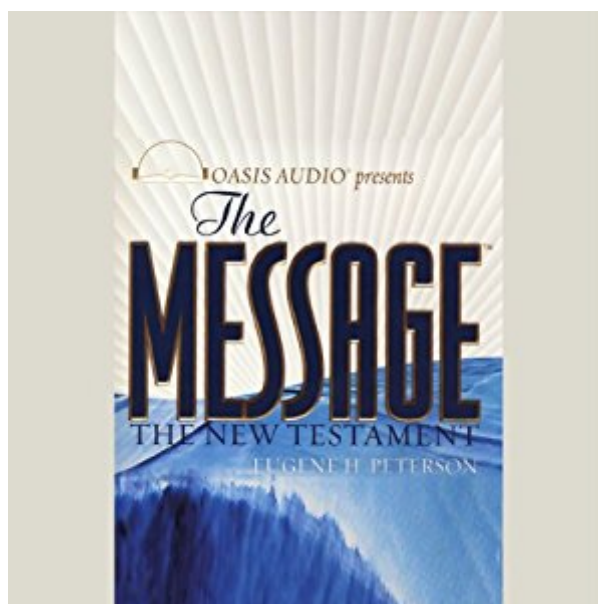


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# The Message: The New Testament In Contemporary Language



## Synopsis

Bringing out the expressive, earthy flavor of New Testament Greek, The Message allows today's readers to experience firsthand the same power and directness that motivated original New Testament readers to change the course of history centuries ago. Now available in paperback, this bold rendering sold more than 200,000 copies in hardcover in less than a year. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A couple of reviews back a reader from Sioux City asked some questions about the translation of this book. I felt it might be appropriate for me to respond. I worked for NavPress when this project was proposed and saw it come to fruition. At the time I had access to some of the initial drafts, and also had the opportunity to interact with the editor on a daily basis. During the planning stages of The Message NavPress was very sensitive to the accuracy of the translation largely because their parent organization (The Navigators) is relatively influential within the evangelical community. Also, while I can't comment on Eugene Peterson's qualifications as a translator (I am unaware of his credentials), I do know that he reads the Bible in its original languages. An interesting note: when the drafts were circulated around the office many of us were blown away. We simply couldn't put them down. Unfortunately many of the original passages were considered too inflammatory, so they were toned down prior to publication. Personally speaking, The Message has helped me through some very tough times. Were it not for the voice that spoke to me from its pages, I would have in all likelihood walked away from the Christian faith bitter and hateful. Take up and read!

Okay, let me just say this now: I LOVE this book and I highly recommend it. I recommend it to people who read The Bible often and have 87 other versions on their shelves. But I also (highly) recommend it to those who never read the Bible and don't know much about it. Sure, I agree with what a lot of the reviewers are saying, that the Bible is poetry, and Peterson's translation utterly destroys that poetry. Well, okay, I'll go with that. But, look, the King James and the NIV and all the other (closer to original, "poetic") versions of the Bible aren't going anywhere. I'm not about to throw those versions out and neither, probably, is anyone else. The Message, however, gives me a different look at what I already know, (and also at that which I don't yet know!), a fresh perspective, a second glance. It brings scripture down-to-earth for me, and helps me understand. It may sound blasphemous but sometimes the language of the Bible gets in my way. Sometimes I enjoy just opening my Bible at bedtime and reading whichever Psalm the page falls to. The Message has brought the Psalms (and Proverbs) to life for me. I relate much better, now, to David. It's not beautiful poetry, and I wouldn't trade it for the eloquence of the original, but there are evenings when I can completely understand his crying out, "Take my side, God-- I'm getting stomped on every day. Not a day goes by but somebody beats me up; They make it their duty to beat me up" (Psalm 56). There are times when I, too, would like to yell, "Don't turn a deaf ear when I call you, God! All I get from you is deafening silence!" (Psalm 28.) And, gloriously, there are days when I also understand, "Hallelujah! Thank God! And, why? Because He's good, because his love lasts" (Psalm 106.) The Message helps me relate to the writers (and characters) of the Bible on a more personal level, which keeps me reading. I'll read from The Message when I can't bear to read any of the other versions.

I grew up in a fundamentalist Christian home, and -- dare I say this! -- the Bible has often bored me. It was stuffed down my throat as a child, and now as an adult I feel, "Wow, I've read this so many times. Can there actually be something relevant in here for me, now?" Yes, there is, and this book helps me see that clearly. Don't be misled, though -- this isn't a "version" of the Bible, it is one man's paraphrase. Serious, scholarly research couldn't, of course, be done with this book. But how many of us need the scholarly research in our daily lives? Not me, not usually. What I do need is to be reminded that God is alive and real and right here, right now, and "The Message" does that for me. I will point out that this is a very "Americanized" book, and that is unfortunate because it is limited only to an American audience. People in other countries, even those who speak good English, would have difficulty with so many idioms. But putting that aside, this book has helped me feel

God's reality in my life once again.

THE MESSAGE is a great addition to the Bible translations commonly accepted today. His writing is enjoyable and the common language used really lets the reader see the text in the light that it was written in. The back of the book jacket says that the Bible was not written in scholarly Greek, but in a common, conversational tone -- in the language of the streets and the marketplace. The way The Message was written makes the New Testament infinitely more accessible. I believe Eugene Peterson did translate directly from the Greek, and not from another English translation of the New Testament, therefore, I think this translation rings very true to the original text. (I'm not a Bible scholar, however). One characteristic that occasionally bothers me is the overabundance of idioms -- English cliches. Phrases like "you can't see the forest for the trees" distract rather than inspire me. It should also be noted that verses are not numbered, as in traditional translations, although the chapters are designated. This isn't a complaint, but an interesting feature. I highly recommend THE MESSAGE -- it's a revolutionary way to read the Bible. You can read it on its own, or with another translation of the Bible as a companion. If you know someone who is having trouble "getting into the Word," then definitely let them know about The Message.

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