

METHOD IN LITERARY CRITICISM

Virgil Warren, PhD

Scholars look at a number of phenomena in Pauline literature to assess whether Paul actually wrote the piece: (a) words (new words not in Paul, Pauline words not in this writing, Pauline words used in non-Pauline ways), (b) syntax (complex *vs.* simple sentence structure, Hebraisms and other solecisms), (c) topics addressed, and (d) mood of the writing.

What control questions need to be asked on literary bases for verdicts on authorship?

1. Characteristic Pauline words are not used.
 - a. What characteristic words do appear here?
 - b. How characteristic are they in non-Pauline literature?
 - c. Is he writing about the same subject with such vocabulary?
 - d. What does “characteristic” mean?
 - e. Are these “characteristic words” of Paul clumped or distributed in his usage (*e.g.*, temple terminology)?
2. Characteristic Pauline words are used differently.
 - a. Some of the above considerations also apply here.
 - b. Are they in fact used differently?
 - c. How many characteristic words are used differently in admittedly Pauline works?
3. Percentage of new vocabulary in this book (ἄπαξ λεγόμενα, *hapax legomena*, once-used words)
 - a. Is this a new subject?
 - b. How get the body of literature in the first place to establish a percentage?
 - c. What percentage of ἄπαξ λεγόμενα occur in the other books?
 - d. What percent of variance is to be allowed for amanuensis, learning, audience?
 - e. How big a body of literature is needed to get a fair representation of vocabulary and style?
4. Words common to the pastorals and other New Testament writings, but unknown in the other ten Pauline epistles
 - a. Does this imply that Paul did not know these words?
 - b. Do these words occur in other writings from the mid-first century?
5. Many words in the letters were used in early second-century literature.
 - a. Are they used because of these letters?
 - b. Are they any more characteristic of second century than of first?

- c. Are they used in previous literature (*e.g.*, the Septuagint)?
- d. Are they “coinable” words?

Such questions emphasize the importance of setting up control data for comparison.

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