

LYN KIDSON, *Persuading Shipwrecked Men: The Rhetorical Strategies of 1 Timothy 1* (WUNT II 526; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020). Pp xvi + 327. Paperback. €84.00.

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*Persuading Shipwrecked Men* is the published version of Kidson's PhD thesis, focusing on the rhetorical strategy of 1 Timothy 1, completed under Alanna Nobbs at Macquarie University. With this volume she makes a valuable contribution to the growing body of research on the Pastoral Epistles from Macquarie (including White and Feltham). The study investigates the rhetorical strategies utilised by the author of 1 Timothy to address the "certain men" as the primary opponents of the letter. Because of this focus the study rightly shows how the opening command of the letter functions as a key to reading the letter as a "persuasive literary unit" (2) rather than a fragmentary text. Prosecuting this case Kidson engages in an in-depth study of the letter in comparison to other Greco-Roman ethical documents, personal epistles and administrative letters. While the monograph is mostly constrained to the opening chapter of 1 Timothy it certainly makes up for this tight constraint with the broad engagement of other source documents.

After an exceedingly brief introduction, the second chapter focuses on the historical and cultural background to the epistle, taking 1 Timothy 4:8 as a springboard. Here the study draws upon studies of Asia Minor to explore the complexities of the social world and the historical context of the writer and audience. Kidson argues for the Pastoral Epistles as historical documents "aside from arguments about the authorship" (3), despite questions of pseudepigraphy. In effect this chapter functions as a longer introduction to the themes and structure of the monograph, introducing methodologies and conversation partners at hand.

The third chapter dives into the question of pseudepigraphy and argues the no matter the historical identification of the epistolary author, there is an equivalence in the writing process (37). Treating the authorship question in this fashion allows Kidson to prioritise the relationship between the implied author and implied audience separate from their historical counterparts. While this chapter makes a solid contribution to discussions on pseudepigraphy it would benefit from further engagement with questions of cognition and reception on the part of the audience.

The fourth chapter turns to the question of the relationship between the letter writer and implied audience, which is set forth within the ideology of the father-son relationship and argues that this should not be an exception for administrative letters. Here Kidson not only examines 1 Timothy but a range of ancient letters highlighting the pattern of business or administrative letters includes personal remarks, especially in the stele of Dionysius.

The fifth chapter follows logically from the last, narrowing the scope to the content of the letter rather than the genre. Here the specific instructions of the

letter are brought to the fore with the content of the *didaskalia* taking centre stage. In this frame the administrative command of the letter is to “return to pastoral Paul’s *didaskalia*” (138), a fulfilment of the administration of the office.

The sixth chapter broadens the focus again to ask what the implication of such a command would be for the audience. Here Kidson draws on a broad range of ancient approaches to education, marshalling Plutarch, Cicero and Xenophon in conversation with each other.

The seventh chapter continues this pattern of in-depth engagement with ancient conversation partners, looking at the rhetoric of persuading the audience that the “certain men” are guilty of *Hybris*—and optimistically the “certain men” themselves.

The eighth—and final—content chapter draws pastoral Timothy as a rhetorical counterpart whose model should provide an educational example to the “certain men.” In addition, Hymenaeus and Alexander’s shipwrecked faith provides a rhetorical counterpoint to that of Timothy and calls on a decision from the “certain men.” The social dynamics of these relationships would have benefited from further exploration.

At times the distinction between the pastoral Paul and the historical Paul (12)—and associated distinctions for Timothy—become somewhat blurred. Similarly other considerations are scattered throughout the monograph, such as the question of genre for 1 Timothy in Chapter 4 (74–82) but reserving rhetorical considerations for Chapter 7 (178–80). At times the reader would be better served by these considerations being collated into the opening chapter, rather than the spread engagement given in this monograph. Nevertheless, the argumentation found within these discussions is cogent and well engaged.

Although the scope of this work is notably limited to 1 Timothy 1 it would benefit from extension into the implications of the outworking of the command, especially given the application of the command in 1 Timothy 3. To see how this command ripples throughout the rest of the letter and the community would round out this work. Furthermore, while this volume focused primarily on the Greco-Roman context and background for the command in 1 Timothy it would have been interesting to explore a wider range of contributing backgrounds, such as further exploration of the Greco-Jewish background of Josephus—who does arise from time to time.

However, Kidson’s monograph presents a strong argument for reading 1 Timothy as a coherent whole, structured around the command as the basis of an administrative letter within an *oikodomia*. Kidson marshals a wide range of secondary literature—from Cicero to Telemachus—in cogent and convincing argument and makes a solid overall contribution to research on the pastoral epistles.

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