This monograph challenges the increasingly accepted notion that Galatians is either a sample of classical rhetoric or should be interpreted in light of Graeco-Roman rhetorical handbooks. It demonstrates that the handbooks of Aristotle, Cicero and other such writers, discuss a form of oratory which was limited with respect to subject, venue and style of communication, and that Galatians falls outside such boundaries. The inapplicability of ancient canons of rhetoric is reinforced by a detailed comparison of Galations with the handbooks, a survey of patristic attitudes towards Paul's communicative technique, and interaction with twentieth-century discussions of the nature of New Testament Greek. Dr Kern concludes that rhetorical handbooks were never a tool of literary criticism and that they cannot assist the search for a distinctly Pauline rhetoric. Thus this study has implications not only for Galatians but also for other New Testament epistles.

Philip H. Kern is Lecturer in New Testament at Moore Theological College, Sydney.
SOCIETY FOR NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

MONOGRAPH SERIES

General Editor: Richard Bauckham

101

Rhetoric and Galatians
Rhetoric and Galatians
Assessing an approach to Paul’s epistle

PHILIP H. KERN
For Amy
## CONTENTS

| Preface                                      | xi |
| List of abbreviations                      | xiii |

1  Introduction                             1

2  Towards a definition of rhetoric
   Rhetoric                                 7
   Rhetor                                   7
   Rhetorician                              34
   Species                                  34
   Taxis                                    36
   Topoi                                    37

3  Methods of rhetorical analysis and Galatians
   Sources                                  39
   History of rhetorical approaches to Galatians 43
   Analytical presuppositions                 56
   Intrinsic and extrinsic approaches         69
   Methods of analysis                        86

4  Rhetorical structure and Galatians
   Galatians 1–2                              92
   Galatians 3–4                              109
   Galatians 5–6                              112
   Conclusion                                118

5  Rhetorical species and Galatians
   The limits of forensic rhetoric             120
   The limits of deliberative rhetoric         125
   The limits of epideictic rhetoric           126
   The limits of rhetoric and Galatians        129
   Galatians as a forensic speech              131
Contents

Galatians as deliberative rhetoric 136
Subsequent solutions to the question of species 156
Conclusion 164

6 The language of Paul’s letters: 1. As evaluated by early Christian writers 167
The church fathers 169
Post-patristic ‘rhetoricians’ 198
Conclusion 203

7 The language of Paul’s letters: 2. The contribution of modern studies 204
Acts 24: a courtroom analogy 204
Orientation to Paul’s background 210
The level of Paul’s language 215
Alternative explanations of Paul’s language 230
Excursus: the activities of the orator 245
Language levels were steeply graduated 247
Paul’s mode of discourse 249
Conclusions 254

8 Conclusions 256
Summary 258
Implications and significance 259
Further study 260

Select bibliography 262
Index of subjects 297
Index of modern authors 302
PREFACE

I set out for Sheffield in late summer of 1990 to do an exegetical study of Galatians, especially 2.15–21. It became apparent, however, that much ground-clearing work was required before exegesis could begin. In the end, and because of the skilful prodding and questioning of my supervisor, Dr Loveday Alexander, these preliminary matters became the thesis, and the exegesis still lies just beyond the horizon. I thank Dr Alexander for broadening my perspective and introducing me to a world about which I knew little.

There are others without whom this work would have been impossible. Friends at Tyndale House who have encouraged and provoked me include Gerald Peterman, Andrew Warren (who constantly pointed out my abuse of the English language, and occasionally assisted with German too), Peter Bolt and Bruce and Lyn Winter. The church family at Lansdowne Chapel, Sheffield, made our two years there wonderful. Thanks also for warm friendship at Wauwatosa and Norwood. Stanley Porter, Philip Satterthwaite and Janet Fairweather of the Classics Faculty at Cambridge have interacted with the content of the book, been fine friends and fountains of information. Thanks go to Jack Fish and David MacLeod for drawing me to Pauline studies, and to Scot McKnight, Doug Moo and D. A. Carson for endeavouring to elevate me to the next level. The careful, critical reading offered by my examiners, Andrew Lincoln and Ian McDonald, has been much appreciated, as has the help of librarians at the universities of Sheffield and Cambridge, Trinity International University (Deerfield), Northwestern (Evanston), Macquarie (Sydney) and Tyndale House. Special thanks to Andrew Clarke for help both in the library and over tea – and again to Bruce Winter for too many things to mention.

This research was funded in part by a Tyndale Council Research
xi

Preface

Grant, and was much facilitated by opportunities afforded at ‘the House’. My thanks go to them for their assistance. The project would have been impossible without the support of my family, especially my wife to whom I dedicate this book.
ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations have been largely restricted to works directly related to biblical studies and follow the NTS (38.1, Jan. 1992) conventions. For papyri see E. G. Turner, Greek Papyri: An Introduction, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 156–71. The following is a supplement.

BETL  Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum loyannisium
DDC  De Doctrina Christiana
EB  Encyclopaedia Britannica
ET  English Translation
JAC  Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JSNT  Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSNTS  Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplements
JSOT  Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTS  Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplements
LCL  Loeb Classical Library
LCM  Liverpool Classical Monthly
LSJ  Greek–English Lexicon, Liddell, Scott, Jones
LXX  Septuagint
Abbreviations

NABPRDS  National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion
         Dissertation Series

NovT     Novum Testamentum

NPNF     Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, ed. Philip Schaff and
         Henry Wace, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991

OCD      Oxford Classical Dictionary, ed. N. G. L. Hammond

PEQ      Palestine Exploration Quarterly

PG       Patrologiae cursus completus, ed. Jacques-Paul
         Migne, Series Graeca

PL       Patrologiae cursus completus, ed. Jacques-Paul
         Migne, Series Latina

repr.    reprint

SBLDS    Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series