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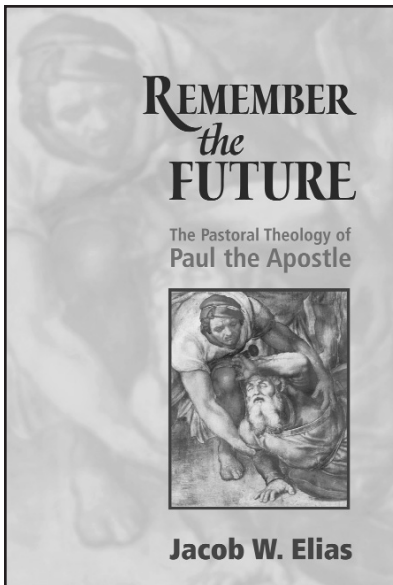
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Remember the Future

The Pastoral Theology of Paul the Apostle

Jacob W. Elias

Why should 21st-century readers bother with Paul? Some people find his letters abstract, complex, and unrelated to real life. Others cringe at passages that address relationships within the household. In a culture that values stories, Paul's letters appear to be concerned mainly with doctrine.

Jacob W. Elias highlights the ways in which Paul draws on narratives as he ministers via letters to congregations throughout the first century Mediterranean world. Paul frequently alludes to his own personal story as a Jew who encountered the risen Christ. Repeatedly Paul reminds his readers about Jesus's life and faithfulness, although he nowhere shares that story in any detail. Paul draws on Old Testament stories and the narratives and images of the Greco-Roman world. And Paul demonstrates his awareness of each congregation's story.

“By coupling Paul's letters with careful research of the Greco-Roman world in which he lived, Elias creatively reconstructs Paul's own story and the stories of each congregation he planted reminding us of the huge cast of characters that launched the story of the church.”—*Reta Halteman Finger*

“Elias brings Paul's letters to life by illuminating their context of ecclesial struggle, pastoral concern, and above all a passion for the gospel of Jesus Christ.”—*Tom Harder, Co-Pastor, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church*

About the Author . . .

Jacob W. Elias is the author of *1 & 2 Thessalonians* in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series. He studied at the University of Saskatchewan, and graduated in 1968 from Mennonite Biblical Seminary. He began pastoral ministry at Mountainview Mennonite Church, Vancouver, and in 1978, earned a ThD in New Testament from the Toronto School of Theology. He has been teaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary since 1977.