

# Press Release

NOVEMBER 2002

## THE CARTOON GOSPELS

by Richard L. Diesslin

### The Cartoon Gospel Series:

- The Cartoon Gospels (full set)
- 1. The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew
- 2. The Cartoon Gospel of Mark
- 3. The Cartoon Gospel (of Luke)

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**SPECIAL OFFER!**  
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#### For a limited time -

*The Cartoon Gospels* CD is available at the author's web site for \$20.00 including shipping and handling! Go to [www.The-Cartoonist.com](http://www.The-Cartoonist.com)



*Cartoons and Meditations on Selected Scripture from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*

*The Cartoon Gospels* - Cartoons and Meditations on Selected Scripture from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. (CD cover above)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rich Diesslin is a freelance Christian cartoonist with an M.A. in Theological Studies from the University of Dayton. He is the author/cartoonist of the *Cartoon Gospels Series* (for which this is the complete collection, but is also available in three volumes by liturgical year), and *The Cartoon Ten Commandments*. He is the cartoonist of *A Journey Through Christian Theology*, Fortress Press, and companion *A Journey Through Christian Theology Color Cartoons CD*. Mr. Diesslin is also creator/cartoonist of the KNOTS scouting cartoons and a cartoonist for the London's Times Cartoons.

## DESCRIPTION

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were never so much fun to read! *The Cartoon Gospels* contain cartoons that bring out the humor in the Bible through the use of visual parable. Jesus used parables - humorous, short, memorable stories that convey truth. Cartoons that are visual parables are simply cartoons that attempt to do the same thing ... bring out biblical meaning in a fun and memorable way. With the help of a humorous visual aid the reader can see new aspects to the scriptures that may otherwise be missed.

*The Cartoon Gospels'* cartoons are stimulating and humorous and are based on researched interpretation. Each one is "defensible" theologically (with the exception of minor cartoonist privilege now and then), even though the point is

to assist the reader in analyzing the actual scripture passage. The message with each cartoon and passage provides one or all of the following - instruction, application and meditation.

The Gospel scripture selections are based on Common Lectionary Readings for all three church years A, B and C, and cover all four Gospels.

## MARKETING

**Type:** CD E-Book

**Price:** \$20\*

\*plus shipping and handling

**Pages:** 400

**ISBN:** 0-9702244-5-1

**Publication Date:** September 15, 2002

**Available at:** [www.Amazon.Com](http://www.Amazon.Com)

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**REFERENCES**

I knew D. Elton Trueblood only through our correspondence (he was kind enough to respond to a letter I wrote him in appreciation of his book *The Humor of Christ*). He agreed to review original *The Cartoon Gospel (of Luke)* and wrote "The work you have done is impressive. You have done a great deal of thinking." Words like that coming from a noted scholar are encouraging, to say the least.

My good friend and former campus minister had this to say about first cartoon Gospel book. "One of the barriers to hearing the word of God when we read the Bible is the feeling, "I've read all this stuff before." One way to break down that barrier is to see the humor that is often hidden in the Scripture. Rich Diesslin, uses a sometimes "off the wall" sense of humor to show us a humorous and, paradoxically, a dead serious side of the Scripture. [...] Jesus, who often used humor in his teaching would, we think, be pleased by these unorthodox and penetrating insights into his teaching." - Rev. Douglas A. Dickey. Doug has now passed on to his final rewards, but I will carry his encouragement and friendship with me always.

**WHY HUMOR IN THE BIBLE?**

Elton Trueblood wrote in his book *The Humor of Christ* -

*"The widespread failure to recognize and to appreciate the humor of Christ is one of the most amazing aspects of the era named for Him. Anyone who reads the Synoptic Gospels with a relative freedom from presuppositions might be expected to see that Christ laughed, and that He expected others to laugh, but our capacity to miss this aspect of His life is phenomenal. We are so sure that He was always deadly serious that we often twist His words in order to try to make them conform to our preconceived mold. A misguided piety has made us fear that acceptance of His obvious wit and humor would somehow be mildly blasphemous or sacrilegious. Religion, we think, is serious business, and serious business is incompatible with banter."*

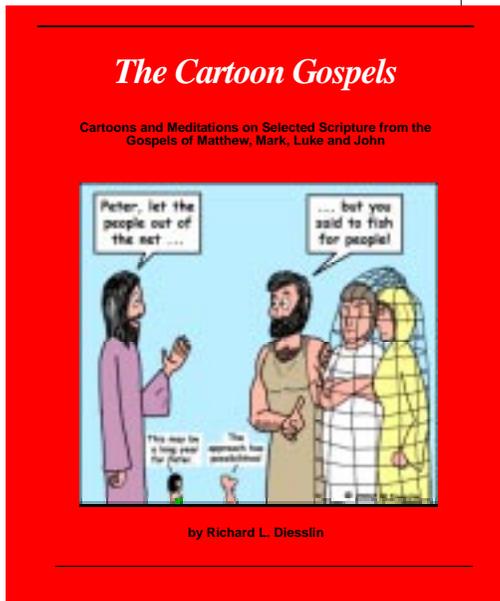
His book is still in print since it's first publication in 1964!

The reverend Grady Nutt, Southern Baptist minister and humorist (best known for his role of "the preacher" on the country TV comedy show *Hee Haw*) was often asked if he thought God had a

sense of humor. He noted that no one was ever smiling when they asked! His reply was to tell them to look in the mirror and ponder the humor God must have if he created something as funny looking as that!

I think there is further proof if you look back to Genesis where it says that we were created in God's image. That can mean we look like God... but that's not likely. More likely it means that we are in spirit and in some traits like God. Isn't it interesting, that babies at a very early age delight in laughter. I think that innate ability to laugh is a clue that God has a sense of humor. Moving ahead to the Gospels, we find that Jesus' teaching in parables was by no means accidental. Perhaps the only way to put infinite truth into finite minds is by way of analogy or parable.

Grady Nutt adds that if Jesus went around dead-serious all day saying "verily, verily I say unto you..." that he would have quickly lost his following. You are just not going to stand around and listen to that in the hot Middle-Eastern sun! Truth to Jesus was like the popcorn in life. He was so in touch with God that truth sort of exploded all around



**BOOK COVER**

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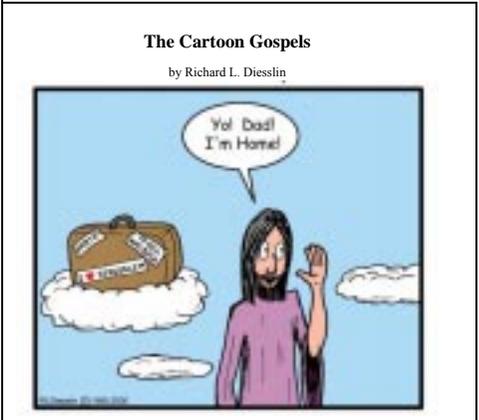
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171 Scripture Readings and Cartoons covering Matthew, Mark, Luke & John!

**BACK COVER**



"One of the barriers to hearing the word of God when we read the Bible is the feeling, "I've read all this stuff before." One way to break down that barrier is to see the humor that is often hidden in the Scripture. Rich Diesslin, uses a sometimes "off the wall" sense of humor to show us a humorous and, paradoxically, a dead serious side of the Scripture. [...] Jesus, who often used humor in his teaching would, we think, be pleased by these unorthodox and penetrating insights into his teaching." -Douglas A. Dickey.

ISBN 0-9702244-5-1

The Cartoon Gospels  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent (A04)** Matthew 1:18-25  
*Joseph's Dilemma*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they were joined together, she was discovered to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Her husband, who was a righteous man, yet one who did not want to disgrace her, planned to divorce her quietly. But when he learned that she was with child by the Holy Spirit, he decided not to do this to her. When he had made this decision, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife; what has happened to her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. This will happen so that what was said by the Lord through the prophet will be fulfilled: 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Jesus.'" When Joseph awoke from his dream, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. She bore a son, the firstborn, and he was named Jesus.

Matthew 1:18-25 Fourth Sunday of Advent (A04)  
**God Works in Mysterious Ways ...**

Give us the faith and compassion of Joseph, Jesus' other loving father!

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The Cartoon Gospels  
**Eighth Sunday after Epiphany (B15)** Mark 2:13-22  
*Collecting Tax Collectors*

Jesus went out again beside the sea; the whole crowd gathered around him, and he taught them.

As he was walking along, he saw Levi the tax collector sitting at his desk. And he got up and followed him. And sinners were also sitting with Jesus and eating. When the scribes of the Pharisees and the tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard this, he said to them, "The days will come when the Son of Man will sit on his throne and judge the living and the dead. Then the Son of Man will say to the angels, 'Send forth the angels, and they will cast out of his kingdom those who do not want to repent. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth for those who do not obey.'"

Mark 2:13-22 Eighth Sunday after Epiphany (B15)  
**Sewing and Wine Making 101**

New teaching, new approach -- Jesus was hardly orthodox, and his newness would be a continual problem for the scribes and the religious establishment. New wine, old wineskins. New material, old clothes. This is a pattern that repeats itself many times and many ways. May we be ever open to the new work God creates in and around us, discerning the fruits of the spirit and not getting hung-up on the method of delivery!

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him. As Grady put it, the Aramaic loosely translated probably means something more like Will Roger's "now that puts me in mind of a story ..."

**BOOK FORMAT**

The layout is in book, chapter and verse order. Each cartoon is preceded by the corresponding scripture verses and fol-

lowed by a brief commentary. In many of the cartoons, Adam and Eve add their unique perspective to the scene! The scripture and commentary serve as a means to keep the cartoon in context, while the cartoon in-turn helps make the scripture accessible. It's much easier to relate to biblical characters when we remove them from their pedestals (or ivory towers) and see them as we see

each other. The scripture passages are from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The selections are based on Common Lectionary Readings for all three church years A, B and C (Advent to Advent).

**THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST**

*I appreciate your review!*

The Cartoon Gospels  
**Sunday 6/26-7/2 (C36)** Luke 9:51-62  
*Travelling Commentary*

When the days drew near for Jesus to go to Jerusalem, he said to his disciples, "I am now sending you out two by two into every town and village around here. Preach the gospel to all. Everywhere you go, wear sandals, but do not take a staff, a bag, or sandals, or a tunic. In whatever town you go, say to the people, 'The kingdom of God is near!'

When his disciples commanded him, he turned and rebuked them. As they were going, he said to them, "Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Whoever loses his life for me and the gospel will save it. Whoever loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not give up his life for me and the gospel cannot be my disciple. Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear."

Luke 9:51-62 Sunday 6/26-7/2 (C36)  
**Excedrin Headache #199**

How could Jesus relax when he knew his time on earth was short and his audience was ... shall we say ... just a little slow. We're still trying to figure it all out!

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The Cartoon Gospels  
**Easter Sunday (C23)** John 20:1-18  
*Mary's Great Surprise*

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, she went to the tomb, where she found the stone rolled away. She went in but did not see the body. Then she went out and told the women who were with her. They did not believe her, saying, "They are joking, for she is delirious." When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and she was afraid. He said to her, "Do not be afraid. I am the one who has risen from the dead. Touch me, for I am here, and my spirit and flesh are as real as you can see. Then she went and told her brothers and sisters. They did not believe her either.

John 20:1-18 Easter Sunday (C23)  
**Occupied?**

Hindsight lent the disciples a chance to really understand Christ's teachings. What he had been trying to tell them all along was suddenly crystal clear. The fog was lifted. Pray that it is as clear to us, now that we already have the advantage of hindsight. Remember, Christ's life, teaching and witness which are our example. Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection are the conviction in that example.

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**MORE FACTS ABOUT THE AUTHOR/CARTOONIST**

*In case you are really in need of filler material or have insomnia, here's my cartoonist resume (below).*

**Education**

University of Dayton, M.A. in Theological Studies, Dec. 1995.

Purdue University, B.S. in Industrial Management, May 1978.

**Art Experience**

**Cartoonist**, London's Times Cartoons, Cartoons for the cartoon Web Site <http://www.londonstimes.com>.(2000 - present)

**Writer/Cartoonist**, created and cartoons KNOTS, a Boy Scout cartoon strip illustrating what NOT to do on camping trips and other scouting events, commissioned by the U.S. Scouting Service Project, Inc. (1999 - present)

**Author/Cartoonist**, *The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew*, ISBN 0-9702244-5-1, September, 2002. Researched, wrote and cartooned the book.

**Author/Cartoonist**, *The Cartoon Gospel of Mark*, ISBN 0-9702244-4-3, September, 2002. Researched, wrote and cartooned the book.

**Author/Cartoonist**, *The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew*, ISBN 0-9702244-3-5, October, 2001. Researched, wrote and cartooned the book.

**Author/Cartoonist**, *The Cartoon Ten Commandments*, ISBN 0-9702244-2-7, October, 2000. Researched, wrote and cartooned the book.

**Writer/Cartoonist**, *A Journey Through Christian Theology*, Fortress Press, ISBN 0-8006-3220-6, Spring 2000. Cartooned approximately 200 single-panel cartoons to humorously present major theologians' contribution to the body of theology to complement Editor/Author William P. Anderson's anthology of theology.

**Multi-media Illustrator**, cartoonist/illustrator on multimedia presentation (in Authorware<sup>tm</sup>) project for Biblical studies including "The Many Names of God," "The What and Why of Textual Criticism," and "What You Should Know About Translations and Paraphrases," for the United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. (1997-2000)

**Editorial Cartoonist**, cartooned a bi-weekly editorial cartoon for the business newspaper, "The Dayton Business Advisor," 1998.

**Author/Cartoonist**, *The Cartoon Gospel (of Luke)*, Liturgical Publications, Inc., ISBN 0-940169-09-6, December, 1990. Researched, wrote and cartooned

the book. Successfully marketed the book manuscript and have been active in augmenting the publisher's marketing efforts through target market identification, advertisement, interviews, book reviews and newspaper articles.

**Advertising**, for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC). Product Manager of a computer-based manufacturing information system. Authored and illustrated a series of advertisements, based on a detailed demographic analysis, resulting in numerous leads and inquiries (1989-90).

**Writer/Cartoonist**, IIT Research Institute (IITRI), Manufacturing Productivity Center, Chicago, Illinois, November 1981 - February 1986. Worked closely with the editorial staff on the monthly publication of The Manufacturing Competitiveness Frontiers.

**Other Promotional Efforts**, has been involved in promotional activities for entire professional career. This includes writing and presenting papers, preparing slide shows, working the booths at trade shows, technical research/writing and document illustration.

**Business Consultant**, for 20+ years in information technology primarily in the areas of manufacturing, data base managements systems, and desktop publishing for industry and government.

