

Frances



“THE MESSAGE BIBLE”: PERVERSION OF GOD’S HOLY WORD

Continued . . .

The Message has been endorsed by many “Christian celebrities,” including Rick Warren, Billy Graham, Chuck Swindoll, *Christianity Today*, Dan Quayle, Patsy Clairmount, Bill Hybels, Gordon Fee, J.I. Packer, Jack Hayford, Phil Driscoll, Rebecca St. James, Jerry Jenkins, Jerry Savella, Bill McCartney, John Maxwell, Leith Anderson, Benny Hinn, Bill and Gloria Gaither, Gary Smalley, Joyce Meyer, Kenneth Copeland, Leighton Ford, Bono of U2, Max Lucado, Richard Foster, Rod Parsley, Tony Campolo, Tim Kimmel, Warren Wiersbe, as well as, many, many others. Billy Graham’s endorsement says, “. . . Children can easily understand it, and veteran Bible readers will see Christ’s words in a **fresh light**.” Many other endorsers spoke in similar terms, using words like “**refreshing**,” “**new**,” and “**alive**.” In his introduction to *The Message*, Eugene Peterson himself said, “This version of the New Testament in a contemporary idiom keeps the language of the Message current and fresh and understandable in the same language in which we do our shopping, talk with our friends, worry about world affairs, and teach our children their table manners.” But, I am having trouble understanding one thing. Just what is so refreshing about raw **racy street language**, especially to those whose minds have supposedly been regenerated by the Holy Spirit?

I wish to show you, here, that much of the language used in *The Message* is just plain vulgar. Even the unsaved world refrains from offensive speech at times, such as for reasons of social etiquette and in taking responsibility for its youth. Guarded speech is used in front of children and parental guidance alerts are put in media. Perhaps Warren W. Wiersbe came the closest to accurately describing the tone of *The Message* when he called it the “. . . **boldest and most provocative** rendering of the New Testament. . .” he had ever read! This is not the language of a Christian. This is the language of darkness and depravity, bitter from rebellion toward God. The Word of God says, “**Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister Grace unto the hearers**” (Eph. 4:29). Also, “**In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you**” (Titus 2:7, 8).

A COMPLETE MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE TEXT

Among the many corruptions of the Message Bible is the misunderstanding tendered in their paraphrasing of certain words of the Bible, such as “*fornication, whoredoms, adultery, and the ‘strange woman’ of Proverbs,*” etc. As the Holy Spirit uses these terms, He is little speaking of the sins of the flesh as we understand them. He is rather speaking of idolatry, i.e., “*the worship of idols.*” In essence, these idols were a substitute for the Message of the Cross, which was typified in Old Testament times by the Sacrificial System.

When people leave the Word of God, no doubt the sins of the flesh, referring to evil passions, are always prevalent; however, at least for the most part, the terms we have mentioned, especially in the Old Testament, refer to idolatry, which in actuality is a much worse sin than sins of evil passion.

Let’s look at some random comparisons between this so-called “exciting” new “Bible” and the traditional

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King James Bible. “*The Message*” constantly uses curse words; “damn,” appears many times. Other crude phraseology including “*hell-raisers, hellhounds, and hellholes,*” as well as all kinds of sexually explicit language fill its pages.

Jeremiah 2:23, 24

King James:

(23) How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done: thou art a swift dromedary traversing her ways;

(24) A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away? all they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her month they shall find her.

The Message:

How dare you tell me, 'I'm not stained by sin. I've never chased after the Baal sex gods! Well, look at the tracks you've left behind in the valley. How do you account for what is written in the desert dust—Tracks of a camel in heat, running this way and that, tracks of a wild donkey in rut, Sniffing the wind for the slightest scent of sex. Who could possibly corral her! On the hunt for sex, sex, and more sex—insatiable, indiscriminate, promiscuous.

Ezekiel 16:24

King James:

That thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and hast made thee an high place in every street.

The Message:

At every major intersection you built your bold brothels and exposed your sluttish sex, spreading your legs for everyone who passed by.

Ezekiel 16:26

King James:

Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians thy neighbours, great of flesh; and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger.

The Message:

And then you went international with your whoring. You fornicated with the Egyptians, seeking them out in their sex orgies. The more promiscuous you became, the angrier I got. Finally, I intervened, reduced your borders and turned you over to the rapacity of your enemies. Even the Philistine women—can you believe it?—were shocked at your sluttish life.

Jeremiah 18:13

King James:

Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing.

The Message:

God's Message: Ask around. Survey the godless nations. Has anyone heard the likes of this? Virgin Israel has become a slut!

Notice, too, that in several of the above verses, “*The Message*” even has a Holy God using this offensive street language.

Ezekiel 23:21

King James:

Thus thou calledst to remembrance the lewdness of thy youth, in bruising thy teats by the Egyptians for the paps of thy youth.

The Message:

I turned my back on her just as I had on her sister. But that didn't slow her down. She went at her whoring harder than ever. She remembered when she was young, just starting out as a whore in Egypt. That whetted her appetite for more virile, vulgar, and violent lovers—stallions obsessive in their lust. She longed for the sexual prowess of her youth back in Egypt, where her firm young breasts were caressed and fondled.

II Kings 9:34

King James:

And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter.

The Message:

Then Jehu went inside and ate his lunch. During lunch he gave orders, "Take care of that damned woman; give her a decent burial—she is, after all, a king's daughter.

Jeremiah 8:14

King James:

Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the LORD our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the LORD.

The Message:

So why are we sitting here, doing nothing? Let's get organized. Let's go to the big city and at least die fighting. We've gotten God's ultimatum: We're damned if we do and damned if we don't—damned because of our sin against him.

Psalms 68:6

King James:

God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

The Message:

Father of orphans, champion of widows, is God in his holy house. God makes homes for the homeless, leads prisoners to freedom, but leaves rebels to rot in hell.

Psalms 88:3

King James:

For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

The Message:

I've had my fill of trouble; I'm camped on the edge of hell.

Lamentations 3:47

King James:

Fear and a snare is come upon us, desolation and destruction.

The Message:

We've been to hell and back. We've nowhere to turn, nowhere to go.

Acts 8:20

King James:

But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

The Message:

Peter said, "To hell with your money! And you along with it. Why, that's unthinkable—trying to buy God's gift!

Zephaniah 1:9

King James:

In the same day also will I punish all those that leap on the threshold, which fill their masters' houses with violence and deceit.

The Message:

I will punish the leaders and the royal sons; I will punish those who dress up like foreign priests and priestesses, Who introduce pagan prayers and practices; And I'll punish all who import pagan superstitions that turn holy places into hellholes.

Ezekiel 23:49

King James:

And they shall recompense your lewdness upon you, and ye shall bear the sins of your idols: and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

The Message:

I'll put an end to slutty sex in this country so that all women will be well warned and not copy you. You'll pay the price for all your obsessive sex. You'll pay in full for your promiscuous affairs with idols. And you'll realize that I am God, the Master. (note New Age term, "Master.")

To Be Continued . . .