ENTHYMEMES IN THE LETTERS OF PAUL

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A compilation and analysis of enthymemes (deductive arguments) throughout the Apostle Paul's undisputed epistles, which opens new insights into his rhetorical habits and social world

KEY SALES POINTS

- A step forward in understanding New Testament rhetoric and the use of enthymemes as a rhetorical tool
- A revisiting of Paul's social world using a well-defined methodology that can be tested by others
- A step forward in the reflection on the triple relation between St. Paul's social world, private thought and public rhetoric.

DESCRIPTION

While Pauline studies today continues to grapple with the question of the core of Paul's thought, the investigation of the apostle's social world is gaining interest among scholars. The study of Paul's argumentation offers a fundamental contribution to both endeavours. Enthymemes, defined by the rhetorical tradition as the basic building blocks of deductive argumentation, constitute an important part of Paul's argumentation which until now has been relatively unexploited. Study of the manner in which Paul constructs enthymemes gives us insight into his thought world. The premises that he uses as argumentative proofs can be viewed as a reflection of the common "social knowledge" of the Pauline milieu.

The object of this inquiry is to study Paul's use of enthymemes as a rhetorical and argumentative tool and to evaluate what this reveals about his thought, his teaching, and his social world. The study begins with a discussion of the problem of enthymeme definition, followed by a clarification of criteria for identifying enthymemes in texts. A method of analysis is proposed. The entire corpus of Paul's seven undisputed letters is then "combed" for enthymemes, one epistle at a time. Enthymemes are identified and analysed, and their argumentative premises are catalogued thematically. This exercise permits a serious consideration of Paul's modes of argumentation, rhetorical aims and social world in the context of each epistle. Results from different epistles are compared as a means to consider, in general, Paul's rhetorical habits.

CONTENTS

1. Introduction: The problematic gap between public discourse and personal thought in Paul; how rhetorical and enthymeme analysis can help bridge the gap.
3. Enthymemes and Enthymeme Premisses in 1 Thessalonians.
4. Enthymemes in Philemon, on the Surface and Below
5. Argumentation within a Ritual of Friendship in Philippians
6. Enthymemes within the Polemical Context of Galatians
7. Romans

AUTHOR

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8. The Corinthian Correspondence
9. Conclusion: Synthesis of results regarding Paul's use of enthymemes, observations about his teaching, his thought, and a reflection on the place of enthymeme analysis within exegesis.

Bibliography

MARKET/READERSHIP
Students/Scholars

SUBJECT AREA
HRBM3 Biblical Studies, New Testament, Greek

RELATED TITLES
Porter and Stamps (Eds), *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible*, 1 84127 093 8, 2002.