

Protestants are often accused of being arrogant, intolerant Catholic-bashing bigots when we point out that Rome's gospel, being as it is "another gospel" (Galatians 1:6-9), is a false and damnable one. Many evangelicals today seem to be oblivious to the fact that it was actually the church of Rome whom had officially anathematized Protestants as far back as the sixteenth-century at the Council of Trent. In other words, if we are "Catholic-bashers", they were "Protestant-bashers" first. It is for this reason that Rome's not-so-tolerant response to the reawakening of the true gospel was appropriately termed the *Counter-Reformation*. Naturally, if the gospel of grace which imputes sinners with the righteousness of Christ by virtue of His propitiatory work with no help of the sacramental sorcery of priestcraft, then the church of Rome is out of business.

In actual fact, and in contrast to Rome's well-documented history of literally bashing Protestant skulls, we do not wish to "bash" anyone but seek to faithfully uphold and proclaim the plain, unequivocal gospel of Christ's all-sufficient (Hebrews 10:12), once-for-all (1 Peter 3:18) atoning work at Calvary for the sins of God's elect.

Rome has stolen the words of the Apostle Paul and misapplied his anathemas of the Judaizers by boldly anathematizing those who in fact believe the biblical gospel which Paul himself preached. Robert Reymond explains:

"Paul twice calls down God's 'anathema' on the Judaizers who were 'trying to pervert the gospel of Christ' by their law-ridden 'gospel, which is really no gospel at all' (Gal. 1:8-9). His words deserve citation: '...even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned [anathema estō]! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned.'

The first thing that must be noted from Paul's statement is that for him the gospel—justification by faith alone in Christ's saving work—was already a fixed message needing no additions or alterations to it in the mid-first century when he first came to the Galatian region and proclaimed it. Neither he nor an angel from heaven could alter it in any way or to any degree without falling under divine condemnation. The implication of Paul's statement here is clear: irrespective of whatever else they may believe—including even every tenet of the Apostles' Creed—they who would teach others that in order to be justified before God and thus go to heaven when they die they must, in addition to trusting Christ's saving

work, 'keep the law,' that is, perform meritorious good works of their own, are in actuality 'false brothers' and stand under God's condemnation. Rome's Tradition, which has corrupted the law-free gospel with its many additions, falls under such condemnation. In fact, the sad truth is that from the post-apostolic age to the present time many church fathers and many church communions, in addition to the Roman Catholic Church, have proclaimed 'a different gospel' and thus stand under Paul's apostolic anathema.

As for the word 'anathema'...[it should be understood as referring to the] principle of 'devoting' or handing something or someone over to God for his disposal, usually to destruction.”[1]

Dr. Tony Costa, Professor of Apologetics at Toronto Baptist Seminary addresses Rome's anathemas against Protestants on Iron Sharpens Iron Radio. They also briefly engage the issue of Rome's synergistic soteriology's relationship to modern semi-pelagian "evangelicalism". This episode is highly recommended.

[1] Reymond, R.L., *The Reformation's Conflict with Rome: Why it Must Continue*, Christian Focus Publications, Great Britain, 2001, p. 20.

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