

# The Sectarianism of Rome and the Ecumenical Churches

by Ian Paisley

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*The sermon warns against perverting the Gospel and the dangers of sectarianism and Romanism, emphasizing the importance of keeping the law of God and trusting in the simple message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.*

**Scripture:** Romans 3:23

**Topics:** "True Gospel", "Christian Obedience"

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## Description

Ian Paisley preaches on the subject of perverting the Gospel, emphasizing the dangers of straying from the true Gospel of Christ. He contrasts the teachings of Rome with the simple Gospel of the Bible, highlighting the importance of acknowledging sin, believing in the complete forgiveness through Christ, and the continuous sanctification by His blood. Paisley also addresses the demands of the Gospel, urging believers to honor God's commandments and live in obedience to His laws as an expression of gratitude for the grace received through Christ.

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## Transcript

Open your Bible at the first chapter of Galatians, verse 7. We will read verse 6 for the connection:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some of that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

I want to speak on the subject of perverting the Gospel.

The Apostle Paul says here there are some that would pervert the Gospel of Christ. I take each week three of the leading Roman Catholic newspapers. I think the people in the paper shop think I am some sort of undercover Romanist when I order this sort of material - The Universe, The Catholic Herald and The

Irish Catholic.

In those papers they have been carrying an announcement of a pilgrimage all round these islands. This is a pilgrimage to celebrate the coming of a man called Augustine. The man called Augustine, 1400 years ago, was sent to these islands to Romanise them; but, of course, this pilgrimage is not publicly announced as a celebration of the Romanising of these islands.

The Church of Rome, the main sponsor of this pilgrimage, states that Augustine was the first to bring the Gospel to these islands and to see people in these islands converted to Christ. It is announced that this pilgrimage is supported by all the main Christian churches in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

They had a miserable little pilgrimage. They came from the Roman Catholic Cathedral and they went down to St. Anne's Cathedral - a small bunch of dishevelled people. They certainly indicated that they themselves must have been duped by the lie that they had swallowed. In fact, the Free Presbyterians had a protest and there were nearly more protesters than there were pilgrims!

Patrick and Ireland The Coming of Patrick

What is this lie? Did Christianity reach the shores of these islands by an emissary of the Pope 1400 years ago? Was the Gospel never heard in Ireland, Scotland, Wales or England until the Pope's messenger came to these shores? Well, anybody who has any knowledge of history knows perfectly well that there was a man called Patrick who, 300 years before Augustine was ever thought of, evangelised this island of ours. He was not sent by the Pope. He knew nothing about the Pope. He never referred to the Pope and, what is more, the Pope never referred to him.

Now if the Pope had such an apostle as Patrick he would have no doubt been blowing the Papal horn in front of him and saying 'What a good boy am I that I have sent you, Patrick, to evangelise you pagans in Ireland.'

Of course, Patrick did not preach anything about purgatory or penance or Mariolatry or auricular confessions or baptismal regeneration or the mass. He preached: 'I, Patrick, am a sinner. Jesus Christ died for me the sinner. He has saved me and He can save you and me and anyone else.'

That is not Rome's gospel, you know: that is the Gospel of this Book, the Bible.

Then we know about Columba. In order to try and bluff people this pilgrimage has tied in to commemorate the death of Columba. This celebration, of course, is blatant sectarianism. This word sectarianism is bandied about now. It is almost as popular as Drumcree. It is blamed for everything, and what Drumcree did not bring us sectarianism has brought us, and what sectarianism did not bring us Drumcree brought us.

Sectarianism and Rome What is sectarianism?

Sectarianism, of course, is a sectional view taken by bigots who say: 'If you don't believe what we believe and join the church that we attend, then there is no hope for you.' That is Romanism. Romanism says that outside the Church of Rome there can be no salvation. You must join the church. No one who does not bow and accept the Pope of Rome as the head of the church and the successor of Peter and the only vicar of Christ on earth can be saved. That is sectarianism.

The true Gospel says that neither is there salvation in any other. There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. That salvation is not in any church. Salvation is not in any sacrament. Salvation is not in any good works that anybody can do. Salvation is in Christ.

Of course, it is not a new thing to call those who preach the Gospel sectarian. Paul was told he belonged to that sect everywhere spoken against - a bit like the Free Presbyterians - so we should be quite happy to be in apostolic succession, the true apostolic succession.

Perverting the dispensations of the Gospel

This pilgrimage perverts the dispensations of the Gospel. It perverts the doctrines of the Gospel and it perverts the demands of the Gospel. It falsifies the givings or dispensations of the Gospel.

I am glad for all eternity God planned that a young slave boy called Patrick minding goats of Slemish Mountain should be gloriously converted and should return to bring the simple Gospel of Christ to the people of this Island. He did it so well, and there was such a revival of true Christianity in this Island that when the Council of Arles was held in the Middle East in AD 314 there were more representatives from the Celtic Church at that Church Council than from all the Latin churches which eventually became the Roman church.

This idea that Christianity came belatedly to these islands is totally untrue. In fact, British bishops were at the Great Council that gave us the Nicean Creed, the creed in which they formulated the Biblical fact that Jesus is the eternal Son of God and God the Son incarnate in the flesh.

What lies Rome pours out and what lies the ecumenical movement pours out in order to deceive the gullible people who sit in the church pews and are prepared to believe the lie that they may be damned because they have pleasure in unrighteousness. The facts of history are that the dispensation of the Gospel in these islands came through the simple preaching of the Bible and not through any emissary of Rome.

Religious persecution came to these islands by the Church of Rome because when Augustine could not have his way he said, and I quote what he says: "If you will not have peace with your brethren you shall have war." Those were his words. He engaged in the massacre of the Celtic church. It has always been the mode of Rome that if she cannot convert, then she will kill and destroy. The hireling comes not to save the sheep but to destroy them.

The ABCs of the Gospel Perverting the Doctrines of the Gospel

Then they perverted the doctrines of the Gospel. I was thinking about that when I was thinking of this service. I was thinking about the ABC of the Gospel.

What is the simple Gospel? First of all it stands for A - All Have Sinned.

That is the diagnosis of the Gospel. God has looked into your heart and He has diagnosed your need and what your need is. It is a need because of sin and all have sinned. That is you; that is I; that is everyone else. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Of course, the Church of Rome rejects that. It tells us first of all that Mary never sinned. That is a very strange thing because Mary rejoiced in God her Saviour. How could you rejoice in the Saviour if you never

had a sin to be saved from? It does not sound right and of course it is not right.

Then Rome has a whole system, the works of supererogation. Rome is great for these high-sounding phrases. The works of what are they? There are some saints who had too much holiness - so you need some holiness and you can buy the holiness of a saint. Pay for it. Go to the supererogation wardrobe and there is an old priest there. He says: "What do you want?" "I want a bit more holiness, father." "Well, you can have the holiness of St Thomas: that will cost you a hundred quid, so fork out one hundred quid and I will give you a bit of St Thomas' extra holiness."

Romanism: how many people know what Romanism really believes? You see, our forefathers knew what it believed and that is why they saw it was the Antichrist. It was not the true Christ. The Pope is a usurper. The Pope is not a Christian minister. The Pope is the Antichrist revealed and exposed in the Bible. All the great creedal confessions of the historic Christian churches say just that.

Mr Spurgeon said that if you read II Thessalonians chapter two you would arrest the Pope on suspicion of being the Antichrist and you would not give him any bail to let him out. He is quite right. The Reformers knew what Romanism was about. Of course, people today do not know what Romanism is about. That is the trouble. We have to re-educate our people in the real basics of Romanism, and it differs as far as Heaven differs from Hell, this true Gospel, from the gospel of Rome, the perverted gospel of Rome. All have sinned is the diagnosis of the Gospel.

The B of the Gospel B - Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away. Please note the words: "taketh away the sins of the world". Now Rome does not believe that sin can be totally and absolutely taken away, so if you die, even if you are the most holy product that Rome can create, you will not go immediately to Heaven. When I was in Rome after the death of Pope John XXIII they had big posters up asking people to pay money to get the soul of a holy Pope out of purgatory. I stood there with John Wylie and I said: "John, if the poor old Pope is in purgatory, and he such a holy being - the sole vicar of Christ on earth (who claimed every time he sat down he was infallible!" The Pope is never infallible when he is standing. He is never infallible except he sits down on St Peter's chair and then suddenly something happens and he becomes infallible. Evidently his brains are in a different place in his body than your brains are in yours): he is in purgatory. He still (according to Rome herself) is, and to this day they are still saying masses for the repose of his soul.

Rome does not believe that your sins can be completely taken away. Thank God, this doctrine says: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." That is why my young brother Philip died rejoicing because all his sins had been taken away. He had looked to Christ and Christ had looked to him and they were one for ever. This is perverting the Gospel of Christ.

Then the third thing, the C of the Gospel - the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. This is sanctification because the word there is in the present continuous tense: keeps on cleansing from all sin. That is the Deliverance of the Gospel.

You see, when God genuinely saves people He does not save them in their sins: He saves them from their sin. I was with a man today and he had lived hard for the Devil. He was an openly wicked and openly bad. We are all bad and we are all wicked but this man bore terrible fruits and then one day God Almighty saved him. He said to me this afternoon: "The things that I once loved to do and would have done anything to get at - I hate them now. I hate them. I hate them." Of course he does. You know what happened? He got born again. He found out that the blood keeps on cleansing from all sin.

## Advertising the demands of the Gospel

So Rome falsifies the dispensations of the Gospel and the doctrines of the Gospel and Rome falsifies the demands of the Gospel. You know, the Gospel makes demands upon you; but you see, the yoke of the Gospel is not a heavy yoke. Christ's yoke is easy and His burden is light. When you are converted, truly converted, you love to do the things that Jesus commands you to do.

You don't say: 'He's a terrible task master, asking me to do these things. Oh! what a terrible task master is Christ.' No. Christ is the most blessed Master you could work for. I have been working for him for 52 years. He always takes the heavy end of the stick. He always puts His cheek to where the winter storm blows the severest. He is always with me in sorrow. He is my comfort in trouble. He is my stay. He tells me every care on Him to roll. He is the Lily of the Valley. He is the Bright and Morning Star. He is the Fairest of Ten Thousand to my soul.

Have no other gods before me... You know, the commandments don't make things right. The commandments tell us what is right. It is not right to have other gods. Have you other gods? The Gospel demands that you shall have no other gods before the true and living God. The Gospel demands that you do not make any graven images - that you do not put anything either by imagination or by the work of your hands in a place of religious worship. Rome's chapels are idol houses. There are idols everywhere.

I remember going into a chapel one day with Monica Farrell as a young preacher, and she said: "Ian, I want to show you something." She took me to a great statue of the virgin. She said: "Let me show you something." I had never seen it before. On every statue of the virgin that is made by Rome the foot of the virgin is on the serpent's head. She said: "There is the serpent and there is Mary's foot on his head. Ian, what awful blasphemy!" Who was it who bruised the serpent's head? It was the seed of the woman. It was the Lord Jesus Christ; and any religion that would exalt Mary to do the work of bruising the serpent's head is surely a deception from Hell itself, and Rome is.

Then when I went to Rome and stood outside the great cathedral built to Mary there is a cross outside that cathedral and on the cross Mary is hanging with Jesus on the cross. Mary did not die for anybody's sins. Mary was a sinner that needed to be saved herself and was saved by the grace of God; but Jesus Christ is alone the Saviour.

Taking the Lord's name in vain. We are not to be in any way irreverent in our speech. I mingle among a lot of Roman Catholic MEPs in Europe and I never heard such blasphemy from the lips of Romanists. Romanists excel in taking the Lord's name in vain. That is something that I don't stand for, and when anybody takes the Lord's name in vain I shut them up and rebuke them. I want to tell you that there is not a member of the British House of Commons who does not know that I have been in company and before they knew they have used a swear word they apologise to me and said they were sorry they said that.

To listen to swear words is to be part of an act of irreverence against the Lord. That is why when there are programmes on radio or television and the name of the Lord is taken in vain you should have that programme stopped immediately. You should ask God to forgive you for having heard in your ear the blasphemy of the blessed name of the Lord Jesus.

It says, you know, in the Book of the Law, that he who heareth is as guilty as he who says it. Yes.

Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. What is more, we need to keep holy the Lord's Day. There seems to be a craze today for God's people to do anything and everything on the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day is a day to work for Him. People should not be engaged in their office work on Sunday or any other work. This is the Lord's Day. It is for the Lord's business. A Sabbath well spent is a day of content. I am telling you if you kept the Sabbath day you would be healthier. People say to me that I do too much. Well, there is one thing I keep the Lord's Day for - I am at it from beginning to end and it has never done me any harm and it never will. Keep the Lord's Day, get at it for there is work to be done.

Honour thy father and thy mother... Then there is to be the honour of the home and no dishonouring of parents and no disrespect for that one thing in society that God has created as cement - the family. What an attack there is today on the home and on the marriage tie.

Then there is to be no murder, no uncleanness, no stealing, no false witnessing and no covetousness. These are the demands that the Gospel make.

The Gospel is the Law of God. These laws are not the way to life because the way to life is Christ. He is the Way the Truth and the Life; but these are the way of life. These are laws governing my conduct. I have to govern my conduct by these laws. They are God's laws: they do not change. They were not written in the Old Testament for Jews only. They were written for everyone. God's law is the same. Let us see that we don't pervert the demands of the Gospel.

You know, I meet Christians today and they say: "Oh! we are not under law; we are under grace." Hallelujah! We are under grace, but if I am under grace I will keep the Law of God perfectly because I have got a power within me that it can enable me to do it.

These are the matters that we need to be awakened to these days. If you are in this meeting, dear sinner friend, don't trust in some perverted Gospel come to the fountain head. Discover you are a sinner. Discover that Jesus Christ took our sins and our sorrows and made them His very own. He bore the great burden to Calvary and suffered and died alone. Look to Him for there is life for a look at the crucified One. Then say: 'O God, I am under your Lordship: help me to meet your demands' - and the Lord will help you to do it; and what does it say? In the keeping of His commandments there is a great reward. If you want the great reward, keep the commandments of God.

May God keep us ever contending for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.

Amen and Amen.

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