

The Message

from the mind of Eugene Peterson

Eugene Hoiland Peterson (1932-2018), the late minister of the liberal Presbyterian Church (USA), published *The Message* in 2002. While the PC (USA) openly supports religious same-sex marriage (2014), Peterson retracted an earlier endorsement of acceptance of gay ministry, by stating in an interview that he believed the biblical view of marriage between one man and one woman (*Religion News Service*, 7/12/2017).

Keep in mind that *The Message* is not a word or thought translation of the Scriptures. It is a paraphrased expression from a singular source, Eugene Peterson, who has written many books, such as *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Word Publishing, 1989).

Just Some of the Issues Regarding *The Message*

1. “Lord” - Greek *kurios*, used 653x (ESV), 24x (MSG)
2. “Lord Jesus Christ” - used 61x (ESV), 0x (MSG)
3. “Master” often replaces “Lord” in MSG¹
4. MSG eliminates specific references to the sins of adultery, homosexuality, idolatry, etc. & replaces them with general reference of abuse (*cf.* 1 Cor 6:9-11; note also the added “environmentally conscience” climate reference to “use and abuse of the earth”)
5. MSG minimizes unbelief’s following Satan & his rule by implying it was merely our sinful nature (*cf.* Eph 2:1-3, especially v2).
6. MSG replaces words condemning occult spirituality with words implying finite, human influences (*cf.* 1 Tim 4:1)

Some Comparisons

Matt 6:9-13, ESV - *“Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.’”*

MSG - *“With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this: Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are. Set the world right; Do what’s best— as above, so below. Keep us alive with three square meals. Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others. Keep us safe from ourselves and the*

¹ The term “Master” is used in various New Age philosophies and cultic practices. Used by Masons (*Worshipful Master*), of New Age “messiahs,” viz., “Master Maitreya” etc. The New Age Tara Center describes “Masters” as the “custodians” or “guardians” of the divine plane of existence.

Devil. You're in charge! You can do anything you want! You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

John 10:30, ESV - *"I and the Father are one."*

MSG - *"I and the Father are one heart and mind."*

John 14:28, ESV - *"You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.*

MSG - *"You've heard me tell you, 'I'm going away, and I'm coming back.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I'm on my way to the Father because the Father is the goal and purpose of my life."*

John 20:28, ESV - *Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"*

MSG - Thomas said, *"My Master! My God!"*

Rom 3:25, ESV - *whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.*

MSG - God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear that world of sin. Having faith in him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public—to set the world in the clear with himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins he had so patiently endured.

Rom 10:17, ESV - *So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.*

MSG - The point is, Before you trust, you have to listen. But unless Christ's Word is preached, there's nothing to listen to.

1 Cor 10:30, ESV - *So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

MSG - So eat your meals heartily, not worrying about what others say about you— you're eating to God's glory, after all, not to please them. As a matter of fact, do everything that way, heartily and freely to God's glory.

Eph 5:22, ESV - *Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.*

MSG - Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ.

1 Thess 5:9, ESV - *For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

MSG - God didn't set us up for an angry rejection but for salvation by our Master, Jesus Christ.