

## **For a Roman Catholic, does receiving the gospel mean becoming a Protestant?**

This I can say, that there are many believers like myself who are actively interested and engaged in getting the gospel to Roman Catholics; but the last thing on earth I should do would be to represent to Catholic people that receiving the gospel automatically means becoming a Protestant.

In Northern Ireland the term 'Protestant' is a political term, and the history of Protestantism, fighting for what it regards as the gospel with force of arms and political manoeuvrings, has brought the gospel into disrepute, not only here in the province, but throughout the United Kingdom, and on the continent likewise.

What we exhort Catholics to do is to seek the Lord; and, when they get converted, to encourage them to read the New Testament, to guide them as to what it means, and to let them be exercised in their own consciences to obey the Lord in regard to the ordinances and to the practice of the churches.

I notice that, when the good man Barnabas came to Antioch, he exhorted the newly-formed church there to cleave to the Lord. As far as we know, he did not exhort them to make sure that they cleaved to Jerusalem and the denominational organization that Jerusalem might seek to impose.

But these are my own convictions.

Your sincerely,  
David Gooding

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**DAVID W. GOODING (1925-2019) was Professor of Old Testament Greek at Queen's University Belfast and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.** He taught the Bible internationally and lectured on both its authenticity and its relevance to philosophy, world religions and daily life. He published scholarly articles on the Septuagint and Old Testament narratives, as well as expositions of Luke, John, Acts, Hebrews, the New Testament's use of the Old Testament, and several books addressing arguments against the Bible and the Christian faith. His analysis of the Bible and our world continues to shape the thinking of scholars, teachers and students alike.