Abstract

I here explore the possibility that the members of Paul’s editorial team had something to do with the DeuteroPauline letters.

I. Following Knox, Onesimus was Paul’s manager in Ephesus. He is the likely person to be in charge of editing Paul’s letters. Other candidates are coworkers mentioned with Paul as sending a genuine letter. These are Timothy (several) and Silvanus (1 Thess). They are a responsible first guess at the membership of the team.

II. There is support for this in the genuine letters. (1) Only Onesimus can have known the letter to Philemon, which is not a church letter and does not belong in the collection. Colossians has a close relation to Philemon, and Ephesians a close relation to Colossians. All this is explained if Onesimus, the chief editor, wrote Colossians as an introduction to the genuine letters, and Ephesians as a later update. (2) Php 4:2-3 is a scrap of a personal letter, sent to Paul’s agent in Philippi, asking his mediation in a sensitive matter. Only the recipient could have known of its existence, and contributed it to the conflation of Philippians. By Php 2:19, a promise to send Timothy to Philippi, this was Timothy. Then Timothy may have later written 2 Tim, which purports to contain other scraps of personal letters. 2 Tim has affinities with the later 1 Tim and Titus, the three together making up the Pastoral group. This would be a second authorship sequence. (3) The connection of Silvanus with Thessalonica makes him a possible author of 2 Thess, a letter purporting to correct erroneous ideas of the Second Coming.

III. As a third independent piece of evidence, a recently available measure of stylistic difference in early Christian texts supports some of these authorship proposals.

(292 words)