



Date: 09/28/2025

Text: 1 John 2:18 – 2:29 NLT

Sermon: The Battle of the End Times - Truth

Matthew 24:36 NLT

“However, no one knows the day or hour when these things will happen, not even the angels in heaven or the Son himself. Only the Father knows.

1 John 2:18-23 NLT

¹⁸ Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, and already many such antichrists have appeared. From this we know that the last hour has come. ¹⁹ These people left our churches, but they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left, it proved that they did not belong with us.

²⁰ But you are not like that, for the Holy One has given you his Spirit, and all of you know the truth. ²¹ So I am writing to you not because you don't know the truth but because you know the difference between truth and lies. ²² And who is a liar? Anyone who says that Jesus is not the Christ. Anyone who denies the Father and the Son is an antichrist. ²³ Anyone who denies the Son doesn't have the Father, either. But anyone who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Matthew 2:22 NKJV

But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.

Luke 11:11 NLT

“You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead?

Notes:

Three types of lies we will confront:

The Adversary

Romans 1:18 NLT

But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.

The counterfeit Christian

2 Timothy 3:8 NLT

These teachers oppose the truth just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. They have depraved minds and a counterfeit faith.

Matthew 7:15 NLT

“Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves.

The Well-Meaning

Matthew 16:23 NLT

Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

Truth is found only in _____ with Christ.

1 John 2:24-27 NLT

²⁴ So you must remain faithful to what you have been taught from the beginning. If you do, you will remain in fellowship with the Son and with the Father. ²⁵ And in this fellowship we enjoy the eternal life he promised us.

²⁶ I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray. ²⁷ But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.

Notes:

The _____ of God takes the _____ of God to make us men and women of God.

1 John 2:28-29 NLT

²⁸ And now, dear children, remain in fellowship with Christ so that when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame.

²⁹ Since we know that Christ is righteous, we also know that all who do what is right are God's children.

Notes:

_____ **Living in Truth.**

Next Steps:

How do we discern the truth?

1. Consider the source
2. Keep a healthy skepticism
3. Ask lots of questions
4. Verify everything / Fact Check

5. Is it Biblical

Acts 17:10–11 NLT

That very night the believers sent Paul and Silas to Berea. When they arrived there, they went to the Jewish synagogue. And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.

Life Group Questions:

Get to Know You

Question: What's one prediction you've heard (serious or silly) that didn't come true—like end-times prophecies, sports upsets, or even family “prophecies”? How did you react when it turned out to be false?

Digging Deeper in the Bible

Read 1 John 2:18-29 and write down any questions, observations or things that stood out to you.

Question: In 1 John 2:18–29, John warns about “antichrists” and deception. Why do you think deception about *who Jesus is* strikes at the very heart of the gospel (vv. 22–23)? How does this connect with Matthew 24:36, where even Jesus points us back to the Father's authority over the future? Do you think we get too fixated on looking for “Antichrist's” or focusing on the end times theology?

Question: John calls believers to “abide in Him” (vv. 27–28) as protection against deception. Looking at your daily life, what practical habits or steps can you take this week to abide more closely in Christ—so that truth shapes you more than the noise of culture, media, or even “well-meaning” voices?

TRUTH

The most common term for truth in the OT is Heb. *’ēmet*, meaning a reality which is “firm” or “certain.” It contains the idea of solidity, validity, faithfulness, and steadfastness. When referring to an individual’s speech, action, or thought, truth denotes a quality of integrity in line with what is “true.” In the LXX this is most often translated by Gk. *alētheia*, “truth,” or one of its forms.

As a legal term *’ēmet* denotes authentic facts which can be verified. If charges brought against a bride by the husband are not false but “true,” then legal action is justified based on evidence (Deut. 22:20). A charge of idolatry may be punishable by a sentence of death if the “charge is proved true” (Deut. 17:4). The queen of Sheba verifies that the report of Solomon’s accomplishments and wisdom was “true” by visiting to see for herself (1 Kgs. 10:6–7). In Daniel’s vision of the last days the word revealed to him was “true” and indisputable (Dan. 10:1).

Truth proceeds from the nature of God, as seen in the words of a prophet. Elijah’s raising of the widow’s son from the dead was proof to her that “the word of the Lord” in his mouth is truth (1 Kgs. 17:24). Zechariah sets forth the essence of prophetic moral teachings as rendering “true judgments” along with showing kindness and mercy (Zech. 7:9). The judicial aspect of *’ēmet* is also present in Zechariah’s instruction to “speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgments that are true” (Zech. 8:16–17).

The concept of truth in the OT appears most frequently in the religious sense, denoting an experiential reality or feeling apart from any essential forensic meaning. God desires “truth in the inward being” (Ps. 51:6 [MT 8]). One who speaks “truth from the heart” has the moral qualification for a cultic position in the congregation; he has a mind fixed on truth, “walking blamelessly” and “doing what is right” (Ps. 15:2). God’s judgments are called *’ēmet* by the psalmist, who seems to equate truth with Scripture (cf. Dan. 10:21). “Truth” may also denote the Jewish religion (Dan. 8:12; cf. 1 Esdr. 4:36–40).

In rabbinic literature “truth” denotes a human attitude which reflects the divine reality. Rabbi Simeon stated that “The world rests on three things; on righteousness, on truth, and on peace” (*’Abot*. 1.18). In the legal sphere the execution of law by humans has a religious dimension. God is the divine Judge who judges all things according to *’ēmet*. The Torah itself is “truth” as an expression of the divine Word. The essence of God is *’ēmet*.

In the hymn of praise to “truth” (1 Esdr. 4:36–40), truth (Gk. *alētheia*) is personified as a powerful actor in nature and society whose righteousness stands in stark contrast to the unrighteousness of wine, the king, women, and all human beings (4:37). She endures and is strong forever. While this

hymn in praise of truth, “the strongest thing in the world,” comes out of the general wisdom literature of the ancient Near East, it has been adapted to fit the character of God as Lord of nature and society as found in the OT.

In the NT the meaning of *alētheia* is determined partly by the Semitic use of *’ēmet* and partly by the Greek and Hellenistic use of *alētheia*. In the original Greek usage, *alētheia* has the basic meaning of disclosing that which has been concealed. The historian would use it to indicate a real state of affairs as contrasted with a myth or legend in which reality has been concealed or hidden. Philosophers would use the term to distinguish a real state of existence from one which had only the appearance of reality. In Plato the real world was the world of ideas which could only be comprehended through thinking, not through the senses. In certain Hellenistic quarters, however, “truth” takes on an “eschatological” meaning with comprehension of this reality available to mortals only through ecstasy or revelation from the divine realm. This understanding of “truth” is developed in the gnostic writings as well as in Philo and Plotinus.

Early Christian use of *alētheia* reflects the diversity of meanings which *’ēmet* has in the OT and rabbinic sources as well as Greek and Hellenistic usage. The author of Ephesians uses *alētheia* in the sense of that which “has certainty and force” in contrast to pagan ways and of the “truth” that was in Jesus (Eph. 4:21). Likewise, for Paul “truth” means a legitimate standard, that which is “genuine” or “proper,” which could be used to measure the claims of his opponents against him (Gal. 2:5). It is also used in the sense of “uprightness” (e.g., “do the right thing”; John 3:21; 1 John 1:6). “Truth” is the opposite of wrongdoing (1 Cor. 13:6). It can also designate that which is reliable or trustworthy, as opposed to human falsehood; likewise, it can refer to God’s justice in contrast to mankind’s injustice (Rom. 3:3–7). “Truth” can also simply mean “sincerity or honesty” (2 Cor. 7:14).

Truth can also indicate “the real state of affairs” in the Greek philosophical sense, as when Paul speaks of people giving up the “truth about God for a lie,” serving the creature rather than the Creator (Rom. 1:25). This is reflected in 1 John 3:18, which exhorts the reader to love “not in word or speech, but in truth and action.” “Doing the truth” may also have this meaning, but seems to allow also the interpretation of truth with the divine revelation (John 8:40, 45; 5:33).

Sometimes “truth” simply means the “sober truth” or a “statement of fact,” as in Paul’s response to Festus’ judgment that Paul’s defense reflected his insanity (Acts 26:25) and in Jesus’ statement of fact about the widows in Israel during Elijah’s time (4:25). Paul calls the gospel “truth” (2 Cor. 4:2); Col. 1:5 speaks of the preaching of the gospel as the “word of truth.”

For John “truth” could mean a saving knowledge, not simple knowledge in general. It could free one from sin and slavery (John 8:32). Although some see gnostic overtones in the antithesis between divine and antidivine reality which John draws in his Gospel, it is more likely that John understood “truth” and “falsehood” as real possibilities for human life rather than permanently opposed cosmological “substances” (John 8:44). The Holy Spirit promised by Jesus is the “Spirit of truth” (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; cf. Mark 13:11; Acts 1:8). This “truth” functions as a part of revelation, a witnessing spirit in the community (1 John 5:6).

Bibliography. R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*. AB 29 (Garden City, 1966); R. Bultmann, G. Quell, and G. Kittel, “*alētheia*,” *TDNT* 1:232–51.¹

¹ William R. Goodman Jr., “[Truth](#),” in *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1338–1339.