

ONWARD

from the desk of Chris Greer



Hey there, . It's Chris. ☐☐

Have you ever felt a little jealous of someone else's life?

Last month I stumbled across Winn Collier's [A Burning In My Bones](#), the biography of pastor, writer, and translator of *The Message* Bible, Eugene Peterson.

I've long admired Eugene Peterson. His writing has gripped and grown me for over a decade, and I'm impressed and moved by the true life story of his ways, wisdom, and willing submission to the Spirit's work. The longer I listen to the audiobook, the more of a hero he becomes.

But the deeper I delve into the details of his life, the more I recognize something is amiss in mine. I don't just appreciate the man...I want to be just like him. I want to write like he wrote, pray like he prayed, lead like he led, and even experience what he experienced. I've found myself making mental notes about the "chasm" between him and me in those areas of life. And, honestly, I've become inordinately bummed out about it.

That ever happened to you? Ever wished you were more like someone else and less like yourself? Ever become envious of someone else's finances or fame, triumphs or trajectory? I imagine it's happened to every single one of us.

But it's a trap. It's not what God wants for any of us.

Thankfully, while I've struggled with the obvious reality that I'm *not* Eugene, I've also sensed God's graceful reminder that that's *the point*. I'm Chris Greer...and you're *you*. God never intended you to be Eugene, me, or anyone else.

God formed *you* — not me or Eugene — in your mom's womb (Psalm 139). He numbered *your* days (Job 14:5), orders *your* steps (Proverbs 16:9), and knows the exact number of hairs on *your* cherished head (Luke 12:7).

And our souls are enlivened and the world is bettered when you and I spend less time questioning God's design and more time living into it. But...how do we do that? How do we stay out of the trap?

It begins by intentionally replacing envy with gratitude. Like this... *Lord God, thank you for Eugene Peterson and the ways you've built him to uniquely contribute to your work and kingdom.*

It continues by walking in confidence instead of comparison. Something like this...*Lord God, help me to fully understand and faithfully utilize the unique way*

you've created and called me.

And it culminates by worshiping God for what *he's* accomplished through someone, rather than focusing on an individual's achievements. A bit like this...
Lord God, you're remarkable. It's beautiful and awe-inspiring how you work through the lives of faithful people – including me – for your glory and others' good.

In the end, I want to emulate Peterson's faithfulness without envying his fruitfulness. And the next time you or I stumble upon a fascinating biography, scroll through social media posts, or observe first-hand the lives of our friends and family, let's keep fresh our commitment to appreciate and live *our* lives – the way God designed it.

Onward,

Chris

quote of the week

"What do you think is
the biggest waste of time?"



"Comparing yourself to others,"
said the mole.

[Charlie Mackesy, The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse](#)

dad joke of the week

How can you tell if Will Smith's been in your yard?

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