

RHETORICAL DESIGN IN 1 TIMOTHY 4

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Many writers view 1 Timothy as an assemblage of instructions by Paul that have no logical plan. Hanson, for example, says, "The Pastorals are made up of a miscellaneous collection of material. They have no unifying theme; there is no development of thought."¹

Yet other Pauline literature, when examined in light of Greco-Roman rhetorical principles, shows evidence of skillful discursive artistry,² even where (in the case of Philippians) any

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¹ A. T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 42. See the outlines of 1 Timothy in Earle E. Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin, and Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: 1993), 665; and George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), viii-ix. Benjamin Fiore states that the Pastoral Epistles have a loose style that reflects hortatory literature of Paul's day (*The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, *Analecta Biblica* 105 [Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986], 10).

Peter G. Bush argues for "a clearly defined and well planned structure" in 1 Timothy ("A Note on the Structure of 1 Timothy," *New Testament Studies* 36 [January 1990]: 152-53). His study, though helpful in its assertion that the letter is structured, goes no further than to point out an inclusio (1 Tim. 1:12-20 and 6:11-16, 20-21) and concluding markers that demarcate sections of the epistle (3:14-15; 4:11; 6:2b; 6:17). The rhetorical structure proposed in the present article (see note 4) builds on Bush's structural ideas, and suggests that 1 Timothy displays a structure that is consistent with Greco-Roman rhetorical principles.

² Examples of the growing body of literature on Paul's Greco-Roman rhetorical skill include Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979); L. Gregory Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993); Robert Jewett, *The Thessalonian Correspondence: Pauline Rhetoric and Millenarian Piety, Foundations and Facets* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986); Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster/Knox,

argumentative design has been denied.³ This article proposes that 1 Timothy demonstrates rhetorical design in the classical mode, with the discussion focused on 1 Timothy 4.⁴

FIVE STEPS IN RHETORICAL ANALYSIS⁵

DETERMINE THE RHETORICAL UNIT

A classical-rhetorical analysis of a New Testament book begins with the definition of the rhetorical unit. A discernible beginning, middle, and end delineate the rhetorical unit, which may be an entire discourse or a segment within it. First Timothy is obviously a rhetorical unit—it is a communication framed by an introductory salutation (1–2) and by a concluding charge and benediction (6:20–21). Chapter 4 constitutes a smaller rhetorical unit within the larger unit.

1993); Walter B. Russell, "Rhetorical Analysis of the Book of Galatians, Part 1," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (July-September 1993): 341-58; and idem, "Rhetorical Analysis of the Book of Galatians, Part 2," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (October-December 1993): 416-39.

³ Duane F. Watson refutes the contention of some interpreters that Philippians is marked by "artlessness" ("A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and Its Implications for the Unity Question," *Novum Testamentum* 30 [1988]: 57).

⁴ First Timothy exhibits an oratorical design after Greco-Roman standards. Below is an outline of the rhetorical arrangement in the letter (on the study of arrangement in rhetorical criticism, see note 13).

- Exordium (1:1-2)
- Proposition (1:3-7)
- Narration (1:8-20)
- Proof (2:1-6:2)
 - Proof A (2:1-15)
 - Proof B (3:1-16)
 - Proof C (4:1-16)
 - Proof D (5:1-6:2)
- Refutation (6:3-10)
- Epilogue (6:11-21)

The thorny question of authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is outside the scope of this study. Whether one considers these letters Pauline or not matters little in a rhetorical study of them. However, a presupposition in this article is that 1 Timothy is authentically Pauline. For discussions on the Pauline authorship of these epistles see William Hendricksen, *Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1957), 4-33; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 23-40; and Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy and Titus*, IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 30-35.

⁵ For these steps see C. Clifton Black II, "Keeping Up with Recent Studies XVI: Rhetorical Criticism and Biblical Interpretation," *Expository Times* 100 (April 1989): 254-55; G. Walter Hansen, "Rhetorical Criticism," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 824; George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 33-38; and Duane F. Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style: A Rhetorical Study of Jude and 2 Peter*, SBL Dissertation Series 107 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1988), 8-28.

The resumptive δέ⁶ in 4:1 elaborates on the subject of the false teachers that was introduced in the proposition (a brief statement of the argument for the entire letter) in 1:3-7. The termination of the rhetorical unit is 4:16, since 5:1 is a partition, a restatement of the epistolary proposition by listing the components to be discussed in the ensuing rhetorical unit.⁷

DETERMINE THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

The rhetorical situation is "a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence."⁸ In 1 Timothy the exigence is the activity of those who teach different doctrines and concern themselves with speculative myths and genealogies.⁹ Timothy, Paul's emissary in Ephesus, was to instruct such people to desist from heresy, and at the same time he was to counteract their influence with wholesome instruction.

DETERMINE THE OVERRIDING RHETORICAL PROBLEM

At this point in rhetorical analysis the student addresses the species, stasis, and question of the discourse. One of three species usually predominates in a rhetorical unit. Either the discourse is judicial (concerned with accusation and defense), or deliberative (dealing with persuasion or dissuasion of the audience), or epideictic (featuring praise or blame). First Timothy is deliberative in that Paul sought to persuade Timothy (and the Ephesian churches generally¹⁰) to oppose false teaching and to conduct themselves

⁶ "Now" in the New Revised Standard Version is preferable to "but" in the New American Standard Bible. (The particle is ignored completely in the New International Version and the Revised English Bible.) *The Greek New Testament*, United Bible Societies, 4th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), places a section break after 3:16.

⁷ A proposition is sometimes divided into its constituent parts (Cicero, *De inventione* 1.22-23; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 1.10.17; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 3.9.1-5, 4.4-5; and Watson, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians," 66).

⁸ Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (Winter 1968): 6.

⁹ For the false teaching and false teachers in 1 Timothy see 1:3-11, 19-20; 4:1-10; and 6:3-5, 20-21; in the Pastoral Epistles generally see Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttoiph and Adela Yarbro, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 65-67; Ellis, "Pastoral Letters," 662-63; and Oskar Skarsaune, "Heresy and the Pastoral Epistles," *Themelios* 20 (October 1994): 9-14.

¹⁰ The plural ὑμῶν in 6:21 is to be preferred to σοῦ so that the phrase reads, ἡ χάρις μεθ' ὑμῶν (Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 116; and Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [n.p.: United Bible Societies, 1971], 644).

within the household of God in an appropriate manner. Exhortation is the decisive tone throughout the epistle.¹¹

Stasis is the basic issue of a case, the issue on which an accusation or defense hinges. In judicial rhetoric, stasis may be either fact (whether something is), definition (what something is), or quality (what kind something is). In epideictic and deliberative discourse, quality is usually the stasis, as it is in 1 Timothy since Paul addressed the quality of Timothy's ministry and the quality of life within the Christian community generally. The rhetorical question is twofold and thus is complex: How should Timothy handle the phenomenon of false teachers (1:3–10), and how should all believers conduct themselves in the household of God (cf. 2:1–15; 3:14–15)?

INVESTIGATE THE INVENTION, ARRANGEMENT, AND STYLE

*Invention.*¹² Invention refers to the rhetor's selection of material (known as proof) that contributes to the convincing nature of the case being argued. Proof can either be artificial (constructed out of the orator's own skill or artifice), or inartificial (i.e., evidence that is ready-made for the rhetor's purpose). Witnesses, documents, and legal precedents are examples of inartificial proof.

Proof may be one of three kinds: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos is the orator's own good reputation, credibility, and esteem before the judge or audience. The auditors' goodwill, favorable self-estimation, and receptivity to the case constitute positive pathos. Throughout a discourse the rhetor seeks to establish his own ethos and to promote both positive pathos among the audience and negative pathos (opposition and revulsion) for opponents and their cause.

Logos, logical argument within a discourse, is of two varieties: inductive, which utilizes examples and draws a conclusion from them, and deductive, whereby the rhetor argues a point deduced from premises presumed to be acceptable to an audience. Topics are employed in both inductive and deductive argument. Topics are the "places" (τόποι) where an orator looks for argumentative material. They are the rhetorical "material" from which proofs are composed. Topics can be either principles applicable to all argumentation (e.g., argument from the greater to the lesser) or subjects within a given body of knowledge or experience (e.g., Jesus' death and resurrection for Christians).

¹¹ See Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 10-11.

¹² Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric* 1.2.1356a.1; Cicero, *De inventione* 1.31.51-37.67; Cicero, *Topica*; Herodotus, *Histories* 3.2.3-5.9; Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 14-18; and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 14-20.

*Arrangement.*¹³ The general pattern of rhetorical discourse is variable, but the basic arrangement for judicial discourse serves as a standard outline. A proem or exordium that seeks to obtain the auditors' attention and goodwill precedes a narration of the facts of the case and the proposition that sometimes features a partition into separate headings. The proof containing the speaker's arguments is followed by a refutation of the opponent's views. Then an epilogue or peroration sums up the rhetor's arguments and seeks to sway the emotions of the hearers toward the orator's view.

*Style.*¹⁴ Style refers to the rhetor's choice of literary devices and language that are used to package the argument. Tropes, such as metaphor and simile, are concerns of style. So too is the degree of force and ornament in the language of the discourse. The rhetorical critic will be sensitive to the three kinds of style: grand, middle, and plain. All three may be present in a discourse, but one usually is predominant.

The examination of invention, arrangement, and style of a piece of rhetoric constitutes the major part of rhetorical criticism. This article examines these three elements in 1 Timothy 4.

EVALUATE THE RHETORICAL EFFECTIVENESS¹⁵

In this step the rhetorical critic seeks to determine the effectiveness of the rhetorical argument in the unit studied.

A CLASSICAL-RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF 1 TIMOTHY 4 NARRATION (4:1-5)

The exordium for the entire letter (1:1-2) provides the introduction of the individual sections within the proof. Hence Paul immediately began the rhetorical unit of 1 Timothy 4 with narration. Pauline ethos is enhanced with the formula τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ῥητῶς λέγει ("but the Spirit explicitly says"). The apostle placed himself within the prophetic tradition as one who knew the mind

¹³ See Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric* 3.13.1414a.2-1414b.4; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 2.18.28-29.46; 3.9.16; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 3.9.1-6; Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 23-24; Burton L. Mack, *Rhetoric and the New Testament, Guides to Biblical Scholarship: New Testament Series* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 41-48; and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 20-21.

¹⁴ Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric* 3.1-12; Demetrius, *On Style*; Herodotus, *Histories* 4; Longinus, *On the Sublime*; Ernest W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible Explained and Illustrated* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968); and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 22-26.

¹⁵ Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 28.

of God and whose writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit to address, in this case, the subject of false teachers. The urgency of Paul's prophetic utterance is intensified by the present active indicative λέγει.

The construction ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς ἀποστήσονται τινες ("in later times some will fall away") further lends a prophetic dimension to Paul's ethos. The future tense may refer here to something already present, thereby informing the hearers that Paul was indeed a prophet warned by the Spirit. As Knight explains, "the NT community used futuristic sounding language to describe the present age. . . . Therefore, Paul is speaking about a present phenomenon using emphatic future language characteristic of prophecy."¹⁶

Serving as the object of λέγει is the ὅτι clause. Within that clause is the construction πνεύμασιν πλάνοις καὶ διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων ("deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons"), which is an example of accumulation, an amassing of words identical in meaning.¹⁷ Here each synonymous noun is modified by an adjective that, in combination with it, forms an alliteration.¹⁸ The accumulation creates negative pathos among the hearers toward the apostates.

In verse 2 the apostates are aligned with demons, are hypocritical, and are said to be κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν ("seared in their own conscience"). The perfect passive participle for "seared" refers, as a metaphor,¹⁹ to the searing or cauterization of a hot iron to the point of moral insensitivity (as suggested in the New Revised Standard Version) and not to the branding of the hearers with Satan's mark like the branding of fugitive slaves (as suggested in the Revised English Bible).²⁰ The former meaning is consistent with what Paul had already said about Hymenaeus and Alexander, men who rejected a good conscience (1:19-20).²¹

¹⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 189.

¹⁷ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 8.4.26–27; cf. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.40.52–41.53; and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 27.

¹⁸ See A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934), 1201.

¹⁹ A metaphor "occurs when a word applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify this transference" (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.45).

²⁰ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 189.

²¹ Apparently Paul delivered these men to Satan only after they had rejected a good conscience (1:19–20). The consignment to the devil did not brand their conscience (4:2)—it only recognized the fact that their conscience was already seared.

In the narration Paul explained the nature of the false teaching at issue in 1 Timothy. The heretics forbade marriage and advocated abstaining from certain foods (v. 3). The construction *κωλύοντων γαμῆν, ἀπέχεσθαι βρωμάτων* (lit. "forbidding to marry, to abstain from foods") features a zeugma, a figure in which one verb serves two objects, whereas the verb actually suits only one.²² The New American Standard Bible overcomes the ellipsis with the translation, "men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods."

Paul elsewhere disputed Christian ascetics who forbade sexual intercourse within marriage (1 Cor. 7:1-7) and who advocated prohibitions against certain foods (Rom. 14:1-6; 1 Cor. 8:1-13; 10:14-33). In 1 Timothy, Paul argued (consistently with those passages) when he maintained against the false teachers, that foods are created by God and that sexual relations²³ within marriage²⁴ are designed by Him, all to be accepted with thanksgiving by believers who know the truth. The error of the false teachers is that by forbidding God's good gifts to the community they had denied God as Creator and the created order as His good work. Such a denial marked one as a heretic in Judaism.²⁵ Believers, who know the truth, are to share in what God has created (1 Tim. 4:3b).

The reason believers should thankfully receive God's creation is stated in verse 4. The word *ὅτι* ("for" or "because") introduces the conclusion of an enthymeme, a syllogism with part of it suppressed.²⁶ The syllogism behind the enthymeme may be stated

²² F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), § 479.2; and Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 190.

²³ This is an example of metonymy, a figure by which an object is called not by its own name, but by something associated with it (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.32.43). Here "marriage" is a euphemistic metonymy for marital sexual relations.

²⁴ The relative clause *ἃ ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν* ("which God created," 1 Tim. 4:3c) has as its antecedent, not just the proximate *βρωμάτων*, but also *γαμῆν*. Knight concedes the reference to *γαμῆν* as directly or indirectly possible (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 190). If the relative clause does refer to marriage as well as foods, then *κτίζω* ("to create") is another example of a zeugma (see n. 22): the verb suits *βρώματα*, but extends to *γαμῆν* (a word such as "designed" or "ordained" linked with *γαμῆν* is unexpressed). God did not create marriage and the sexual relations within it in the sense that He created tangible foods, but in His creation of male and female His design is that conjugal relations should be enjoyed by believers. A possible translation of verse 3c that considers the zeugma places a full stop before the relative clause and continues, "God designed marriage, and He created foods, so that they all might be received with gratitude."

²⁵ Skarsaune, "Heresy and the Pastoral Epistles," 10–11, 13.

²⁶ Aristototele, *The Art of Rhetoric* 1.2.1357a.13–14; 2.22–26; 3.17.1418a.6–1418b.17; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 5.10.1–3, 14.1–24, 26; Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 16–17; and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 17–19.

as follows:

- Premise A: Everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected when it is received with thanksgiving.
 Premise B: Marriage and foods are created by God.
 Conclusion: Marriage and foods are good and to be received with thanksgiving and not rejected (by those who believe and know the truth).

The enthymeme of verses 3c-4 is itself substantiated by another enthymeme whose presence is evinced by γάρ in verse 5.²⁷

This underlying syllogism is the following:

- Premise A: Whatever one receives is sanctified by God's Word and prayer.
 Premise B: God's creations are received by the Word of God and prayer.
 Conclusion: God's creations are sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

"The Word of God and prayer" (λόγου θεοῦ καὶ ἐντεύξεως) may refer to the divine pronouncement on the goodness of things He has fashioned (Gen. 1:31) and thankful prayer by those who receive them.²⁸ One would normally expect to find enthymemes in the proof of the discourse. Paul, however, used them in the narration itself to dispense with heresy. His primary focus was on Timothy's character and activity in the face of false doctrine.

"A GOOD SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS": AN EXPOLITIO (4:6-10) *Proposition, reason, and contrary* (4:6-7a). The arrangement of proposition and proof in 1 Timothy 4 follows that of an *expolitio*,²⁹ a refinement of a topic by one's comments on it. Paul followed one of many possible variations of arrangement. In 4:6-10 a theme or proposition is expressed with a subjoined reason. Following this are a contrary, a restatement of the theme, a comparison, an example, and a conclusion. Such a refinement can be quite ornate, accompanied with numerous figures of diction and thought,³⁰

²⁷ The conjunctives γάρ and ὅτι are common indicators of an enthymeme (Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 16).

²⁸ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 192. The noun ἐντεύξις suggests a prayer of thanksgiving in 1 Timothy 4:5, synonymous with εὐχαριστία in verses 3-4 (Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2d ed., rev. F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979], 268). Hanson's reading of eucharistic language in verse 5 is anachronistic, imposing the thinking of second and subsequent centuries on the text (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 88-89).

²⁹ *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.42.54-44.57.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.43.56-44.56.

Grammatically verse 6 is a conditional construction with the conditional participle **ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος**³¹ ("pointing out these things") serving as the protasis, and **καλὸς ἔσῃ διάκονος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ** ("you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus") standing as the apodosis. The force of verse 6, however, is imperatival since the imperatival sentence in verse 7a, introduced by an adversative **δέ**, stands as a direct antithesis³² to verse 6. The proposition of the *expolitio* lies here: "be a good servant³³ of Christ Jesus."

In verse 6 **ἐντρέφόμενος**, a causal participle may be translated "since you are nourished." Timothy was to be a good servant of Christ who put good instruction before the believers. He had been nourished on wholesome doctrine and thus was capable of being such a servant. The causal-participial construction constitutes both the reason for the proposition ("be a good servant since you are nourished") and the guarantee of its successful execution by Timothy ("you will be a good servant since you are nourished").

By means of an opposite or contrary statement in verse 7a, Paul made the conditional construction in the first half of verse 6 more emphatic. To be "a good servant" of Christ Jesus, Timothy must avoid "worldly fables fit only for old women." The words **βεβηλους** ("profane") and **γρῶδεις** ("fables") are highly emotive. The former term has already appeared as a negative description of the false teachers (1:8-11),³⁴ whereas the latter word (an epithet commonly used in philosophic abuse during the first century³⁵) assesses the doctrines of the false teachers as no better than the idle chatter, gossip, and tales told by old women. Both expressions evoke negative pathos in the audience toward the heretics. The imperatival verse 7a carries the proposition by expressing it conversely.

Restatement and Comparison (4:7b-8). The contrary, set off by **δέ** in verse 7a, is itself contrasted by another antithesis in verse 7b: **γυμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν** ("discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness"). As a restatement this command elaborates on verse 6; it explains that a good servant of

³¹ The present middle participle is conditional (as in Goodspeed, the NIV, and the NRSV).

³² *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.15.21, 45.58.

³³ The word **διάκονος** could mean "deacon" here in 4:6, as it does in 3:8-12, but it likely has the more general notion of "servant, one who waits at tables."

³⁴ The string of substantives in 1:9-10 is an instance of attenuation (negative amplification by accumulation) in which all the aspects and topics of a subject are amassed, thus giving force to the argument. See *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.40.,52-41.53; and Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 8.4.26-28.

³⁵ Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 90.

Christ Jesus is one who exercises himself in godliness. Therefore one who presents sound teaching to fellow believers, being "nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine" one has received, and who exercises himself in godliness is a good Christian servant.

The word *γυμνάζω* means "to exercise naked, to train" but it also has figurative applications as in the training of one's mental or spiritual powers (cf. Heb. 5:14; 12:11), which is its meaning here.³⁶ The life of piety is similar to athletic training. Hence *γυμνάζω*, a comparison within the *expolitio*, is a metaphor emphasizing the effort necessary to acquire and progress in godliness.

"Godliness" (*εὐσέβεια*), mentioned eight times in 1 Timothy (2:2; 3:16; 4:7–8; 6:3, 5–6, 11), refers to "the right attitude to God and to the holiness, the majesty and the love of God."³⁷ Paul maintained in 4:7 that *εὐσέβεια* is something for which one must strive.³⁸

The conjunction *γὰρ* in verse 8 is continuative, not enthymematic. It serves to extend the comparison (begun in verse 7b) of a good Christian servant's conduct with an athlete's conduct. Paul used the rhetorical topic of arguing from the lesser to the greater³⁹ when he affirmed the value of godliness over physical exercise (v. 8). Godliness has benefit for the present and the future, whereas physical exercise is useful only for the present age. The value of *εὐσέβεια* is a convincing proof in Paul's argument for Timothy to be a good servant of Christ.

Conclusion (4:9-10). In verse 9 Paul wrote, *πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος* ("It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance"). What he was referring to is widely debated. The formula could refer to the preceding discussion or part of it.⁴⁰ However, *ὁ λόγος* could point to elements of verse 10.⁴¹ The

³⁶ Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 167.

³⁷ William Barclay, *New Testament Words* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 113.

³⁸ *Ibid.* This is not to deny that *εὐσέβεια* is the gift of God as well (2 Pet. 1:3).

³⁹ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 5.10.87, 92; and Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik: Eine Grundlegung der Literaturwissenschaft*, 2 vols. (Munich: Hueber, 1960), §397.

⁴⁰ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 201-2. Marvin L. Reid maintains that "syntactically, 1 Tim. 4:9 legitimizes the admonition in verse eight" and thus has a backward emphasis ("An Exegesis of 1 Timothy 4:6-16," *Faith and Mission* 9 [Fall 1991]: 53).

⁴¹ This is suggested in the New English Bible, the New International Version, and the Revised English Bible.

opinion that verse 9 is a solemn assertion about the text as a whole is advanced by Hanson.⁴² The translations that make no commitment at all in their punctuation and paragraphing to either a backward or forward reference buttress his claim.⁴³

Rhetorically verse 9 functions (with v. 10) as a conclusion to the *expolitio* begun in verse 6. The words ὁ λόγος would seem to refer to the entire rhetorical subunit of verses 6-8. Verse 10 functions as a parenthetical note⁴⁴ by Paul that extols God and also the apostle's own conduct as a servant of Christ.⁴⁵ Paul used himself as an example of the action to which he summoned Timothy in the proposition (v. 6). The apostle was an example of a good Christian servant from which Timothy could learn. Paul labored (κοπιῶμεν) and toiled (ἀγωνιζόμεθα⁴⁶) to encourage Timothy to be "a good servant." Again the apostle used an athletic metaphor in describing his work (ἀγωνίζω suggests exerting oneself or struggling like an athlete). Like the athlete, the Christian minister must undergo rigorous discipline in order to complete the contest (cf. 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7).⁴⁷ Paul enhanced his ethos when he maintained that he exerted himself strenuously for Christ.

EPILOGUE (4:11-16)

A series of ten exhortations, whose imperative verbs are all in the present tense, concludes chapter 4. The injunctions in this exhortation may be classified under the following headings: the pastor's public ministry (vv. 11, 13), the pastor's example (v. 12), and the pastor's personal growth (vv. 14-16).⁴⁸

⁴² Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 92.

⁴³ Examples are the New American Standard Bible, the New Revised Standard Version, and the Revised Version.

⁴⁴ The New International Version perceives to some degree the parenthetical nature of verse 10, with the parenthesis ending after "strive" (ἀγωνιζόμεθα).

⁴⁵ The first-person plural of the verbs κοπιῶμεν, ἀγωνιζόμεθα, and ἠλπικαμεν eliminates any haughtiness in Paul's claim, since the plural embraces the audience as well as the apostle (cf. μάλιστα πιστῶν). Thus positive pathos and positive ethos are evoked.

⁴⁶ The reading ἀγωνιζόμεθα ("struggle," NRSV) is better suited to the context and is preferred over ὀνειδιζόμεθα ("suffer reproach," NRSV, margin). See Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 641-42; and Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 202.

⁴⁷ See Karl Heinrich Ringwald, "ἀγών," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, 1 (1975), 644-48.

⁴⁸ For these categories see Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 193. An alternative arrangement is to regard Paul as one counseling his son (Timothy) in the faith in a manner reminiscent of the educator in the pedagogical rhetoric of Proverbs, in which an educator counsels a protege in wisdom (see Michael V. Fox, "The Peda-

The pastor's public ministry (vv. 11, 13). The items mentioned in verses 1-10 are to be insisted on and taught publicly (v. 11).⁴⁹ Moreover, public ministry for Timothy was to involve attention to "the public reading [ἀνάγνωσις⁵⁰] of Scripture" with its concomitant appeal (παράκλησις) for the hearers to respond to instruction in the principles of Scripture (διδασκαλία).⁵¹

The pastor's example (v. 12). Paul enjoined Timothy to be an example (τύπος) for the believers. The range of qualities that exemplary character encompasses is prescribed in an appealing rhetorical fashion by means of epanaphora⁵² with ἐν, alliteration,⁵³ and *homoeoptoton*.⁵⁴ These rhetorical devices emphasize the urgency of the task laid on Timothy. An antithesis exists in verse 12 with the positive τύπος γίνου and the negative command μηδεὶς σου τῆς νεότητος καταφρονεῖτω ("let no one look down on your youthfulness"). The "youthful" Timothy, though perhaps in his thirties,⁵⁵ may have been despised by older members of the congregations who resented a younger person as Paul's emissary. However, his youthfulness was inconsequential if he was a positive, influential example. In secular writing the word τύπος was used in reference to the stamp or impression made on a coin, to a mold, or to an outline of a book's contents. Paul used it to

gogy of Proverbs 2," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 [Summer 1994]: 233–43). Proverbs 2 urges attention to the educator's teachings (vv. 1–4), their benefits (vv. 5–11), and the salvation they guarantee (vv. 12–22). First Timothy 4:11–16 features these same elements: attention to Paul's instructions (vv. 11–12), their benefits (vv. 13–14), and the salvation they promise (vv. 15–16). Fiore observes that in ancient times the teacher of rhetoric acted as a surrogate parent. Instruction was typically the role of the parent or a surrogate (*The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, 34–35).

⁴⁹ The present writer views 1 Timothy 4:11 (παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ δίδασκε) as having a retroactive force, pointing to what has come before. This is also the view of Bush ("A Note on the Structure of 1 Timothy," 154), except that he regards verse 11 as "the concluding marker" for 3:16–4:11 that concerns apostasy. For the view that ταῦτα in verse 11 has a forward reference to the admonitions of verses 12–16, see Reid, "An Exegesis of 1 Timothy 4:6–16," 54.

⁵⁰ This was to be public not private reading of Scripture (Oscar Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship*, *Studies in Biblical Theology* [Chicago: Regnery, 1953], 24; and Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 207).

⁵¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 208.

⁵² An epanaphora is a figure by which similar and different ideas appear in close succession in phrases begun by the same word (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.13.19).

⁵³ The alliteration occurs with the Greek letter alpha: ἐν ἀναστροφῇ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ἐν ἀγνείᾳ.

⁵⁴ This is a figure in which two or more words in the same case with similar endings appear in the same phrase, clause, or sentence (*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.20.28). In 1 Timothy 4:12 the figure is formed by ἀναστροφῇ, ἀγάπῃ, and πίστει.

⁵⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 205.

mean an example, one that serves as a model for others (Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:7; 2 Thess. 3:9; Titus 2:7).⁵⁶

The pastor's personal growth (vv. 14-16). The foremost exhortation for Timothy's personal spiritual development was that he not neglect his spiritual gift (μη ἀμέλει τοῦ ἐν σοὶ χαρίσματος, v. 14). The words μη ἀμέλει ("do not neglect") are a litotes, a figure of speech by which an affirmation is expressed by its negation.⁵⁷

The urgent necessity of this directive is supported by a relative clause that describes the origin of the spiritual gift: ὃ ἐδόθη σοι διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου ("which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery"). The laying on of hands by a group of elders⁵⁸ recognized Timothy as one whom the Holy Spirit had already designated by way of prophecy for a particular task. The χάρισμα ("spiritual gift") was bestowed by the Spirit, whom Timothy had already received. So reflective of God's intentions for Timothy were the inspired predictions about him (cf. 1:18) that Paul could say that those prophecies themselves effected the bestowal of the χάρισμα. The phrase may be rendered "on account of prophecies," taking διὰ προφητείας as an accusative plural, rather than a genitive singular.⁵⁹

Prophecy is weighty evidence for the reality of the χάρισμα. Oracular evidence, as supernatural testimony, was oratorically superior to other evidence. The Christian prophets' testimony would be considered oracular and thus persuasive to Timothy and others.⁶⁰

Final exhortations of the epilogue are expressed by the verbs μελέτα (lit., "put into practice" or "take pains with") and ἴσθι ("be devoted to" or "be absorbed in") these teachings (v. 15), and by ἔπεχε ("pay close attention") to yourself and to your teaching and ἐπίμεινε ("continue") in these things (v. 16). In verse 16b γὰρ is enthymematic, introducing a conclusion based on this syllogism:

⁵⁶ Leonhard Goppelt, "τύπος, ἀντίτυπος, τυπικός, ὑποτύπωση," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 8 (1972), 246-59 passim.

⁵⁷ J. B. Sykes, ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, 7th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), 589.

⁵⁸ This is more likely the meaning here rather than the presbytery (Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 209).

⁵⁹ So Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 208.

⁶⁰ See Quintilian, *Institutio Oratio* 5.11.37, 42-44; Cicero, *Oratoriae Partitiones* 2.6; and Watson, *Invention, Arrangement, and Style*, 16-17.

- Premise A: One ought to pay attention to what saves himself and his hearers.
- Premise B: By paying attention to one's life and teaching and continuing to do so, that person saves himself and his hearers.
- Conclusion: One ought to pay attention to himself and his teaching.

The salvation of oneself and others reflects the topic of honor and advantage, the twin goals of deliberative discourse.⁶¹ The verb *σώζω* ("save") may refer to Timothy's delivery of himself and his flock(s) from the deceptive, erroneous teachings of liars.

That Paul could make such a pronouncement on the ultimate destiny of others enhances his ethos. In an epilogue the rhetor typically sought to enhance his own ethos and positive pathos for his cause.⁶² In verse 16 Paul succeeded in this quest by stressing his own inspired perceptions and the honor and advantage at stake in his exhortation.

SUMMARY AND EVALUATION OF PAUL'S RHETORICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Paul was successful in his goal to argue persuasively his case that Timothy (and his fellow Ephesian Christians) should be a good servant of Christ Jesus. No precise historical evidence exists to prove that Paul succeeded in his rhetorical efforts,⁶³ but the rhetorical critic can be satisfied that the conditions for success in the endeavor have been met.

Paul's narration both denounces the falsehoods of the heretics and supplies reasons for their untruthfulness. In verses 6-10 his proposition is artfully presented as a future state (*ἔσθη*, "you will be") resulting from a present action (putting the apostolic instructions before the believing community). In a skillfully constructed *expolitio* Paul defined what it means to be a good Christian servant: negatively a person is to avoid erroneous doctrines, and positively he is to exercise himself in godliness, since such a practice has perpetual benefits:

This rhetorical analysis of verses 6-10 suggests a solution to the question of the reference of verse 9. Since it appears where one

⁶¹ Cicero, *De inventione* 2.51.156.

⁶² See Watson, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Philipians," 78.

⁶³ Second Timothy could be adduced as indirect evidence that Paul was persuasive in 1 Timothy, since Timothy was still in the service of the apostle as a faithful and trusted representative (2 Tim. 1:14; 2:2; 3:14; 4:5, 9, 11, 13, 21).

would expect a conclusion to an *expositio*, it probably refers to the subunit of verses 6-8.

In the epilogue (vv. 11-16), which includes a chain of exhortations in light of the narration and *expositio*, Paul instructed Timothy on the pastor's public ministry, example, and personal growth. The instruction on the pastor's example in verse 12 is stylistically rich and thereby emphatic. Verse 16 is an effective parting directive in its enhancement of Pauline ethos and in its stress on the honor and advantage to be gained by an obedient Timothy.

PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

"TRAIN YOURSELF IN GODLINESS" (1 TIM. 4:7-10)

The difficulty in establishing a consistent and effective physical exercise program is well known. The effort required to block out time for exercise three or four times a week sometimes seems insurmountably difficult, and therefore many individuals remain sedentary and physically unfit. Yet the benefits of physical exercise are significant for those who persevere in their efforts to exercise and eat healthy foods. Paul maintained, however, that those who train themselves in godliness, that is, for the purpose of attaining that quality, will find far greater rewards.

Devotion to God and the development of Christlikeness have recompense for this life and the life to come. Great effort, however, is required. Like the athlete in training, the believer must discipline the body and its actions (by devotion to prayer and avoidance of sin) and habitually consume vital and wholesome "nutrients" (through study of the Word of God).

On this passage Stauffer perceptively remarks, "This is not contempt for the world. It is insight into the law of life that the better is the enemy of the best, so that even what is right and good may have to be renounced."⁶⁴

"SET THE BELIEVERS AN EXAMPLE" (1 TIM. 4:12)

No one can prevent others from looking down on him or her because of lack of talent, attractiveness, experience, wealth, or age. In Ephesus some despised Timothy's youthfulness. They, likely older than he was, must have assumed that someone younger could not adequately give oversight as an apostolic envoy.

The solution to the contempt of others is attention to one's own

⁶⁴ Ethelbert Stauffer, "ἀγών, κτλ.," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 1 (1964), 137.

example in the face of that contempt. Like a mold that reproduces its shape in other material, or like an outline that others follow, a positive example can change others' attitudes and influence them for the good.

Paul did not counsel Timothy to step back from his responsibility (until he was "older and wiser"), nor did he suggest that Timothy retaliate. Instead, the apostle maintained that Timothy's speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity win over his despisers. In that way he was not allowing anyone to despise him.

"DO NOT NEGLECT THE GIFT THAT IS IN YOU" (1 TIM. 4:14)

Each believer has been endowed with a spiritual gift, a manifestation of the Spirit to be used in service for the good of the entire body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7). Yet according to 1 Timothy 4:14, that gift can be neglected. By being left idle and unused or unimproved, one's gift is neglected. Sometimes the fear of failure or of the censure of others keeps a person from using his or her spiritual gift and it is thus neglected.

Paul admonished Timothy to use his gift. The young protegee ought to seek ways for it to be expressed and to be refined for greater usefulness. When one considers a business or job opportunity, a geographical move, or any other life change, he or she ought to ask questions such as these: "Will this enable me to improve my spiritual gift and use it more effectively? Will the change enhance the development and expression of my spouse's and children's gifts?"

First Timothy 4 indicates something about God's guidance in the life of a believer. Timothy knew God's will by means of what others said about him (the prophecies) and their confirmation of God's work in his life (the laying on the elders' hands). God's direction for believers' lives is by these means (though not exclusively so)—means that are corporate as well as private.

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