

THE DEVIL AND PASTOR GUS

Roger E. Bruner



Lighthouse Publishing
of the Carolinas

www.lighthousepublishingofthecarolinas.com

PRAISE FOR *THE DEVIL AND PASTOR GUS*

A whimsical, quirky tale that is so much more than whimsical and quirky. This is a story that makes you smile and laugh, but also leaves you with a profound sense of what is happening in the unseen spiritual realm—and how it can have a significant impact on your life. I loved *The Devil and Pastor Gus*.

~**James L. Rubart**

Christy Award-winning, bestselling author of *Rooms*, *Soul's Gate*, and *The Chair*

Excellent satire by a skillful wordsmith.

~**Donn Taylor**

Author of *Lightning on a Quiet Night*, *Rhapsody in Red*, and *Deadly Additive*

Clever and thought provoking. A winner!

~ **Christy Barritt**

Award-winning author of *Race against Time*, *Hazardous Duty*, and the Squeaky Clean series

...Gus's unique ability to forgive will boggle your mind. The surprise ending will send chills up your spine and bring tears to your eyes... This introspective book, peppered with humor sometimes and nitty-gritty life sometimes, is a must for everyone who has ever struggled with Satan.

~**Katheryn Haddad**

Author of *Applied Christianity* and *Inside the Hearts of Bible Women*

THE DEVIL AND PASTOR GUS BY ROGER BRUNER

Published by Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas
2333 Barton Oaks Dr., Raleigh, NC, 27614

ISBN: isbn number goes here

Copyright © 2014 by

Cover design by

Interior design by

Available in print from your local bookstore, online, or from the publisher at:
www.lighthousepublishingofthecarolinas.com

For more information on this book and the author visit: <http://www.rogerbruner.com/>

All rights reserved. Non-commercial interests may reproduce portions of this book without the express written permission of Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas, provided the text does not exceed 500 words. When reproducing text from this book, include the following credit line: “*The Devil and Pastor Gus* published by Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas. Used by permission.”

Commercial interests: No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means—electronic, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission of the publisher, except as provided by the United States of America copyright law.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, and incidents are all products of the author’s imagination or are used for fictional purposes. Any mentioned brand names, places, and trademarks remain the property of their respective owners, bear no association with the author or the publisher, and are used for fictional purposes only.

Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION r. NIVr Copyright c 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Brought to you by the creative team at LighthousePublishingoftheCarolinas.com:
Bethany R. Kaczmarek

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Bruner, Roger.
The Devil and Pastor Gus/ Roger Bruner 1st ed.

Printed in the United States of America

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I feel like an Academy Award winner stepping up to the microphone and trying to remember all of the people he should acknowledge for the roles they've played in contributing to his success.

I'll start with God, though. His influence is definitely the most important one. Without the writing talent and imagination He's gifted me with—including its quirky nature—I couldn't have written this book. And without my relationship with Him through faith in Jesus Christ, I wouldn't have had a reason to write this novel or anything else.

I'm indebted to these sources:

- The book of *Job*, which gave me the idea of God allowing Satan to test a man's righteousness
- Stephen Vincent Benét's short story, "The Devil & Daniel Webster," which not only suggested my title but gave me the idea of a righteous man signing a contract with the Devil
- C.S. Lewis's *Screwtape Letters*, in which he quoted Martin Luther as saying, "The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn." Then Luther proceeded to do that brilliantly himself

Don't think I'm not tempted to list my LPC editor, Bethany Kaczmarek, as my co-author. Not only did she do a lot of praying for me while we worked together—I kept her in my prayers, too—she rarely made suggestions I failed to see the wisdom of accepting. More than that, however, she occasionally suggested alternate wordings that were—don't blush, Bethany—almost brilliant. I hope we get to work together again soon.

I can't overlook my friends at church and in the neighborhood, either. They've been faithful in encouraging me during the waiting process (the publication of a book involves a lot of that). And I'm counting on those same people to buy copies of this novel—numerous copies—and give them to everyone they know. Maybe even to complete strangers.

Ah, but neither can I leave out Kimberly Shumate, who—as an acquisitions editor who couldn't use any of my manuscripts—believed in *Found in (the) Translation* so strongly that she got Mr. Terry Burns for me as an agent. Without his help, I'd still be an unpublished novelist. Thanks to both of you!

As soon as this book goes to print, I'm bound to think of people I should've acknowledged. Let me just thank you now—whoever you are. Just fill your name in here: _____.

Best regards,
Roger

To Kathleen, my loving wife of eleven years.

Without her encouragement and understanding, my career as a novelist might have died with my first book, which I self-published and later withdrew from availability. I learned the hard way that majoring in English in the mid-1960s had not prepared me to write a 21st century novel—and that marketing is one of the writer's largest responsibilities.

Kathleen convinced me to go to Christian writers conferences—she attended some of them with me—and to study books on writing. She read everything I wrote and proved to be an excellent editor. Then, when she thought my writing showed sufficient promise, she suggested that I retire at sixty-two to write full-time.

I've never regretted that. Retiring. Writing novels. Or marrying Kathleen.