

# SPOTLIGHT

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## Pray for Haiti

On Tuesday, January 12, a devastating earthquake of 7.0 magnitude hit Haiti near its capital, Port-au-Prince. Many buildings are destroyed, more than 100,000 are injured or deemed dead, and almost a third of the entire Haitian population is affected. Haiti, being one of the poorest countries on earth, was already weak in its infrastructure. This event

just made Haiti even more vulnerable and weak, making it dependent on the rest of the world to lend its arms and give aid.

As Christians who are far from Haiti, we can do two things. First, we can pray. Let us pray that the Haitians would find comfort and peace in Christ even in such times of trouble. Second, we can give. The orphan and homeless population boomed over night as many families were separated. GNC is

holding a bake-sale today and all the proceeds will go directly to The Global Orphan Project, a privately funded Christian organization that ministers to Haitian orphans. You can get more information at [www.theglobalorphanproject.com](http://www.theglobalorphanproject.com). All donations will go straight to the children. Please give in faith.

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

## Beyond Skin Deep : Greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven

By Karen Park

On the reasons why women do what they do to make themselves feel beautiful, Bethany Dillon explains it perfectly in her song, "Beautiful":

"I was so unique now I feel skin deep.  
I count on the make-up to cover it all.  
Crying myself to sleep 'cause I cannot keep their attention.  
I thought I could be strong but it's killing me.  
Does someone hear my cry? I'm dying for new life.  
I want to be beautiful, make you stand in awe.  
Look inside my heart, and be amazed.  
I want to hear you say who I am is quite enough.  
Just want to be worthy of love and beautiful..."

As young women buy into the media's perception of beauty, the struggle to accept compliments and grasp a true understanding of a woman's worth can be easily explained by the common saying that we are our own worst critics. It is no surprise that many are in a losing battle with insecurity and lack an understanding of true self-worth. Given today's society, so widely consumed with setting

*cont on pg.2...*

By Ben Song

It is so easy for me to become distracted and to live my life as if this is it – to believe that this is my only moment of existence, so I should do all I can to make the most of it. Now this may be true to a small degree; there will be no other moment in earth's existence when there will be another me. But what is 66.57 years (the average life span of a human being according to the CIA world fact book) compared to an eternity in the presence of God? And though an eternity with God will be incomparable to our lives as we know it, there is so much purpose during this time. What we do here on earth will continue with us when we enter into our time of eternity with Him. As Jesus taught us in the book of Matthew, "do not store up treasures for yourself here on earth but rather store up treasures in heaven."

One of the harder things I find myself struggling with as a Christian is carrying out the will of God while taming the strong desire to live for myself. Society is so effective in telling me how I should live in order to enjoy my time here on earth, that I find myself being constantly influenced and compromising my values. I can honestly say that my thoughts are spent more on myself and what pleases me rather than considering how my actions would please or displease God. But this is not what my life is intended for and how God desires for me to live.

As an example, many living in this day and age long to be great. More often than not, people want to be noticed by everyone else. Whether we're noticed by the car we drive, the clothes we wear, the amount of money we have, or how successful we have become, it pleases us to know we are noticed. And what better way than to be noticed for greatness? But as I have been humbly reminded, our true moment of greatness will not come in this lifetime but in the coming age when we are met face to face with the Lord our God. One author describes our time here on earth as a sort of internship leading to our ultimate purpose in the next stage of life. So what does the bible teach us about greatness? One verse that comes to mind is, "Whoever humbles himself...is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:4)." Living

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# Glory to the Greatest Designer

By Jonathan Park

It's 4:00 a.m. and I have a couple of hours left until I have to present my graphic design final. I've been working and exerting all my creative energy night and day on this project. I suddenly feel self-conscious about my work and I can't help but question and criticize every single detail of my project. Is it conceptually sound? Is it formally interesting? Is it relevant? Are there gaps in my thinking? Is the typography kerned just the way it is supposed to be? I do this because my work is a visual reflection of who I am, my thinking, and my capabilities as an artist. I desire it to be the best that it can possibly be. When I realize how much love, dedication, passion, and thought I have put into my work, I am humbled by how much the Ultimate Creator has poured out into His creation.

At the end of the day, no matter how great a piece of graphic design it is, it's essentially visual elements that have been composed on a page.

My creativity goes as far as taking previously existing shapes and making something new. For God, He spoke creation into being and created something from nothing! His process is unique, distinct, and goes beyond what humans can comprehend. His Word is what placed the stars in their place, what makes the earth orbit the sun, the waves crash, the birds soar, and what gives me the ability to think and even write this. There are subjects in our universities, taught by the most intelligent minds, dedicated to exploring God's creation in detail. Whether it be astronomy, biology, chemistry, or whateverology, it reflects how brilliant our God is. From every perspective, I am in awe to see His beauty from a micro and macro point of view, ranging from the smallest cells to the largest planets. As a graphic designer, I am amazed at how visually striking He has created the earth and everything in it— not only visually, but scientifically and function-

ally, how everything is designed and organized to relate to one another.

When God says that we are created in His image, it is an honor and a joy. We worship a creative God, and for Him to share that attribute with us is such a blessing! It's the reason that I am able to enjoy and experience the excitement of creating something. It's what allows the artist to make art, the musician to make music, the writer to write, the engineer and the architect to build, the philosopher to think, and for the comedian to humor. If I can conclude how beautiful His creation is in its fallen state, my mind is blown at the idea of how glorious it will be in its perfected state. To the evolutionists who try to discredit God and instead attribute His wonderful work to chance, I imagine God looking down and saying, "Are you serious?! You've gotta be kidding me!"

cont. of "Beyond Skin Deep" by Karen Park

the standards by which beauty is defined, I cannot help but to consider the flaws in my own approach. Whether through the portrayal of celebrities who are thin beyond what is healthy, or the innumerable advertisements for products intended to enhance appearance, the message is two-fold: who we are, as we are, is far from sufficient, and there are always ways to improve. Despite such a demeaning message, we readily acquiesce and find ourselves insecure and unable to acknowledge the fact that we are all beautiful.

I admit that I suffer from the, you-can-always-look-better syndrome. I am slow to take in the compliments and quick to heed the ever-so-strong sug-

gestions of my parents: "Don't wear that – it makes you look fat," "Never perm your hair," and "Lose some weight." I am unsure if my inability to fully be content with my appearance can be attributed by my parents; however, I have come to realize that none of that matters to God.

He who makes everything beautiful can find the greatest beauty even in the midst of the deepest of flaws. There is comfort in knowing that how we look, what clothes we wear, or what make-up we use to hide the blemishes are all trivial to Him. There is no degree to which God will love us more, or less, by basis of all that is skin-deep. By Him and for Him, we are all "fearfully...wonderfully [Ps. 139:14]" and beautifully made. †

cont. of "Greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven" by Ben Song

a humble life, willing to put others above myself is so counter-intuitive to what we hear on the radio or see on TV, but this is the kind of lifestyle that God finds so incredibly pleasing.

Church, let us not be fooled into thinking that this is the most significant time of our existence, and that what we do in this life will have little effect on our time in eternity. There is so much more in store for us when we leave all worldly things behind. Let us waste no time in preparing ourselves for what is to come, and let us strive for greatness in the kingdom of heaven. †