LETTERS
— to a —
YOUNG PASTOR

Timothy conversations
between father and son

ERIC E. PETERSON
EUGENE H. PETERSON

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NOTES

INTRODUCTION
2. 1 Timothy 1:2, niv.

THE FIRST LETTER
1. Melody was a music director at Colbert Presbyterian Church.
2. Lynn was Eric’s first wife. She was involved in Colbert Presbyterian Church when the church was first formed.

THE SECOND LETTER
1. The series of lectures here referenced as “Follow the Leader” was eventually published as *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways That Jesus Is the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011).

THE THIRD LETTER
1. Eugene’s reflections in these letters occasionally made their way into his later books. A few paragraphs here would eventually be adapted for his memoir *The Pastor: A Memoir* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2011), 315.

THE FOURTH LETTER
1. By “Search,” Eugene is perhaps referring to the Center for Organizational Reform (COR), a ministry (now defunct) that helped individuals and
institutions pursue health and resilience. Both Eugene and I did work for COR over the years.


THE FIFTH LETTER
1. Eugene may have picked up this quotation from Dorotheus of Gaza from Kathleen Norris’s book *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* (New York: Riverhead, 1999), 32. Norris doesn’t cite it. Eugene was pretty fluent in patristic literature, so he may have quoted from a primary source.

THE SIXTH LETTER

THE SEVENTH LETTER
1. *SPU*: Seattle Pacific University.

THE NINTH LETTER

THE TENTH LETTER
1. Audio for these talks is included in *Creation and Gospel: From the Garden to the Ends of the Earth*, available from the Regent College bookstore.

THE THIRTEENTH LETTER
1. 1 John 3:2. Eugene is paraphrasing here, probably from memory.

THE SIXTEENTH LETTER
1. Lynn was a music director for Colbert Presbyterian Church.
2. This letter appears in Eric E. Peterson, *Letters to a Young Congregation: Nurturing the Growth of a Faithful Church* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2020).
NOTES

THE TWENTY-FIRST LETTER

THE TWENTY-SECOND LETTER
1. Ultimately published as The Jesus Way.

THE TWENTY-THIRD LETTER
5. Leif Peterson, Catherine Wheels (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2005).

THE TWENTY-FOURTH LETTER
1. This phrase is found in Psalm 91:6.
2. Ultimately published as The Jesus Way.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH LETTER
2. Eugene H. Peterson, Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006).

THE TWENTY-SIXTH LETTER
2. In awkward reverence: from a part of “Church Going” not quoted above.
6. Eugene here is anticipating Eric’s forthcoming sabbatical.
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH LETTER
1. Up until this time, I had kept my relationship with Eugene pretty quiet; I found that my relationships with people were complicated if they knew too soon that I was the son of Eugene Peterson. “Coming out of the closet” here is a reference to when I stopped being so careful about it, having become more confidently established in my personal and pastoral identity in distinction from him.

THE TWENTY-NINTH LETTER

THE THIRTIETH LETTER

THE THIRTY-FIRST LETTER
1. Eugene seemed to be in a shorthand mood when writing this letter. To address any confusion: RC = Roman Catholic; HS = Holy Spirit; mss = manuscript; TV = television; ok = okay.
2. SanDisk flash drive.

THE THIRTY-SIXTH LETTER

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH LETTER
1. Psalm 21:6, nrsv.