

AUTHOR OF ‘MESSAGE BIBLE’ DOESN’T BELIEVE CHRISTIANS SHOULD STUDY THE BIBLE

Statements by the Author:

The importance of poetry and novels is that the Christian life involves the use of the imagination; after all, we are dealing with the invisible. And, imagination is our training in dealing with the invisible, making connections.

I don't want to do away with or denigrate theology or exegesis, but our primary allies in this business are the artists.... Why do people spend so much time studying the Bible? How much do you need to know? We invest all this time in understanding the text which has a separate life of it's own and we think we're being more pious and spiritual when we're doing it.... [Christians] should be studying it less, not more. You just need enough to pay attention to God... I'm just not at all pleased with all the emphasis on Bible study as if it's some kind of special thing that Christians do, and the more they do the better." ["A Conversation with Eugene Peterson," "Mars Hill Review," Fall 1995, Issue No. 3: pgs 73-90.]

[The Berean Call Ministry comment to the above: It is shocking, but not surprising, that Peterson esteems Bible study so little. While claiming to be a Greek and Hebrew scholar on one hand, Peterson regularly abandons definitions from Strong's (and other trusted sources) for his own poetic "translation" into today's "lingo." That such carelessness is applauded by leading evangelicals is astounding. Peterson is much more careful with his interviews today -- but these earlier comments reveal his rationale for taking such "creative liberty" with Scripture in his corrupted "paraphrase" of God's Word called "The Message." Peterson says, "imagination is our training in dealing with the invisible." What an astounding contradiction of God's Word! (which says): "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15); "All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy

3:16-17).]