

Why was Paul so mad with the Galatians? And why is the letter so short compared to Corinthians?

After the apostle Paul had preached the gospel to the Galatians, he had discovered that Judaisers were preaching a false gospel to them. The epistle could just as easily be written to men today who have believed many of the same things that the Galatians were believing then (e.g. a false gospel of works vs. the true gospel of salvation by grace through faith).

Regarding this epistle, J. Vernon McGee writes:

...[T]he Epistle to the Galatians has a particular message for us because it was written to people who were like us in many ways. They had a like temper, and they were beset on every hand by cults and “isms” innumerable—which takes us, likewise, from our moorings in the gospel of grace.

It is a stern, severe, and solemn message (see Gal. 1:6–9; 3:1–5). It does not correct conduct as the Corinthian letters do, but it is corrective. The Galatian believers were in grave peril because the foundations of their faith were being attacked—everything was threatened.

The epistle, therefore, contains no word of commendation, praise, or thanksgiving. There is no request for prayer, and there is no mention of their standing in Christ. No one with him is mentioned by name. If you compare this epistle with the other Pauline epistles, you will see that it is different.

...In this epistle the heart of Paul the apostle is laid bare, and there is deep emotion and strong feeling. This is his *fighting epistle*—he has on his war paint. He has no toleration for legalism...

...Galatians is the strongest declaration and defense of the doctrine of *justification by faith* in or out of Scripture. It is God’s polemic on behalf of the most vital truth of the Christian faith against any attack. Not only is a sinner saved by grace through faith plus nothing, but the saved sinner lives by grace. Grace is a way *to* life and a way *of* life....¹

Paul’s message was short and sweet to the Galatians. It is a writing that helps to clarify false doctrine (as does Romans). Individuals who have believed in a work-based religious system (e.g. Roman Catholicism) would be wise to re-read Galatians.

¹ McGee, J. V. (1991). *Thru the Bible commentary: The Epistles (Galatians)* (electronic ed., Vol. 46, pp. vi–x). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.