

**ON THE UNITY AND
ORDER OF THE
EPISTLES OF ST.
PAUL TO THE CHURCHES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649663248

On the Unity and Order of the Epistles of St. Paul to the Churches by Alfred T. Paget

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ALFRED T. PAGET

**ON THE UNITY AND
ORDER OF THE
EPISTLES OF ST.
PAUL TO THE CHURCHES**

ON THE
UNITY AND ORDER



OF THE
EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL
TO
THE CHURCHES.

BY THE
REV. ALFRED T. PAGET, M.A.

MATHEMATICAL MASTER OF SHERWSBURY SCHOOL,
AND FELLOW OF GONVILL AND CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Ἄλλ' οὕτω τινεὶ αὐτὸν ἀγνοοῦσιν, ὡς μηδὲ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν τὸν ἀριθμὸν εἰδέναι σαφῶς. τοῦτο δὲ γίγνεται, οὐ κατὰ ἀμαθίαν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μὴ βούλευσθαι συνεχῶς ὁμιλεῖν τῷ μακαρίῳ τούτῳ. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ὅσποτε ἴσμεν, εἴπερ τινὰ ἴσμεν, δι' εὐφυΐαν καὶ ὀξύτητα διανοίας ἐπιστάμεθα, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ συνεχῶς ἔχουσαι τοῦ ἀνδρὸς, καὶ σφόδρα διακίεσθαι περὶ αὐτὸν. . . . μηδεὶς δὲ περιέργου τοῦτου ἠγείσθω τὸν κόπον, μηδὲ περιεργίας περιττῆς τὴν τοιαύτην ἱερωαν. συντελεῖ γὰρ ἡμῖν πρὸς τὰ ζητούμενα οὐ μικρὸν ὃ τῶν ἐπιστολῶν χρόνος. ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΥ ὑπόθεσις τῆς πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἐπιστολῆς.

LONDON:
FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON,
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.
1851.

101. b. 279.

TO THE
REV. THE MASTER,
AND TO THE
FELLOWS OF GONVILL AND CAIUS COLLEGE,

This Dissertation

ON THE UNITY AND ORDER OF THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

TO THE CHURCHES,

IS INSCRIBED,

BY

THE WENDY FELLOW.

STAT. COLL. DE GON. ET CAIUS PER R. P. WM.
BATEMAN.

2. *De Obedientia et Gestu Sociorum.*

. . . . aliquod sophisma problema vel quæstionem the-
logiæ disputent.

P R E F A C E.

THE sum of what it is proposed, in the following pages, to render probable is:—that the Epistles of St. Paul to the Churches are one system; that the order of their composition is discoverable from their logical order as parts of such a system; that their order thus indicated, is, 1st. The Epistle to the Hebrews; 2nd. Those to the Corinthians and Thessalonians; 3rd. That to the Galatians; 4th. That to the Romans; 5th. Those to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians.

The construction of such a system may have been accomplished in either of several ways. Either, the detached labours of the same principal actor in one great struggle were providentially ordered to form a consistent and self-elucidating whole; or, the Apostle, ever narrowly watching the effects of his teaching, and all the turning-points of the controversy in which he was engaged, himself designed that each succeeding letter should throw a light on the preceding, and should dispel whatever errors had arisen through misinterpretation; or, one great purpose, the development of Christianity out of Judaism, binding together the whole mass of this correspondence, the epistolary argument was to be only casually and subordinately diverted from

this purpose, by the events of St. Paul's ministry at Corinth and elsewhere.

Whichever supposition we take, certain conclusions will be the same. If the Epistles of St. Paul form one system, their common object must be considered in the interpretation of them all. If the order of their composition can be discovered, the interpretation of each must be consistent with its relation to those that preceded it in the series. If it should appear that the Epistle to the Hebrews is a member, or even the principal member, of such a series, then will be furnished, what to the minds of many seems necessary, a much better evidence than has yet been adduced, that that Epistle was written by St. Paul.

It may be hoped that the importance of these conclusions will be sufficient to engage the reader in the consideration of the grounds by which the premisses are sustained. Yet a few preliminary words may be requisite, lest he should turn away at once, with the disrelish he must naturally feel for an argument maintaining something new, in a subject in which novelty may seem out of place.

There is, indeed, nothing new in supposing St. Paul's Epistles to form a connected system; but the principle that they do so has not, I think, been regarded as the chief and best test for determining the order in which they were written. Yet, surely, if the Apostle designed such a system in the composition of his Epistles, or if letters of different dates were over-ruled by the Divine Providence to bear, in an orderly manner, upon the same argument, we may be able to discern in them, not merely evidences of their design, but some indications of the order in which the several parts thereof were accomplished. If we can discover a logical sequence in any argument enforced by the Apostle in several or all of these Epistles, this sequence may prove not only the unity of design that pervades them all, but the relation in regard to date, which they bear to each

other : it may prove both the existence of the system and the relative positions of its members.

The first steps of this investigation were made in no higher expectation than that of discovering the dates of certain Epistles. It was thought that a person's letters, if every other trace of the periods in which they were severally written had been lost, might still be brought into some arrangement, by considering the topics introduced into them ; and that where the order of the events related was unknown, it might yet be assumed that those letters which introduced the same topic, in much the same language, were more nearly of the same date. If, in studying such letters, one chain of argument were found throughout certain of them, and not in others, those might form a group or packet separate from the rest. The question of the order of writing would be thus simplified by division, and the general order might be afterwards settled by the connexion of the groups.

It was under these general impressions, concerning all masses of correspondence, that, when the Epistles of St. Paul were searched, the subjects which entered into them appeared to admit of arrangement in the following principal classes : 1st, uncontroverted Christian doctrines ; 2nd, the controversial topic of some time or place ; 3rd, metaphorical illustrations ; 4th, local or personal circumstances, distinctly fixing the date or dictating the whole composition of a letter ; and 5th, references to less prominent events, names of places or persons incidentally appearing, and salutations of casual companions.

In the endeavour to use these several classes of the subjects for the proposed inquiry, it was soon found necessary to rely on comparisons of those of the first three classes. Subjects of the fourth class are scarcely to be found in any of the Epistles ; there is indeed but one such patent and

obvious reference to events as we can use in the ensuing investigation, and from this, accordingly, we assume the priority of the Epistles to Corinth before that to Rome¹. There would be a wide difference of value between such references, if they did occur, and the subjects of the fifth class. We may not estimate alike the express and positive declaration of the times of successive events, and any calculation based upon names and circumstances, which may be ambiguous from the mode of their introduction, or the brevity of what is to us an accidental reference. It has been too commonly attempted to settle the whole question of the order and dates of St. Paul's Epistles, by the incidental names and addresses contained in them. As it is not intended to follow this method, there is no occasion to point out the mutually contradictory results derived from it. The true use of the names of persons and places casually referred to, of the salutations and addresses of the Epistles, in such an inquiry as this, is found when they are regarded as tests of the accuracy of dates otherwise suggested.

In the employment of the subjects of the first three classes, for suggestions of the order and date of the Epistles, the several Epistles to the Churches had to be grouped, and the order of those in each group to be investigated, by examining how some argument common to the whole was in each conducted; how some metaphor used in all was in each applied; how some doctrine, taught in one, was in others made the ground of practice; how some truth, taught as to the whole Church in one Epistle, was in another explained or restated to a single Church.

In this search, it was not necessary to adopt a new principle of inquiry. Locke maintained, that the best method of studying an Epistle was to read it as a whole. It was but an extension of this principle to maintain, that the best method of studying the whole of the Epistles is to read

¹ See page 106.