

From Friend to Foe?

Galatians 4:12-20

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Most couples start out marriages as best friends. But friendships end.
- As believers in Christ, we are part of God's big family.
 - We enjoy a brother-sister relationship as part of Christ's family
 - We are not just family, but friends!
- Perhaps we have all experienced close friends turning on us. You go from friend to foe!
- Paul is dumbfounded over how quickly the Galatian believers had abandoned the gospel of grace for a "gospel" of works.
- Paul appeals to them to *"become like me, for I became like you."*

From Friend to Foe?

A. Paul as the "Friend"—Galatians 4:13-15

1. The Galatians roll out the "red carpet" for Paul—Galatians 4:13-14

- a. Paul's illness
 - 1) Stoned at Lystra—Acts 14:19
 - 2) Paul's near death, out of body experience—2 Corinthians 12:7
 - 3) May of contracted malaria
- b. Sickness or disfiguring was viewed by Jews and pagans as a sign of God's judgment
- c. The Galatians unexpected reception of Paul
 - 1) Treated him as an "angel" or messenger from God.
 - 2) Received him as Christ Himself

2. The Galatians expressed their great love for Paul—Galatians 4:15

- a. The "Blessing" they enjoyed.
- b. Their willingness to "pluck out their eyes"—and expression of great love!

B. Paul as the "Foe"—What happened? – Galatians 4:16-20

1. The Galatians refused to listen to and heed the truth. Galatians 4:16

- a. Relationships are built on truth
 - 1) "Truth" is that which corresponds and describes reality. What is.
 - 2) We need to speak the "truth in love"
 - 3) Many today do not want to hear the truth—2 Timothy 4:3-4
- b. Sometimes the truth hurts
- c. Friendships are fragile and easily broken
 - 1) Through stupid words and hurtful actions
 - 2) Through unwillingness to accept the truth

2. The Galatians were being "courted" by others. —Galatians 4:17-20

- a. The "other" party was the Judaizers whose only interest was to ensnare believers in legalism and to build their own following.—Galatians 4:17
- b. Paul too had been zealous in a commendable manner.
 - 1) Paul preached the gospel out of love for Christ and a desire for them to become followers of Jesus.
 - 2) Paul was not interested in building a following for himself.
 - 3) Paul pushed Christ!
 - 4) Paul loved them like a "mother"
 - 5) He would suffer "labor pains" until "Christ is formed in you"