



Christian School Finals Competition provides an opportunity for each school to showcase their talented photographers. The Competition Photography events (500-560) demonstrate the artistic ability to capture God's unique creations in aesthetically pleasing compositions.

The Photography events may be "Send-in" Entries. With eight different photography events in which to participate, students are given an opportunity to share their creativity and to tell a story through these entries. All work should be the original work of the student with no outside assistance. Only photographs taken after May 25, 2009 are eligible for submission in the 2010 Christian School Finals Competition.

Send-in Entries offer students that are eligible for Competition but unable to attend in person an avenue to participate. Details on the process for Send-in Entries are available on the Competition Web site.

Photography events general guidelines are available in the Competition Handbook along with specific guidelines for each event. Matting and framing information is accessible online at the Competition Web site.

In this month's article, Kristin Threadgill shares some foundational components to help the aspiring photographer to "not only capture a moment, but also to enhance it." These tips are beneficial to all photographers and will provide helpful information for the Photography events (500-560) and the Yearbook event (146).



# AWARD WINNING PHOTOGRAPHY

By: Kristin Threadgill



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True photography is not about showing the occasion to those who were not in attendance, it's about showing the occasion to those who were present. Take a look at scenes and objects from an unnatural angle – think outside the box. In a competition, it's easy to lose sight of the photography and see only the rules. Photography is not only about learning rules, but also about instinct. This instinct allows photography to flow while still being in line with photographic standards. Photography becomes something natural. Award winning photography is the ideal collaboration of three components: subject, framing and lighting. When combined correctly, these components create an aesthetically pleasing photograph.

## SUBJECT

In portrait photography, as with any photography, the subject should always be the focus of the photograph. When snapping away, keep this in mind. This may seem like an obvious statement, but it is one of the largest problems found in the work of aspiring photographers.

Ask yourself, “Is what I am capturing drawing the eye to the person or object of the photograph?”

“Is the subject lost, causing the viewer to engage in an unnecessary search?” For example, when photographing portraits against buildings, amateurs tend to shoot the building rather than the person. Focus on your subject.



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Another key to award winning photos is to remember that the best photos develop from letting people be themselves. This is most important in portrait or publicity shoots. No one wants to receive their photos and feel that the shots are unrepresentative of themselves. Guide and inspire poses, but don't let it become awkward. If your model is shy, step in and show give them examples, this normally makes people more comfortable. In the process of mirroring your actions, allow the subject to fall into place naturally and make the pose their own.



## FRAME YOUR FOCUS

This idea somewhat coincides with assuring the subject remains the focal point of your photo. Look for surroundings and framing opportunities that enhance the subject.

Buildings and trees are good framing opportunities. Beyond that, be intentional about framing your subject. When looking through the viewfinder, look at the whole picture and think about the outcome.



Ask yourself, “Is too much sky included for the shot to be aesthetically pleasing? How is the person’s face framed to enhance the photo?” A photograph can be lost due to a poor judgment call on framing. It is not enough for one to be photogenic; it is your job to make the whole 4 x 6 frame pleasant.



## LIGHTING

The third major component of the photo is lighting. Use the ISO, shutter speed and white balance to your advantage. Never fully depend on the flash. A flash is an important piece of equipment that aids in fill lighting and illuminating faces, but do not be afraid to try something new. Some of the best photos I have shot can be attributed to a God-given steady hand, sunlight or spotting available lighting.

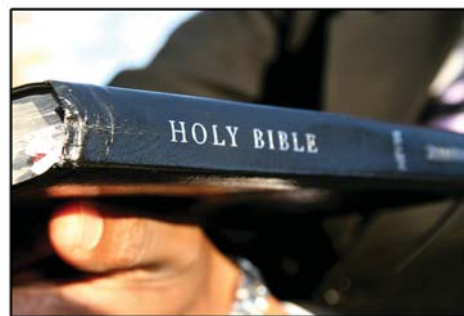
I remember the first concert I shot, which was the “Extraordinary” album worship night at Oral Roberts University.

The “Extraordinary” concert opened my eyes to the diverse possibilities quality arena lighting provides. Do not live life off your flash. Sometimes it saves you, but sometimes it can limit you.

As you advance in photography, look into obtaining diffusers and reflectors to further enhance the lighting of your subject.

In basketball, coaches will sometimes tell the player to imagine the ball going in the hoop before taking a shot. Do not waste your time mindlessly snapping photos hoping one will turn out.

Be intentional about each shot, frame it in your mind and shoot to score. Remember, photography is about being creative. Think outside of the box, but always think about the outcome. As a photographer your job is not only to capture a moment but to enhance it.



Kristin P. Threadgill is currently in her last semester at Oral Roberts University where she is completing a Public Relations & Advertising degree. In 2005 she started her own freelance photography and graphics business, KPT Photos & Worship Design and today she has over 1000 photos published in various venues. Additionally, she has won several state and nation-wide photography, writing and graphic contests. Following graduation, Kristin's heart is to use her God-given talents in ministry media as well as continue her free-lance work. You may contact Kristin at [kptphotos@yahoo.com](mailto:kptphotos@yahoo.com) or visit <http://kpt.smugmug.com/> to view more of her photography.

## CHRISTIAN SCHOOL FINALS COMPETITION DATES

Plan to attend ORU Christian School Finals Competition on May 23-28, 2010.

## COMPETITION HANDBOOK 2010

The 2010 Competition Handbook will be accessible online at the Competition Web site at <http://competition.oru.edu> by November 1, 2009. To access the Competition Handbook use the 2010 password, **closer2God**.

## TENTATIVE 2010 COMPETITION SCHEDULE

A tentative schedule for the 2010 Competition events has been established in order to allow administrators time to plan accordingly. Please take note that some events have been moved to different days and times of the week. The final schedule will be available after all the entries have been received in April 2010.

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS NEW *REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE* FORM

International schools must submit a written request to demonstrate their serious desire to attend Competition. The new form, *Request to Participate*, has been e-mailed to international schools in the Competition database. The form is also available to download from the Competition web site at <http://competition.oru.edu>. The form must be submitted by February 1, 2010.

## CONTACT US

The Competition office is open to take your calls Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CST at 918.495.6856. To use e-mail send your correspondence to [competition@oru.edu](mailto:competition@oru.edu) any time.

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