity.
7. Integrity means unbending loyalty to the absolute principles of the Word of God. One must be convinced that these principles are unchanging and unalterable and represent the expression of divine truth.
8. The objective of the plan of God is to make the believer independent of all life's problems through total dependence upon God.
9. This dependence upon God is what gives power and direction in one's relationship with others and results in the acquisition and application of an honor code.