

‘Message’ Bible Creator Eugene Peterson Changes Mind on Homosexuality; Would Perform a Same-Sex Marriage if Asked

Eugene Peterson, the man behind The Message translation of the Bible, says he would perform a same-sex marriage ceremony if asked.

In an interview with Jonathan Merritt on Religion News, Peterson describes how his views on homosexuality have changed over his career.

“I wouldn’t have said this 20 years ago, but now I know a lot of people who are gay and lesbian, and they seem to have as good a spiritual life as I do. I think that kind of debate about lesbians and gays might be over. People who disapprove of it, they’ll probably just go to another church. So we’re in a transition, and I think it’s a transition for the best, for the good. I don’t think it’s something that you can parade, but it’s not a right or wrong thing as far as I’m concerned,” Peterson says.

Merritt specifically asked Peterson about the LGBT issues plaguing Peterson’s denomination, Presbyterians.

Charisma News previously reported the denomination, which capitulated to the gay agenda, has less than 10,000 churches after an exodus of Bible-believing pastors. In 2015, 34,000 black churches broke ties with the PCUSA, among others.

“I haven’t had a lot of experience with it,” Peterson says of LGBT members in his church. “But I have been in churches when

I was an associate pastor where there were several women who were lesbians. They didn't make a big deal about it. I'd go and visit them, and it never came up for them. They just assumed that they were as Christian as everybody else in the church.

"In my own congregation—when I left, we had about 500 people—I don't think we ever really made a big deal out of it. When I left, the minister of music left. She'd been there ever since I had been there. There we were, looking for a new minister of music. One of the young people that had grown up under my pastorship, he was a high school teacher and a musician. When he found out about the opening, he showed up in church one day and stood up and said, 'I'd like to apply for the job of music director here, and I'm gay.' We didn't have any gay people in the whole congregation. Well, some of them weren't openly gay. But I was so pleased with the congregation. Nobody made any questions about it. And he was a really good musician."

Merritt also interviewed famed evangelical Jen Hatmaker about her stance on the LGBT community.

Hatmaker told Merritt:

From a civil rights and civil liberties side and from just a human being side, any two adults have the right to choose who they want to love. And they should be afforded the same legal protections as any of us. I would never wish anything less for my gay friends.

From a spiritual perspective, since gay marriage is legal in all 50 states, our communities have plenty of gay couples who, just like the rest of us, need marriage support and parenting help and Christian community. They are either going to find those resources in the church or they are not.

Not only are these our neighbors and friends, but they are brothers and sisters in Christ. They are adopted into the same family as the rest of us, and the church hasn't treated

the LGBT community like family. We have to do better.

The 84-year-old Peterson says he's done traveling, preaching and writing. He says *As Kingfishers Catch Fire: A Conversation on the Ways of God Formed by the Words of God* will be his last book.

"I just feel like there's a sense of completion, or maybe satisfaction. I think I've done a better job of everything I'd done before in this book. I might do something else, but I don't think so. These days, I write a lot of letters. I'm still keeping up with people and answering their questions or responding to what they are doing. I think it's more just a sense of completion," Peterson says. {eoa}