



[TOP](#)

Daily Devotional - Monday, January 20, 2025 - Mentorship and Modeling

JANUARY 20TH 2025 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Conflict is inevitable in any close relationship, but when we navigate conflict well, we can emerge with even greater understanding and intimacy. One key to addressing conflict is to remain relationally attuned, to continue to see the other person as a person and an ally, even though you think differently about an issue.

Following his rebuke of the Galatians in 3:8–11, Paul reminds his readers of their relational history. The strong emotion continues, but his frustration softens into a jealous plea for their hearts. He calls them “brothers and sisters” and entreats them: “Become like me, for I became like you” (v. 12). He implores them to follow his own example of Christlikeness. When Paul says, “I became like you,” he is likely describing his willingness to live like a Gentile, to remove himself from the burden of the Jewish Law, and to embrace them as family.

Paul also wrote about his model for incarnational ministry in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23. “I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some” (v. 22). Among the Galatians, Paul lived out his faith in their presence, providing a concrete example of what it looks like to be a disciple of Jesus. Next, Paul

reminds his readers of the unique circumstances surrounding their time together. Paul unexpectedly was in Galatia because of an “illness” (Gal. 4:13). It may have been a sickness or an injury inflicted by enemies of the gospel. Regardless, the providential result was his ability to preach the gospel to the Galatians.

Paul commends the Galatians’ sacrificial care for him, even using hyperbolic language in verse 15 (“you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me”). But then, in sharp contrast, he delivers another harsh rebuke: “Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?” (v. 16).

Who has modeled Christlikeness to you? Where has God called you to live out incarnational ministry?

Echoing Paul’s plea, we join the Psalmist’s prayer: “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit” (Ps. 51:10,12).

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