

ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ IN THE PAULINE CORPUS

A SURVEY of the investigations which have been made of ἀλήθεια and its cognates brings to light the rather astonishing fact that, while much has been done to clarify the use of these terms in the Johannine writings, very little has been done on their use in the Pauline corpus.

I

The major investigations can be summarized as follows: A general investigation which was made by H. G. Hoelemann (published 1859)¹ proposed a simplified explanation for ἀλήθεια in terms of “Seyn” and “Beharrlichkeit” covering both the Old and the New Testaments. In 1883 H. H. Wendt² attempted to explain its use in the New Testament as influenced mainly by the Hebrew words *'emeth* and *'emunah* which are derived from the stem *'mn*. In the earlier editions of his *Biblich-theologisches Wörterbuch* (1867 ff.) H. Cremer³ did not admit any Hebraic influence on the use of ἀλήθεια in the entire New Testament. Later he did explain Rom. iii. 7 and xv. 8 in an Hebraic sense. This, however, did not change his position in any noteworthy degree.⁴ Among the various articles published in dictionaries on the subject concerned, mention should be made of V. H. Stanton's investigation⁵ in which he agrees to a large extent with Cremer, including the latter's opinion on the use of ἀλήθεια in Rom. iii. 7 and xv. 8. In 1928 R. Bultmann⁶ published an article in which he revived and improved Wendt's thesis that the use of ἀλήθεια in the New Testament was determined by its Hebraic background as found in the LXX. He

¹ *Bibelstudien* (Leipzig: E. Haynel, 1859), I, 1–53.

² “Der Gebrauch der Wörter ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής, und ἀληθινός im Neuen Testamente, auf Grund des alttestamentlichen Sprachgebrauches,” *Theologische Studien und Kritiken, eine Zeitschrift für das gesamt Gebiet der Theologie*, LXV, 2 (1883), 511–547.

³ *Biblich-theologisches Wörterbuch der neutestamentlichen Gräzität* (10, veränderte Auflage herausgegeben von J. Kögel, Gotha: F. A. Perthes, 1915), pp. 110–127.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁵ “Truth,” *A Dictionary of the Bible Dealing with Language, Literature, and Contents including Biblical Theology*, edited by James Hastings, IV (1909), 816, col. 2–280, col. 1.

⁶ “Untersuchungen zum Johannesevangelium,” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche*, XXVII (1928), 113–163.

excluded the Gospel and Epistles of John, and Hebrews, which he thought were under Greek influence. With a few exceptions¹ this contention was retained in his article in G. Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*.

As far as the Pauline corpus is concerned, investigations were limited mainly to the linguistic aspect at the expense of other, equally important problems. Apart then from the unsettled question as to Hebraic or Greek-Hellenistic influence on the use of ἀλήθεια in the Pauline corpus, there are other aspects which necessitate a more comprehensive reconsideration of all the problems involved. These can be analyzed as follows: Just what is the meaning when the word is employed? Were the meaning or meanings determined by the Greek-Hellenistic or Hebraic concept of ἀλήθεια as found in the LXX? What is its content, and what does the Pauline corpus teach us about its nature, its sources, appropriation, communication, propagation, and effects?

II

Philologists seem to be in general accord that ἀλήθεια was derived from the verb λανθάνειν, to forget, and that its basic meaning is that which is not forgotten, that which is open, or uncovered. In its application it means further reality, whether concrete or abstract, correspondence, and in a rather limited number of instances it means truthfulness.

On the basis of an exegetical study and a comparison of ἀλήθεια in the LXX with the Hebrew words which it renders (*'urim* and *tummim*, *'emun*, *'emunah*, *'omnah*, *'emeth*, *yashar*, *meysarim*, *nakhoach*, *tom*, *nekhonah*), supplemented by a similar study of its cognates and by an investigation of the Greek words, other than ἀλήθεια, which are employed to render these Hebrew words, its meanings and connotations in the LXX can be summarized as follows: faithfulness [Gen. xxiv. 27; Ps. lxxxviii (lxxxix). 9; xcix (c). 5; cxviii (cxix). 90; etc.],

¹ In his first article he interpreted Rom. i. 18, 25 in an Hebraic sense as that which is dependable (*op. cit.*, p. 128). Later he took it in the formerly rejected Greek sense as revelation ["ἀλήθεια", *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, I (1933), 244]. He also explains ἀλήθεια with verbs of pronouncement in a Greek sense (Rom. ix. 1; 2 Cor. xii. 6, etc.) (*loc. cit.*).

trustworthiness, stability,¹ uprightness (Is. xxvi. 10), sincerity (Tob. viii. 7), righteousness,² certainty (Deut. xxii. 20; Jud. ix. 15), firmness, perfection and completeness (cf. Deut. xxv. 15; Is. xxxviii. 3; xlv. 26), and revelation (Ex. xxviii. 30; Lev. viii. 8; Num. xxvii. 21; Deut. xxxiii. 8; 1 Kings xxviii. 6; 2 Esd. ii. 63; xvii. 65).

In the two instances where the Aramaic words *yacqib* and *qeshot* are rendered by ἀλήθεια it merely embraces the element of factual certainty (Dan. ii. 8, 47). It might be mentioned in this connection that the Rabbinic use of *'emeth* (*qushta*) remained virtually the same as in the Old Testament.³

In the rest of the LXX where there are no Hebrew or Aramaic equivalents the meanings of ἀλήθεια still correspond to a large extent with those cases where it was equated with Hebrew words which are derived from the stem *'mn*. In a number of instances, however, it is used as truth in an absolute sense, approximating the Greek use (Wisd. vi. 22, cf. Sir. iv. 25, 28; 3 Macc. iv. 16; 4 Macc. v. 10, 18; vi. 18).

A comparison of the Greek-Hellenistic and Hebraic concepts of ἀλήθεια shows that according to the former it pertains predominantly to metaphysical, epistemological, and noetic matters; according to the latter it denotes predominantly a subjective quality of firmness, faithfulness, and dependability. In both the Greek-Hellenistic and Hebraic uses of ἀλήθεια the concept of an ontological criterion is found. In the Hebraic sense it denotes firmness and stability. In the Greek-Hellenistic sense it pertains to reality and correspondence of man's knowledge with that reality.

¹ One hundred and seventeen out of one hundred and thirty-one Hebrew words which are rendered by ἀλήθεια in the LXX are derived from the root *'mn*, which in the qal means to support. In this sense it is used of pillars (2 Kings xviii. 16) and of carrying a child (Num. xi. 12; 2 Sam. iv. 4; Is. xlix. 23). In a metaphorical sense it describes the inner disposition of people as faithful (2 Sam. xx. 19; Ps. xii. 2). In the niphil it means to prove oneself steady or faithful (Ps. lxxviii. 8, etc.). It is used for the fulfilment of a word and promises (Gen. xlii. 20; 1 Kings viii. 26; 1 Chron. xvii. 23, etc.). It indicates the firmness of objective things, such as a house (1 Sam. ii. 35; xxv. 28; 1 Kings xi. 38) and a sure place (Is. xxii. 23, 25).

² Cf. the equation of δικαιοσύνη and *'emeth* (Gen. xxiv. 49; Is. xxxix. 8, etc.), and δικαίος and *'emeth* (Ex. xviii. 21).

³ G. Kittel, "ἀλήθεια", *Theologisches Wörterbuch*, I, 237.

In order to ascertain which one of these two categories would predominate in the Pauline corpus, the meanings of ἀλήθεια should be defined more precisely:

A. As an objective concept:

1. The truth in terms of the Gospel¹ (Rom. ii. 8; 2 Cor. iv. 2; Eph. i. 13; iv. 21; Col. i. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 12; 1 Tim. ii. 4; iii. 15; iv. 3; vi. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 15, 25; iii. 7, 8; Tit. i. 1).
2. A teaching which is related to the Gospel (Gal. ii. 5, 14; v. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 18; iv. 4; Tit. i. 14).
3. Truth in terms of correspondence or certainty (Rom. ix. 1; 2 Cor. vi. 7; vii. 14a; xii. 6; Eph. iv. 24, 25; 2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Tim. ii. 7a, cf. Acts xxvi. 25).
4. Revelation (a) General revelation (Rom. i. 18, 25); (b) Special revelation (Rom. ii. 20).
5. Truth in terms of an abstract reality (Rom. ii. 2; 2 Cor. vii. 14b; Col. i. 6).
6. Truth as an absolute (2 Cor. xi. 10; xiii. 8).

B. As a subjective quality:

1. Faithfulness, fidelity, or steadfastness (Rom. iii. 7; xv. 8; Eph. v. 9; vi. 14).
2. Truthfulness (1 Tim. ii. 7b).
3. Righteousness (1 Cor. xiii. 6).
4. Integrity (1 Cor. v. 8).
5. Sincerity (Phil. i. 18).²

In about seven instances it is doubtful whether the Greek-Hellenistic or Hebraic influence determined the use of ἀλήθεια, since it is employed as an ontological criterion, which, as pointed out, is common to both (Rom. ix. 1; 2 Cor. vi. 7; vii. 14 (a and b); xii. 6; Col. i. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 7a, cf. Acts xxvi. 25). In about twenty-eight instances it seems fairly certain that its use roots in the Greek-Hellenistic rather than in the Hebraic tradition. These pertain to passages where it has reference to the

¹ For the relationship between the truth and the Gospel cf. Rom. i. 16 where the Gospel of Christ is described as a power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes, and Eph. i. 13 where mention is made of "the word of truth, the Gospel of . . . salvation" in which the addressees believed. Cf. also Col. i. 5 and 2 Thess. ii. 2-12.

² The cognates of ἀλήθεια have the following meanings: ἀληθεύειν: 1. To speak the truth (Gal. iv. 16). 2. To speak in terms of the Gospel (Eph. iv. 15). ἀληθής: 1. Truthful (2 Cor. vi. 8, cf. Phil. iv. 8). 2. True in terms of correspondence (Tit. i. 13). 3. Faithful (Rom. iii. 4). ἀληθινός: True in an abstract sense (1 Thess. i. 9). ἀληθώς: In reality (1 Thess. ii. 13).

Gospel or a teaching which is related to the Gospel; where it pertains to revelation as such, a concept which is basic to the meaning of ἀλήθεια;¹ and where it is used as an absolute. Phil. i. 18 also falls in this category.² In only about seven instances does it seem best to take ἀλήθεια in an Hebraic sense (Rom. ii. 20; iii. 7; xv. 8; 1 Cor. xiii. 6; Eph. iv. 25; v. 9; vi. 14).³ It seems beyond doubt that the Greek form preponderates.⁴ It should be said, however, that this conclusion is valid only insofar as the form is concerned. The content is a different question.

III

The meanings as given above deal to some extent with the content of the truth but do not exhaust it. To arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of its content it is necessary to broaden the investigation to include synonymical, metonymical, and related terms.⁵ With these included the content can be summarized as follows: According to the divine plan of salvation God sent His Son into the world. He died for the sins of men, but was raised from the dead. He returned to heaven where He makes intercession. The indwelling of the Holy

¹ The main reason for classifying instances where ἀλήθεια pertains to the Gospel and revelation as Greek-Hellenistic is because in these instances the emphasis falls on its epistemological content.

² The contrast of πρόφασις and ἀλήθεια as found in Phil. i. 18 is frequent in Greek literature, but entirely absent from the LXX. Cf. J. J. Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum graecum; Editionis Receptacum lecttionibus variantibus codicum MSS., editionum aliarum versionum et patrum (Amsteladamai, ex officina dommeriana, 1751-1752)*, p. 264.

³ In these instances the emphasis falls on ἀλήθεια as a subjective concept, a use which is predominant in the LXX.

⁴ The cognates of ἀλήθεια can be divided as follows: ἀληθεύειν defies definite categorizing. ἀληθής is used in the Greek sense twice (2 Cor. vi. 8; Tit. i. 13), once in an Hebraic sense (Rom. iii. 4), while Phil. iv. 8 is indefinite. ἀληθώς is undefinable since it falls in the orbit of ontological reality which is common to both the Greek-Hellenistic and the Hebraic concepts of ἀλήθεια.

⁵ It has been shown above that the Gospel and the truth are synonymical terms. On this basis κήρυγμα, which is in juxtaposition to εὐαγγελίου (Rom. xvi. 25), falls in the same category (cf. also Tit. i. 1-3). In so far as the truth is a teaching which is related to the Gospel (cf. *supra*) it is synonymically related to πίστις as a belief or doctrine. With this in mind it can virtually be equated with the law of Christ (Gal. vi. 2). Truth is metonymically related to light (Rom. ii. 19, cf. 2 Cor. iv. 4; Eph. v. 9), to γνώσις and ἐπίγνωσις (cf. 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6; Col. ii. 3; 1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Tim. ii. 25; iii. 7). The truth is also related to wisdom in so far as preaching is Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. i. 24, cf. 30; ii. 7). The common denominator of truth and wisdom is knowledge (Eph. i. 13-18; Col. i. 5-9; ii. 3).

Spirit is the guarantee of His earthly presence and the future judgment of mankind necessitates His reappearing. Belief in this Gospel-truth is essential for salvation (Rom. i. 1-4; viii. 34; x. 8 f.; 1 Cor. xv. 3 f.; Gal. i. 3 f.; 1 Thess. i. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1).

IV

Turning now from the content of ἀλήθεια to its nature, its salient characteristics can be summarized as follows:

Truth is manifested in historical events and as such it contains a substantial factual and historical element. E.g., Jesus was a descendant of Abraham (cf. Gal. iii. 8, 16; cf. Matt. i. 2 ff.). He was a descendant of David according to the flesh (Rom. i. 3; ix. 5; 2 Tim. ii. 8; cf. Matt. xxii. 41 ff. and parallels). As such He was a man (Rom. v. 15; 1 Cor. xv. 21), born of a woman and subject to the Jewish law (Gal. iv. 4; cf. Luke ii. 21 ff.). His sanctity is asserted (2 Cor. v. 21) and reference is made to His gentleness and meekness (2 Cor. x. 1). Mention is made of His sufferings (Rom. viii. 17; 2 Cor. i. 5, 7), of His blood (Rom. iii. 25), of His death (Phil. iii. 10; 1 Thess. ii. 15; iv. 14, etc.), of His burial, resurrection, and apparitions (1 Cor. xv. 4-8). In a number of instances one might even have references to some of His sayings which are recorded in the Gospels (1 Cor. vii. 10 f., cf. Matt. xix. 9 and parallels; 1 Cor. xi. 23 ff., cf. Matt. xxvi. 26 ff. and parallels; Rom. xii. 14 and 1 Cor. iv. 12 f., cf. Luke vi. 27 f.; 1 Cor. xiii. 2, cf. Matt. xvii. 20, etc.). The truth not only has its beginning in history but continues to establish itself in history.

The Gospel-truth is comprised of historical facts and interpretation of these facts. The question now arises to what extent it is proper to speak of a subjective element in ἀλήθεια because of this interpretation, because of the process of verbal communication (Rom. ix. 1; 2 Cor. vii. 14; xii. 6; Eph. iv. 25; 1 Tim. ii. 7, cf. 2 Tim. ii. 15), and on account of the process of appropriation by hearing (Eph. i. 13; Col. i. 5), knowing (1 Tim. iv. 3, cf. ii. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 7), and believing it (2 Thess. ii. 12). If there could be mention of a subjective element in ἀλήθεια in the Pauline corpus, it was not due to man's primary senses, since these are not questioned outrightly as e.g. in the case of Philo Judaeus and some of the Hermetic literature. In the Pauline corpus the origin of what might be termed a subjective element seems to root deeper than the mere mode of cognizance,

namely a wrong disposition toward God; this subjective element has a religious and ethical foundation.

Man's perversion might endanger the truth, but this is more than balanced by a strong emphasis on the divine origin of the truth in terms of general revelation, the Gospel, and that which pertains to the Gospel (2 Cor. iv. 6; ix. 1; Gal. i. 11f.; Eph. iii. 3; Col. i. 15; ii. 3; cf. Acts ix. 3 ff.; xxii. 26 ff.). A mistake about the truth is man's own responsibility. Paul claimed divine revelation for himself and could therefore say that he neither received his Gospel from a man, nor had been taught, but received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. i. 11 ff.). Further, the revelation which was begun by Jesus was continued by the Holy Spirit who speaks to the apostles and prophets (Eph. iii. 2-6), operates in the believers (1 Cor. ii. 10 ff.; 2 Cor. iii. 17 f.), and reveals hidden things of God to man (1 Cor. ii. 10 ff.).

It is proper to ἀλήθεια as a criterion that it implies absoluteness. But this absoluteness should not be identified with the Platonic transcendentalism nor with independence (*Unabhängigkeit*) which would make it incapable of human recognition and cognizance, since there is no indication in the Pauline corpus that ἀλήθεια is beyond human appropriation and since truth, as one can infer from the Pauline writings, would be entirely without value unless it had its course among men as something pragmatic. It is not altogether transcendental because it was revealed and exists among men. The absoluteness of the truth, then, should much rather be defined in terms of that supreme truth beside which there is no other truth which has been revealed to men. It is that truth of which Paul said: "For we are not able to do anything against the truth, but only for the truth" (2 Cor. xiii. 8).

In the Pauline corpus ἀλήθεια is invested with authority. This authority comes to expression in its function as a criterion, in its presentation as a διδασκαλία and a κήρυγμα, and in its application as the new law of Christ. But in the same way as the absoluteness of ἀλήθεια does not imply independence, so its authority is contingent on its origin in God and the κύριος.

Paul sees truth and power inseparably related in the divine purpose. The Gospel-truth is a power of God unto salvation (Rom. i. 16). And to realize this purpose the ministers of God commended themselves ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας and ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ (2 Cor. vi. 7). This dynamic manifests itself in salvation and corresponding ethical living. Where it is present something is

bound to happen. It exposes the lie (Rom. iii. 4); opposition to it causes amongst others the exposure of *ἔνοια* (2 Tim. iii. 7, 9). It confronts its hearers with a decision, and their attitude towards it causes either their salvation or their damnation (2 Thess. ii. 10 ff.). The purpose of presenting the truth is to transform men into new creatures (Eph. iv. 20–25). The hearing, and one might infer the acceptance, of the *λόγος τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*, yields fruit (Col. i. 5 f.) and gives man a sound view of life (1 Tim. iv. 3). Finally, the truth manifests its dynamic in the fact that it stimulates the believer to project his vision in hope beyond the horizon of temporal existence (Tit. i. 1 f.; cf. Col. i. 5).

V

The brief reference which has been made above to the content of truth prompts an investigation of its sources. In dealing with the sources of truth, it is to be kept in mind that inquiry should not be limited to those instances where the word *ἀλήθεια* occurs, since, as an investigation of its synonymical, metonymical, and related terms brings to light, it has a much broader scope.

As in the LXX [cf., e.g., Job xii. 8 f.; Ps. viii; xviii (xix). 1–6; Is. xl. 26; Jer. v. 22] and as also found e.g. in the writings of Philo,¹ Paul regarded the created world as an inescapable source of truth. Its evidence is so strong that man cannot disregard it, and he is therefore accountable. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth by unrighteousness, because what can be known of God is manifest among them, for God has revealed it to them, since from the creation of the world His invisible nature, namely His eternal power and deity, is clearly seen with understanding in the things which have been created; so they are without excuse" (Rom. i. 18–20).

But when the Pauline epistles are considered as a whole, one finds that truth derived from man's environment and from secular authors constitutes a rather small segment of the entire truth. The only explicit quotations from secular sources are the sayings of Menander (1 Cor. xv. 33) and Epimenides (Tit. i. 12). (In this respect reference should be made to Acts xvii. 28, where Paul is reported to have quoted from Aratus.) True as these statements might be (cf. Tit. i. 13), yet they do not belong to the upper strata or essence of the Gospel-truth.

¹ Cf., e.g., *De specialibus legibus*, I, 41, cf. 32–35.

The Pauline epistles testify to an awareness of a divine purpose which unites the history of the Jewish nation with the life of Jesus and with the history of the Church. With this in mind it is not surprising that the Old Testament¹ is employed as a major source of the truth. In it are found the records of the prototypes of the more complete antitypes (e.g. Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. v. 6–8; x. 1–6; xv. 22; Gal. iii. 8 f.; Eph. v. 31 f.; Col. ii. 11–13), the promises (e.g. Rom. iv. 13–25; ix. 4; xv. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 54 f.; Gal. iii. 16–18, cf. also Acts xiii. 32; xxvi. 6), the prophecies which were fulfilled in the new dispensation, and the legal and axiomatic statements, all of which form an integral part of the truth (e.g. Rom. i. 17; 1 Cor. i. 31; x. 26; Gal. iii. 6; v. 14; Eph. iv. 25; vi. 2 f.; 2 Tim. ii. 19).

Paul cherished the traditions of his fathers (Gal. i. 14) and for the sake of completeness it should be mentioned that the current oral tradition in Palestine undoubtedly made its imprint on him. The similarities which exist between Paul's writings and the Talmud and Midrash,² and other Jewish writings, give ample evidence to this fact.³

With regard to sources one of the major questions is to what extent one can speak of reliance on Christian traditions (either oral or written) for the essential facts of the Gospel-truth. It should be kept in mind that it is very unlikely that any of the Synoptic Gospels had been committed to writing in their present form at the time when the major Pauline epistles were written (presumably between c. A.D. 50–60). It is therefore unlikely

¹ It is almost certain that Paul employed the text of the LXX, cf. e.g. H. Vollmer, *Die Alttestamentlichen Citate bei Paulus nebst einem Anhang über das Verhältnis des Apostels zu Philo* (Freiburg und Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr, 1895), p. 73; A. Schweitzer, *Paul and His Interpreters, A Critical History*, translated by W. Montgomery (London: Adam & Charles Black, reprinted 1948), p. 88; A. Deissmann, *Paul, A Study in Social and Religious History*, translated by W. E. Wilson (2nd ed.; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1926), pp. 100 f.

² Cf. H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Die Briefe des Neuen Testaments und die Offenbarung Johannis erläutert aus Talmud und Midrasch (Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch, III)* (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926); W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, Some Elements of Pauline Theology* (London: S.P.C.K., 1948).

Due to antagonism between the Jews and the Christians it is unlikely that any similarity between these sources and Paul's writings could be attributed to reliance on Paul. The most probable explanation is therefore that similarities go back to a common tradition which was familiar to Paul and which was later put into writing in the Talmud and Midrash.

³ For an excellent summary in this respect cf. J. Weiss, *Das Urchristentum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1914), pp. 334f.

that any references to the earthly life of Jesus could have been obtained from them. If he availed himself of written sources at all in these matters, it is also unlikely that he had the entire history of Jesus at his disposal and, thus, he would naturally have had recourse to oral tradition. Despite Paul's claim to direct revelation for his Gospel (Gal. i. 11 f.; cf. 1 Cor. ix. 1; Eph. iii. 3; Acts ix. 3 f.; xxii. 6 ff.; xxvi. 9 ff.), this evidently did not include historical facts. He admits his sojourn with Cephas and that he was at the same time with James, the brother of the Lord. From them he most likely obtained certain data (Gal. i. 18). This view is substantiated by the fact that Paul employs and recommends the oral tradition: "I commend you because you remembered me in all things and keep the traditions (παράδοσεις) even as I handed them down to you" (παρέδωκα, 1 Cor. xi. 2). In the same way he says that he had handed down (παραδοῦναι) to the Corinthians the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23). He speaks further of the Gospel which they have received (παραλαβεῖν), and concerning the death, burial, resurrection, and epiphanies of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 1-4).

The question now arises as to the finality of these sources. For Paul (as also, e.g., in the LXX and in Philo's writings) the created world, although a source of truth, points beyond itself to a creator who embodied His truth in it. Thus, the truth which is revealed in creation is called the truth of God (Rom. i. 18-25). Likewise one might infer that he regarded the LXX as a given source of truth which points beyond itself to a divine revealer (Rom. i. 1 f.; xv. 8). The same would apply to persons who are vehicles of the truth.

For Paul the Gospel-truth roots in the divine act by which the Son of God became flesh (Gal. iv. 4; cf. Phil. ii. 7). So he could say ἀλήθεια ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ (Eph. iv. 21) and could speak of ἀλήθεια Χριστοῦ (2 Cor. xi. 10). The continuation of this Gospel-truth among men depends on the indwelling of God's Spirit both in the individual and in the body of Christ—the Spirit who by the *charismata* is the warrant of the offices in the Church which were entrusted to those who, as office bearers, were in a special sense conveyers of the truth (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 4 ff.; Eph. iv. 11 ff.). The Holy Spirit speaks directly to the apostles and prophets (Eph. iii. 2-6), operates in the believers (1 Cor. ii. 10 ff.; 2 Cor. iii. 17 f.), and thus, when He bestows a word of wisdom and of knowledge (1 Cor. xii. 8)—and it might be inferred the

truth—He reveals hidden things of God to men (cf. 1 Cor. ii. 10 f.). In the last analysis God is the final source and origin of the truth.

VI

If God is the ultimate source of truth and man can be a conveyer, one has to ask oneself as to how he appropriates it. In dealing with the process of appropriation one is concerned with the function of man's spiritual endowment, namely his πνεῦμα, νοῦς, συνείδησις, and καρδία. In the Pauline corpus, as in the LXX (cf. e.g. 1 Chron. v. 26; 1 Esdras ii. 5; 2 Esdras i. 1, 5; Esth. v. 1), man's πνεῦμα, his most comprehensive spiritual faculty in contrast to man as a carnal being, is especially a point of contact in his relationship to God.¹

Another element of the inner man in contrast to the σάρξ is the νοῦς. In so far as the νοῦς is naturally connected with διάνοια, νοήματα, and also with ἄγνοια (Eph. iv. 17 f.), it can be regarded as the seat of knowledge and understanding (cf. Rom. i. 20, 28; Eph. iv. 17; 1 Cor. xiv. 14 f., 19), and of judgment and deliberation (cf. Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. i. 10). The metonymical relationship which exists between truth, knowledge, and wisdom, the use of verbs of knowing and contemplating truth (cf. Eph. i. 13; Col. i. 5; Phil. iv. 8; 1 Tim. iv. 3), are indicative of the place of the mind in its appropriation. Within the realm of the mind falls the deliberating συνείδησις (Rom. ii. 15; 1 Cor. viii. 10; Titus i. 15). And so, to the extent that the νοῦς is the seat of knowledge, it is a rational, and to the extent that it includes the activity of the conscience, it is the moral instrument in the appropriation of truth (cf. 2 Cor. v. 11). It is against this background that Paul could say that, by the manifestation of the truth, they commend themselves to every human conscience in the presence of God (2 Cor. iv. 2).

But although the mind is important in the appropriation of truth, it is inadequate because of the imperfection of knowledge and the impotence of knowledge without faith (1 Cor. xiii. 8 f.). Consequently the mind and conscience are not final faculties of appropriation and must be supplemented.

This leads to a discussion of man's καρδία which is closely related to both the πνεῦμα (Rom. ii. 29; viii. 27; 2 Cor. iv. 6,

¹ The Holy Spirit and man's spirit testify together as to his divine childhood (Rom. viii. 16) and God influences man's spirit (1 Thess. v. 23).

cf. Eph. i. 18) and the νοῦς (Rom. ii. 15, cf. i. 24 where ἐπιθυμῖαι τῶν καρδιῶν are in a parallel position with ἀδόκιμος νοῦς in verse 28). Man's heart is the centre of his psychic and pneumatic impulses and is the governing principle of the rational, moral, volitional, and intuitive appropriation of truth. To the Romans Paul wrote: ". . . the word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart. This is the word of faith which we preach. For if you confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth and believe with your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart it is believed unto righteousness . . ." (Rom. x. 8-10). Faith, then, in its complexity, is the response of man's heart by which truth is ultimately appropriated.

The Pauline epistles make it unequivocally clear, however, that the mere endowment with the faculties of mind, conscience, and heart, does not *per se* mean that man will appropriate the truth. In fact, without renewal and illumination it is not very likely that he will. A perverted mind is not consonant with the truth (1 Tim. vi. 5; 2 Tim. iii. 7), and, therefore, it cannot appropriate it. Consequently, man's mind is in need of renewal (Eph. iv. 23, cf. Rom. xii. 2; Col. i. 21; 2 Tim. ii. 25). This renewal is accompanied by illumination as is evident from 2 Cor. iv. 6: "For God, who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, He shined in our hearts [to give] illumination of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." Without divine revelation and illumination man has neither true knowledge nor appropriation of it. Similarly man's conscience can be defiled (Titus i. 14 f.). The ψευδολόγοι, who, as this designation indicates, are opponents of the truth, are depicted as κεκαυστηριασμένοι τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν (1 Tim. iv. 2). It follows logically that man's conscience must be renewed too before it can respond adequately and properly to the truth. Turning now to man's heart, Paul states that the darkening of the senseless heart of the heathen is concomitant with their rejection of the truth (Rom. i. 21). On the other hand, the illumination of the eyes of the heart, as Paul puts it, leads to the knowledge of the hope of His calling, and of the riches of the glory of His inheritance, etc. (Eph. i. 18, cf. 2 Cor. iv. 6).

Appropriation of truth by the means just discussed would be incomplete without reference to the practical and experiential appropriation in the Christ-mysticism in terms of suffering with Him (Rom. viii. 17), being crucified with Him (Rom. vi. 6;

Gal. ii. 20), dying with Him (2 Cor. vii. 3; 2 Tim. ii. 11), being buried with Him (Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12), being raised up with Him (Eph. ii. 6; Col. ii. 12; iii. 1), being made alive with Him and living with Him (Eph. ii. 4 f.; Col. ii. 13), hoping to inherit with Him (Rom. viii. 17), sitting with Him (Eph. ii. 6), and reigning with Him (2 Tim. ii. 12). So historical truth becomes a living reality for the believer. It is in faith, which is the kernel of mystic fellowship, that he experiences and finally appropriates the truth. But while a legitimate place is assigned to man with all his faculties in the process of appropriation, it cannot be denied that ultimately all depends on God who is the author of faith itself.¹

VII

The appropriation of the truth presupposes in part that it is communicated and propagated among men and raises the question as to how this takes place. Communication and propagation of the truth find their final roots in the divine purpose (πρόθεσις) of salvation, which was determined ages ago, manifested in Christ Jesus, and entrusted to men by His gracious call (cf. Rom. viii. 28 f.; ix. 11; x. 14 ff.; Eph. i. 11; iii. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9). Through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and in mystic union with Christ the purposes of those whom God has called were blended with His purpose and His will inspired their will (cf. Eph. i. 11; 2 Tim. i. 9; iii. 10). This identification with the will and purpose of God enhanced a divine obligation for the ministers of the Gospel (Eph. iii. 7) and the stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. iv. 1) to spread the Gospel-truth even in the face of opposition (cf. Acts iv. 19; xxi. 27 ff.; Phil. i. 17, etc.).²

¹ The dualistic nature of faith is one of the paradoxes in Paul's theology. On the one hand, there are clear indications of man's efforts and his burden of responsibility; on the other hand, passages such as Eph. ii. 8 f.: "For by grace you are saved, through faith, and this is not of yourself, it is a gift of God, not of works . . .," Phil. i. 29: "For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in Him, but also suffer for His sake," seem to lessen man's responsibility (cf. Rom. iv. 16; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 12). This paradoxical view is explicable in the light of the mystical union with Christ whereby man's own efforts and abilities dwindle to insignificance (cf. 1 Cor. iv. 7) and God and Christ become all in all (cf. 1 Cor. xii. 6; Col. iii. 11).

² The motivation is summed up rather forcefully in 1 Cor. ix. 16: ". . . for the necessity is laid upon me; for woe is to me if I do not preach the Gospel," and in 2 Cor. v. 13 f.: "For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are sober, it is for you. For the love of Christ constrains us. . . ."

By virtue of a personal contact with Jesus and by virtue of the experiential verification of the truth in Christ by faith, it is not amazing that the propagation of the truth by witnessing is most outstanding in Christianity in general and in the Pauline writings in particular. Various phases of the life in the early Church and its environment determined the modes of witnessing. Certain terms which are found in the Pauline epistles and in some instances in Acts are indicative of the adaptation to needs. It is unique that the truth was brought as good tidings—εὐαγγελίζεσθαι (Acts v. 42; viii. 4, 35; xi. 20; xiii. 32; Rom. i. 15; 1 Cor. i. 17; ix. 18; xv. 1; Gal. i. 11, etc.).¹ The good tidings were heralded into the world—κηρύσσειν (Acts viii. 5; ix. 20; xix. 13; xx. 25; xxviii. 31; Rom. x. 8; 1 Cor. i. 23; 2 Cor. i. 19; Gal. ii. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 9).² It was announced distributively and repetitiously—καταγγέλλειν (Acts xv. 36; xvii. 13; 1 Cor. ii. 1; xi. 26; Col. i. 28). Very closely related to witnessing propagation is ὁμολογεῖν by which the act of mutual participation is stressed (Acts xxiv. 14; Rom. x. 9 f.; 1 Tim. vi. 12). It came to men in a commendatory way—παραγγέλλειν (1 Cor. vii. 10; 2 Thess. iii. 4) and was presented authoritatively as a teaching—διδάσκειν (Acts iv. 18; v. 42; xv. 35; xviii. 11; Rom. xii. 7; 1 Cor. iv. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 2)—in public and in private households, everywhere, with exactness, and in all wisdom (Acts xviii. 25; xx. 20; xxi. 28; 1 Cor. iv. 17; Col. i. 28; iii. 16).³ A more personal type of propagation and communication of the truth is embodied in κατηχεῖν⁴ (Acts xviii. 25; 1 Cor. xiv. 19), which took place in a spirit of sharing (Gal. vi. 6). Sharing and participation are further stressed by the use of such terms as μεταδιδόναι: “For I long to see you in

¹ The synonymical relationship which exists between the Gospel and truth warrants the assumption that to bring the Good News is at the same time to propagate the truth.

² Κηρύσσειν is used parallel with εὐαγγελίζεσθαι (Acts viii. 4 f.) and with διαμαρτύρεσθαι (Acts x. 42), and in some instances has τὸ εὐαγγέλιον as direct object (Gal. ii. 2; 1 Thess. ii. 9; cf. Col. i. 23). Thus, although the truth is not employed as direct object of the verb, there is ample justification to regard it as implicit.

³ The relationship between teaching and communicating the Gospel truth comes out, e.g. in the juxtaposition of εὐαγγελίζεσθαι and διδάσκειν (Acts v. 42; xv. 35).

⁴ The significance of this verb for furthering the truth comes out e.g. in the fact that Apollos' instruction (κατηχημένος) in the way of the Lord was one of his qualifications in teaching and propagating the Gospel-truth (Acts xviii. 25 ff.).

order that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you, and this is that we may be strengthened mutually” (Rom. i. 11); παρατιθέναι (1 Tim. i. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 2);¹ and παραδιδόναι (1 Cor. xi. 2, 23; xv. 1 ff., cf. 2 Thess. ii. 15; iii. 6).

For the sake of completeness it should be mentioned that oral communication and propagation of the truth were supplemented by writing, which was almost invariably dispatched with apostolic authority rooted in the Lord Himself (Rom. i. 1; 1 Cor. i. 1; Gal. i. 1; Eph. i. 1; 1 Tim. i. 1; 2 Tim. i. 1; Titus i. 1).

Despite the importance of oral and written communication, the truth was meaningless unless it became concrete in the experience and deeds of those who were adhering to it (cf. Titus i. 13–16). In this practising of the truth lies a most powerful means of propagation: “You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men . . .” (2 Cor. iii. 3).

In these various ways the truth was presented in an atmosphere of tension between good and evil. This called for a polemic method of propagation. In the same way as the task of the believer in his daily living is often seen as a military one (Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. vi. 11; 1 Thess. v. 8; 1 Tim. i. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 3 f.), so also the obligation of those who proclaim the truth: “. . . but as servants of God commending ourselves . . . in a word of truth . . . through the armor of righteousness on the right and on the left . . .” (2 Cor. vi. 4, 6 f.).

The Pauline epistles testify to a painful awareness of the precarious lot of divine truth in this world at the hand of falsehood and its exponents, the false teachers. They give heed to deceitful spirits and to teachings of demons (1 Tim. iv. 1), they have erred concerning the truth (2 Tim. ii. 18), they beguile with enticing words (Col. ii. 4). Their handling of the truth necessitated an apologetic approach in its furthering. The propagation of the truth by a life which exemplifies it is merely part of the believers' contest against τὰ πνεύματα τῆς πονηρίας ἐν τοῖς ἔπουρανίοις (Eph. vi. 12, cf. 14). Where there is perversion of the truth Paul presents himself as its patron and defender (e.g. 2 Cor. xiii. 8; Gal. ii. 5, 14; v. 7).

¹ This verb is frequently used in the New Testament for serving food (Mark vi. 41; viii. 6 f.; Luke ix. 16; x. 8; Acts xvi. 34; 1 Cor. x. 27). When it is used for oral tradition in the cases mentioned above it is accompanied by the idea of expected participation of the party to whom the tradition is “served”.

VIII

Dynamic truth is part of a divine causality, and as such it is designed to develop and to manifest itself wherever it is present. It is co-instrumental to convict men of their error, to induce to repentance, and to transform their lives in accordance with the light and its ethical demands (cf. Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 9). The truth of the Gospel is co-instrumental in restoring man as a child of God.

Through the individual the truth affects his environment. It confronts man with a choice to adhere to or to reject it, the outcome of which has a dividing effect on society—those who adhere to the truth and those who reject it or are indifferent to it (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. v. 8 ff.). Thus, in the same way as the revelation of the Old Testament helped to isolate the Hebrew nation as a λαὸς περιούσιος ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔθνῶν (cf. Exod. xix. 5; Deut. xiv. 2; xxvi. 18, cf. Ps. cxxxiv (cxxxv). 4), so did the truth which came in Jesus make men His λαὸς περιούσιος (cf. Titus ii. 14).¹ This division is charged with dissent and contention between those who adhere to the truth and those who do not. The history of the Hebrew people among other peoples and the history of Paul's missionary journeys and of the early congregations testify amply to this effect of the truth (cf., e.g., 2 Cor. i. 8 ff.). The society of those who adhere to divine truth undergoes an ordering effect for which the truth is partly responsible. For the Hebrew nation this issued forth in their theocracy. In the Christian society it unites people in a body of Christ which is His Church, diffused in many places with its organization, and binds them together as the family of God in His Kingdom.

Through enlightenment, conviction, transformation, justification, reconciliation, redemption, and sanctification the cause of truth culminates in the heavenly Kingdom where the family of God's children are participants of salvation and eternal life.

Princeton Theological Seminary

DANIEL J. THERON.

¹ It is noteworthy that this quotation is not completed but omits "from all the Gentiles", which is in full keeping with the universal view of the effects of the Gospel-truth (cf. Rom. i. 5; iii. 29; Gal. i. 16; ii. 2, etc.).