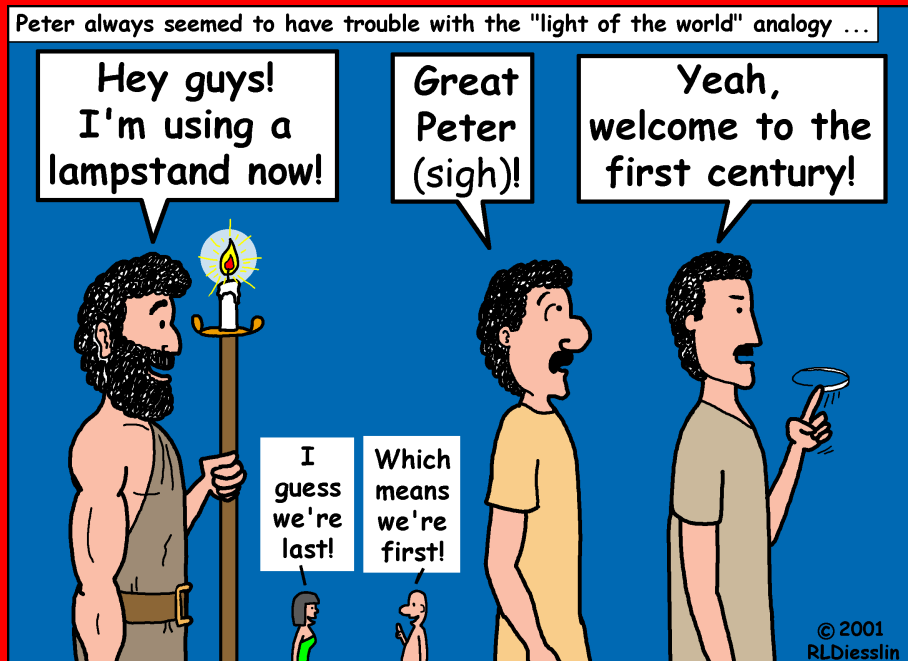


The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew Excerpt

Cartoons and Meditations on Selected Scriptures
from the Gospels of Matthew and John



by Richard L. Diesslin

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew Excerpt

**Cartoons and Meditations on Selected
Scriptures from the Gospels of Matthew and
John**

*This unaltered excerpt version
may be distributed and
is not for resale.*

Richard L. Diesslin

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew Excerpt

Cartoons and Meditations on Selected Scriptures from the Gospels of Matthew
and John

2001

ISBN 0-9702244-3-5

Copyright © 2001 by Richard L. Diesslin, author/cartoonist. All rights reserved.
No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any
means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any
information storage and retrieval system without permission from Richard L.
Diesslin (e-mail at RLDes@aol.com, website [http://members.aol.com/rldes/
index.htm](http://members.aol.com/rldes/index.htm)). Only this unaltered excerpt version may be distributed and is not for resale.

Printed in the United States of America.

PREFACE

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew is unique because it is cartooning of scripture passages instead of scripture illustration or normal Christian cartooning (which primarily lampoons church life). The purpose is to add freshness to the interpretation of the passages. It should challenge the reader to (re-) read these verses and see if it adds a new dimension to his/her understanding.

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew attempts to portray biblical characters as real people trying to know and follow God's will. It is all too easy to read the Bible and be left with the feeling that they are rigid, perfect, even superhuman characters instead of people with the same possibilities that you and I have. The cartoons are meant to be stimulating and humorous and are based on interpretation of the scripture. 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 his/her own analysis of the actual scripture passage. Hopefully, the humor and challenge stand on their own merit.

Mixing humor with the holy can be hazardous, but I want to assure you that I take the Gospel message seriously, yet joyously. Jesus uses parables to express spiritual meaning with joy and a twinkle in his eye ... I hope to carry on that tradition in my own small way through cartoons. I think of the cartoons as visual parables meant to provide short, memorable, entertaining and visual insights. Each cartoon has commentary by Adam and Eve, an addition that started with William P. Anderson and my theology anthology entitled "A Journey Through Christian Theology" published by Fortress Press, May 2000. Hopefully their unique, since-the-beginning-of-time, perspective adds context and fun to each cartoon.

The scripture passages are excerpted from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, since most of the original research was done from this translation. The Gospel scripture selections usually follow the common lectionary readings for year A.

Thank you for reading the Cartoon Gospel of Matthew. I hope it entertains you and enriches your spiritual life.

-R.L.D.

Table of Contents by Church Year

First Sunday of Advent	10
Second Sunday of Advent.....	12
Third Sunday of Advent	14
Fourth Sunday of Advent.....	16
First Sunday After Christmas	18
Second Sunday After Christmas	20
Epiphany	22
Baptism of the Lord	24
Second Sunday after Epiphany	26
Third Sunday after Epiphany	28
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	30
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	32
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany	34
Seventh Sunday after Epiphany	36
Eighth Sunday after Epiphany	38
Last Sunday after Epiphany	40
First Sunday of Lent	42
Second Sunday of Lent	44
Third Sunday of Lent	46
Forth Sunday of Lent	48
Fifth Sunday of Lent	50
Sixth Sunday of Lent (when Palm Sunday).....	52
Sixth Sunday of Lent (when Passion Sunday).....	54
Easter Sunday	56
Second Sunday of Easter	58
Third Sunday of Easter	60
Fourth Sunday of Easter	62
Fifth Sunday of Easter	64
Sixth Sunday of Easter.....	66
Seventh Sunday of Easter	68
Pentecost	70
Trinity Sunday	72
Sunday 5/29 - 6/4.....	74

Table of Contents by Church Year

Sunday 6/5-11	76
Sunday 6/12-18	78
Sunday 6/19-25	80
Sunday 6/26-7/2	82
Sunday 7/3-9	84
Sunday 7/10-16	86
Sunday 7/17-23	88
Sunday 7/24-30	90
Sunday 7/31-8/6	92
Sunday 8/7-13	94
Sunday 8/14-20	96
Sunday 8/21-27	98
Sunday 8/28-9/3	100
Sunday 9/4-10	102
Sunday 9/11-17	104
Sunday 9/18-24	106
Sunday 9/25-10/1	108
Sunday 10/2-8	110
Sunday 10/9-15	112
Sunday 10/16-22	114
Sunday 10/23-29	116
Sunday 10/30-11/5	118
Sunday 11/6-12	120
Sunday 11/13-19	122
Sunday 11/20-26	124

Table of Contents by Title

Expect the Unexpected!	11
Baptism by Fire.	13
Doesn't Anyone Read Isaiah Anymore	15
God Works in Mysterious Ways	17
Early Experiments with Timesharing	19
It's All in the Packaging!	21
Priority Club?	23
One-Upmanship	25
Behold the Lamb of God?.....	27
Fishers of Men?	29
The Sermon on the Mound	31
God's Power and Light Company	33
Go Straight to Jail, Do Not Pass Go	35
The Origin of What's the Sound of One Hand Clapping	37
Grin and Bare It!.....	39
Let Your Light Shine	41
Some Food Just Isn't Fast!	43
Early Attempts at Being Born Again	45
Well, Well, What Have We Here	47
Blinded by the Light	49
Come Out, Come Out, Wherever You Are!.....	51
Double-Take	53
A Case of Mistaken Identity	55
Surprise Party?	57
Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign	59
Who Was that Masked Man	61
Okay Corral	63
Do You Have a Room?	65
No Solicitors Allowed	67
No Refunds!	69
Are You Paranoid Enough?	71
Looking for Someone?	73
Dead to Rights	75

Table of Contents by Title

Hi Doc, You Just Called To Say Hello?	77
Lose Something?	79
The Literalist	81
The Over-Zealous Zealot	83
Out of the Mouths of Babes	85
Flower Power	87
Gospel Chalk Talk	89
What We Have Here Is a Failure To Communicate	91
Cooking with Jesus	93
Sink or Swim	95
A Job for Little Bo Peep	97
Is That Your Final Answer?	99
God Forbid!	101
So Hot They're Cool; So Cool They're Hot	103
Do Unto Others	105
Yeah, but What about Benefits?	107
My, It's Hard to Get a Straight Answer around Here!	109
Car 54 Where Are You?	111
An Offer You Can't Refuse	113
H & R Jesus	115
Thank You, Thank You Very Much	117
Hare Loss	119
Too Late	121
A Bad Idea	123
The Hero or The Goat?	125

First Sunday of Advent

Matthew 24:36-44

Keep Your Eyes Peeled

“But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.

Then two will be in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken and one will be left. Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.

But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an unexpected hour.”

Expect the Unexpected!



Lord, help us live ready.

Second Sunday of Advent

Matthew 3:1-12

John the Baptist Prepares the Way

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

*“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”*

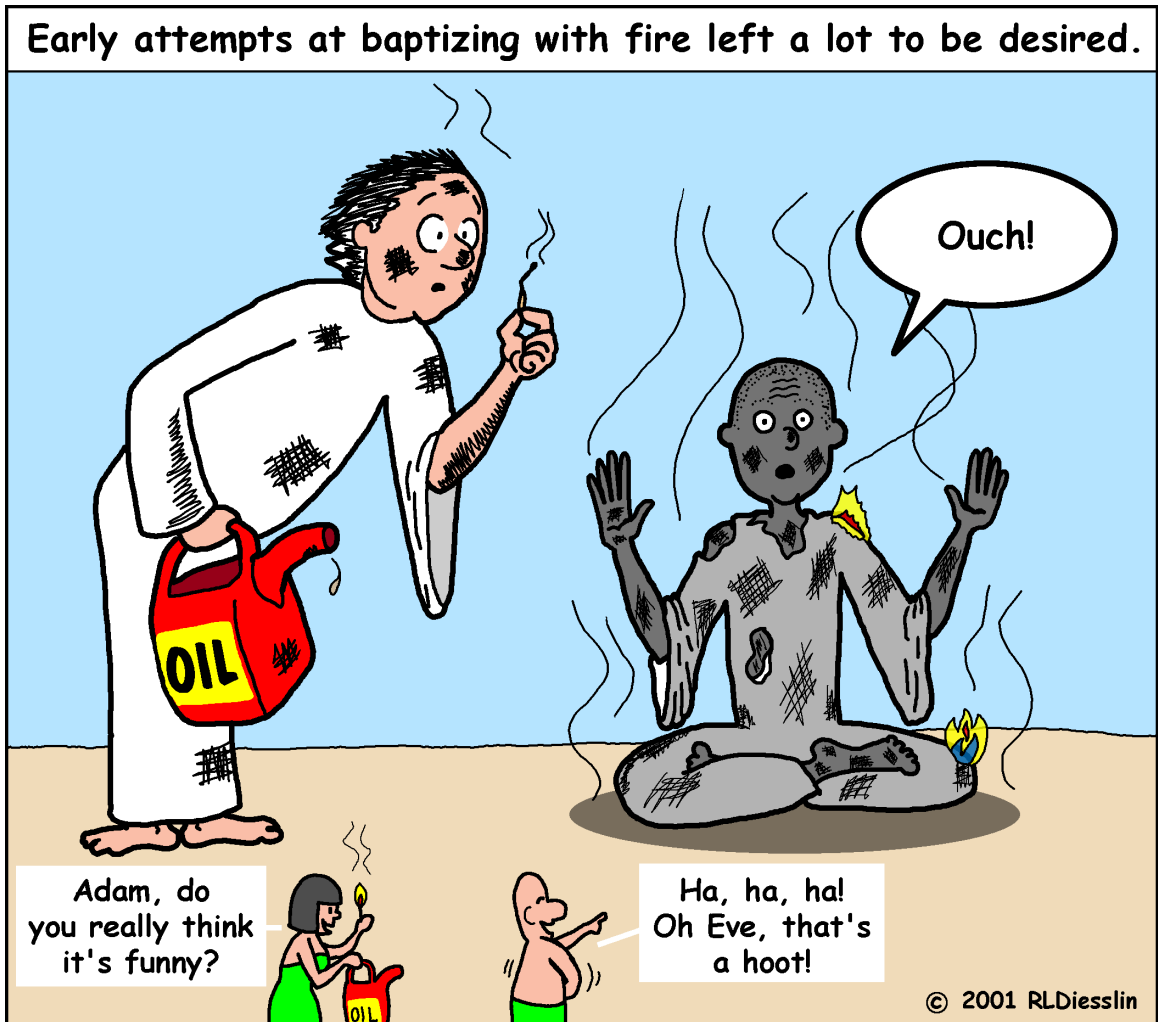
Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them,

“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Baptism by Fire



Pray that we can stand the heat!

Third Sunday of Advent

Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist Get's Confirmation

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him:

“Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?”

Jesus answered them:

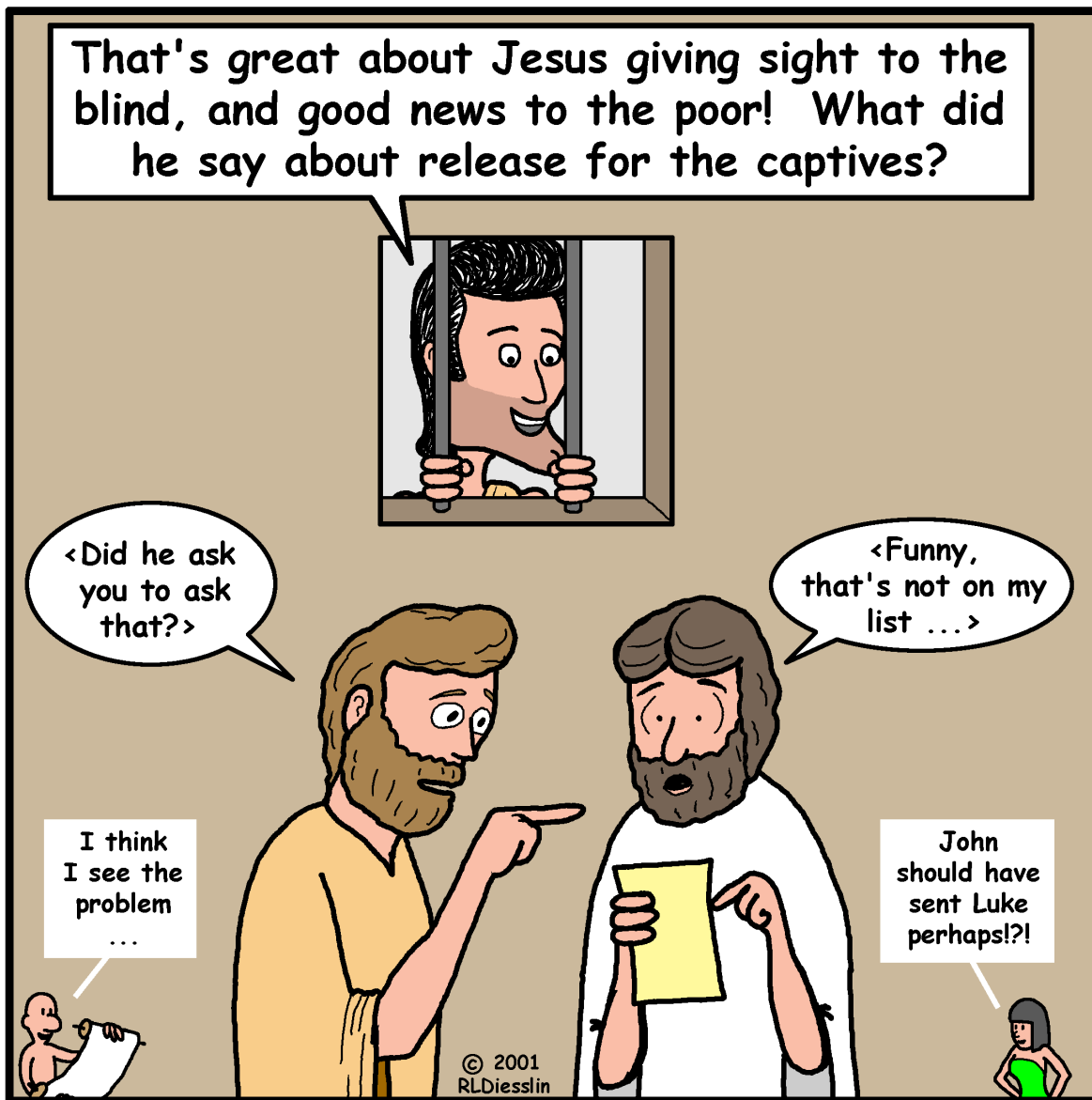
“Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

Jesus Gives Kudos to John the Baptist

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John:

“What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Doesn't Anyone Read Isaiah Anymore ...



Help us to look, see and understand who Jesus is, even from our prisons. Then read Luke.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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 lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said:

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Immanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

God Works in Mysterious Ways ...



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

First Sunday After Christmas

Matthew 2:13-23

On the Road Again ...

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said:

“Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.”

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet,

“Out of Egypt I have called my son.”

Herod’s Folly

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah:

“A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.”

On the Road Again, Again ...

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said,

“Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child’s life are dead.”

Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled,

“He will be called a Nazorean.”

Early Experiments with Timesharing ...



Sometimes our life depends on our hopes and dreams ... may they always include God.

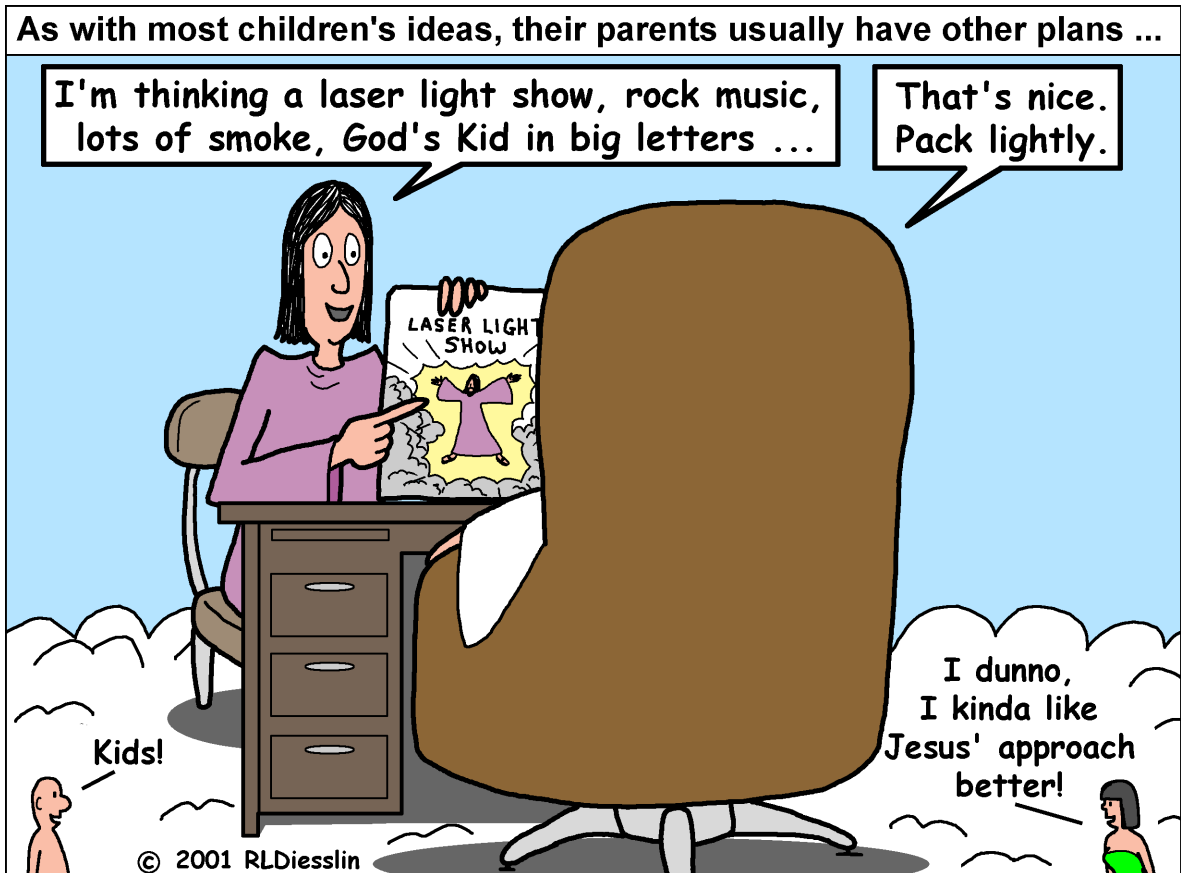
Second Sunday After Christmas

John 1:1-18

And Now for a Word from Our Sponsor

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

It's All in the Packaging!



The plan certainly isn't anything we can really comprehend, but we can understand the main point: God's incredible love for us.

Epiphany

Matthew 2.1-12

Herod Flunks Astronomy

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking,

“Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”

When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him,

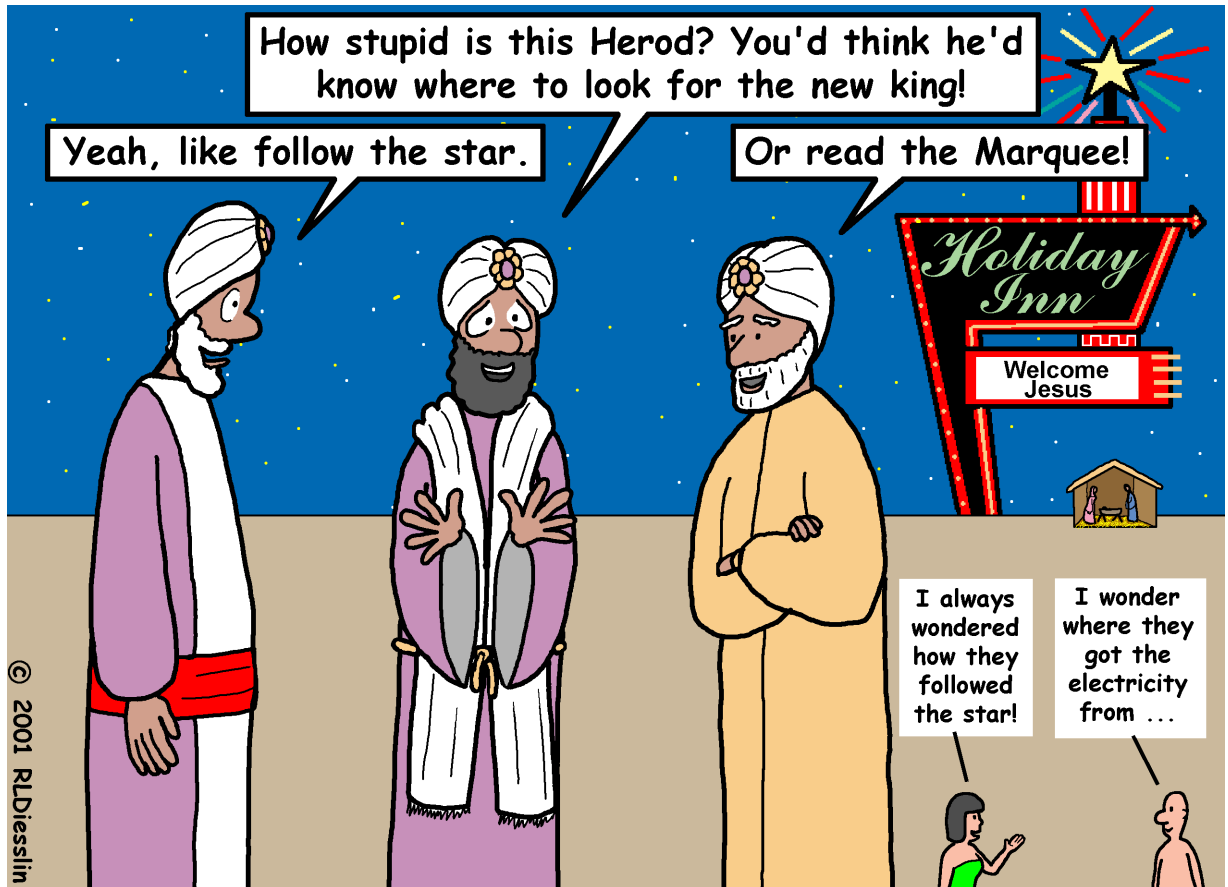
“In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying,

“Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Priority Club?



Most hotels, like most homes have a Bible. It's still the best selling book of all time. Unfortunately, it is probably the least read book as a percentage of number in print. Let's endeavor to bring that percentage up. May we be open to the truths that lie within!

Hope You Enjoyed This Shareware Excerpt!

How to Obtain The Complete E-Book

Use my web site order form at: www.the-cartoonist.com

- Credit Cards welcome using Pay Pal. All orders will be confirmed prior to shipping/billing.

Via e-mail at: rich@the-cartoonist.com

Thank you in advance for your review this shareware e-book excerpt and for honoring my copyrights. Cartooning is what I do for a living, so I'm counting on your honesty and integrity to make e-publishing a viable option for me and others. I am using the shareware model for free excerpts (pass them around generously), and an e-commerce approach for selling entire books (not excerpted) and CD-ROMs.

I hope you found this informative and entertaining. If so, please consider purchasing this or one of my other books (listed below).

Books by the Author

The Cartoon Ten Commandments, Diesslin, Richard L., Dayton:Diesslin, 2001\$11

A Journey Through Christian Theology, edited by Anderson, William P.; illustrated by Diesslin, Richard L., Minneapolis:Fortress, 2000. List Price: \$29 my website: \$22

A Journey Through Christian Theology Color Cartoons CD, CD-ROM, Dayton:Diesslin, 2000.
.....\$15

Cartoon Gospel Series by the Author

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew, (Year A) Diesslin, Richard L., Dayton:Diesslin, 2001\$15

The Cartoon Gospel of Mark, (Year B) Diesslin, Richard L., Dayton:Diesslin, 2002\$15

The Cartoon Gospel (of Luke), (Church Liturgical Year C) available as :

- Paperback - New Berlin:Liturgical Publications, 1990.\$15
- Color Cartoons CD - Dayton:Diesslin, 2000.\$15

The Cartoon Gospels, (The Complete One-Volume Set of Cartoon Gospels in Book/Verse Order - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) Diesslin, Richard L., Dayton:Diesslin, 2002\$20

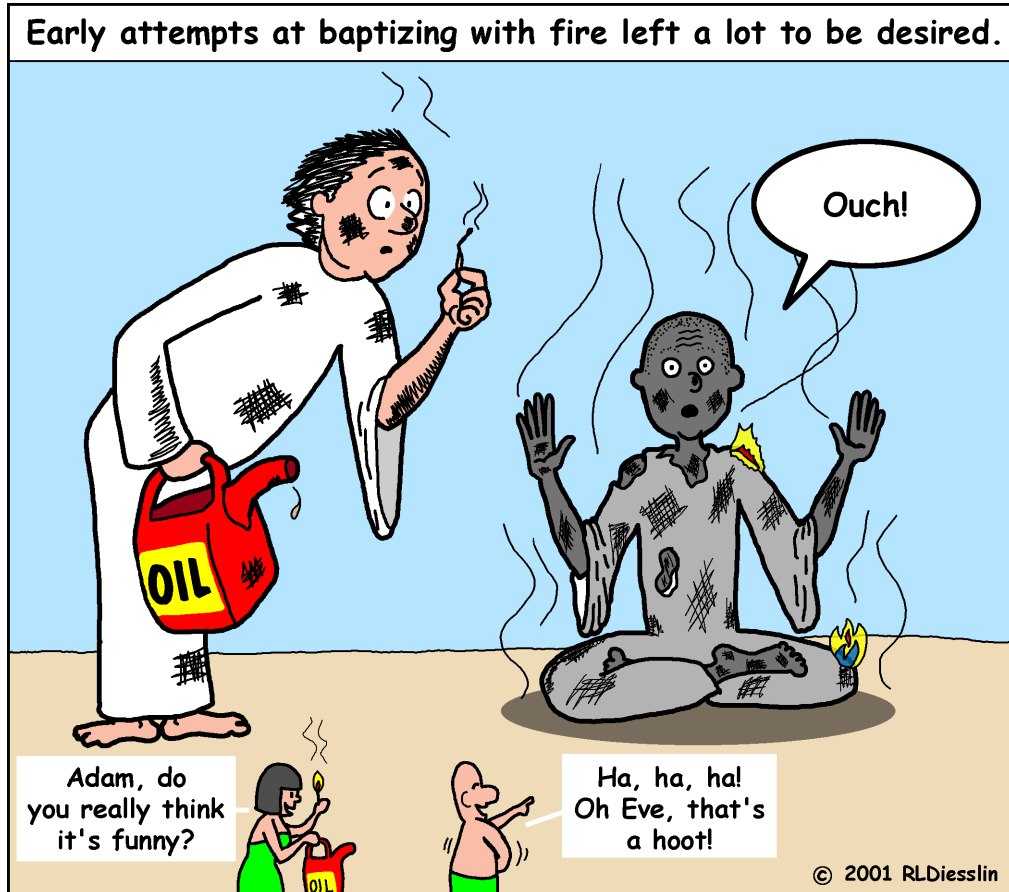
And more to come!

Note: prices subject to change without notice, please refer to my website for the latest details!
Prices already include shipping and handling (no hidden charges).

This PDF file is Shareware and is not for sale or resale. It is strictly a promotion for the full e-book and should be distributed freely. It may not be used or included in any other collection of cartoons or other kinds of works. (refer to the copyright at the beginning of this document)

The Cartoon Gospel of Matthew

by Richard L. Diesslin



Tired of the same old approach to the scriptures? Here's a way to read the weekly gospel passages and have fun at the same time! Give it a test drive and see what you think, but be careful, many of the stunts should only be attempted by a trained cartoonist (baptism by fire for example)! Enjoy!



ISBN 0-9702244-3-5