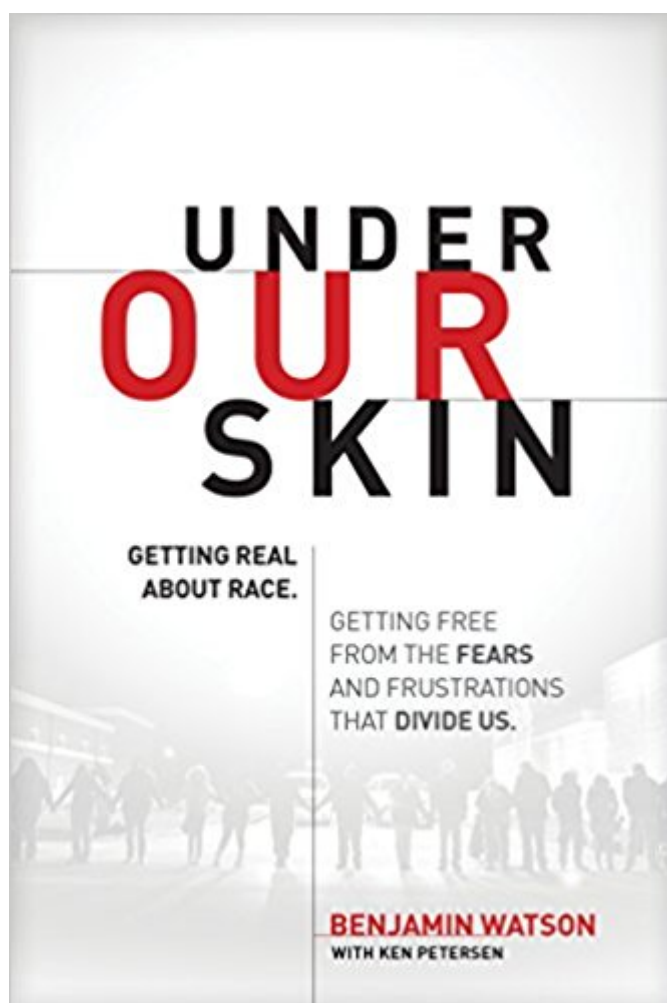


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# Under Our Skin: Getting Real About Race. Getting Free From The Fears And Frustrations That Divide Us.



## Synopsis

Can it ever get better? This is the question Benjamin Watson is asking. In a country aflame with the fallout from the racial divide •in which Ferguson, Charleston, and the Confederate flag dominate the national news, daily seeming to rip the wounds open ever wider• is there hope for honest and healing conversation? For finally coming to understand each other on issues that are ultimately about so much more than black and white? An NFL tight end for the New Orleans Saints and a widely read and followed commentator on social media, Watson has taken the Internet by storm with his remarkable insights about some of the most sensitive and charged topics of our day. Now, in *Under Our Skin*, Watson draws from his own life, his family legacy, and his role as a husband and father to sensitively and honestly examine both sides of the race debate and appeal to the power and possibility of faith as a step toward healing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Benjamin Watson is an important African American voices of balance and sanity in a world of racial chaos and confusion. He has used his platform as an NFL player to speak God's perspective on race. In this work, Ben will encourage and challenge you to think rightly and righteously about addressing the sin that is destroying our nation. (Dr. Tony Evans, Senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship and president of The Urban Alternative) Benjamin Watson has been an outspoken advocate for racial unity based solely on the fact that Jesus Christ died for all people. Jesus came to this earth to cover the sin of mankind with His precious blood and to wipe out the sins of

disobedience, immorality, and racial conflict. Under the skin of every human being beats a heart that has the potential to love and serve the Lord and Master of the soul made alive by the very breath of God. Thank you, Benjamin, for pointing people toward the One who came and dwelt among us, who died to save us, and who lives to prove His everlasting salvation to all who will come to Him.

(Franklin Graham, President and CEO, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse) In his first book, *Under Our Skin*, Benjamin Watson does a superb job of exposing the many racial stereotypes that exist on all sides, and he helps people to understand that we are all human beings created by God and intended for great things. If we invest energy in understanding others, we will improve our own lives. (Benjamin S. Carson Sr., MD, Retired neurosurgeon and Republican presidential candidate) This is a message every one of us needs to hear, and we're listening to what Benjamin Watson has to say. *Under Our Skin* is unflinchingly honest, strong, and authentic. You won't be able to put it down, and it will surprise, challenge, and inspire you in ways you never expected. (Holly Robinson Peete, Actress, author, philanthropist; Rodney Peete, Former NFL quarterback, author, entrepreneur) If you thought you were moved by Benjamin's words in the wake of Ferguson, wait until you read this book. It is intensely personal, provoking real race discussions based on his own life and the issues still plaguing this nation. More importantly, though, my friend Benjamin leaves us with a sense of hope. (Brooke Baldwin, Anchor, CNN) Packed with germane insights, this eye-opening book challenges current trends in American race relations, providing an important context for conversations about finding roads to racial unity. Read this book and be better prepared to narrow the gap between our national creeds and deeds. (Barry C. Black, Chaplain of the United States Senate) Not many people can speak so honestly and eloquently about such a tough issue. Benjamin Watson shows great perspective on every side and challenges us all to embrace a higher moral and spiritual purpose. (Drew Brees, Quarterback, New Orleans Saints) A must-read for anyone who is frustrated by the racial strife and problems in our world and ready to become part of the solution. Stop everything you're doing and read what Benjamin Watson has to say. (Mark Richt, Head football coach, University of Georgia) I am honored to recommend my friend Benjamin Watson's first book, *Under Our Skin*. Ben has grabbed the attention of our nation with insightful writings on many of the issues that divide us. God has expanded Ben's reach way beyond the football field. I believe Ben is a voice for our time. In *Under Our Skin*, you will soon see why his wisdom on the issue of race in our nation is so needed. (Chris Tomlin, Musician, songwriter) Benjamin Watson is one of the most intelligent and thoughtful men I have ever met, inside or outside of football. When he examines a topic, it is never from the perspective of societal norms or cultural traditions. His observations are always based on sound,

biblical principles. I know you will benefit from his insights into race and religion in the United States today. (Tony Dungy, Super Bowl winning head coach and New York Times bestselling author)

For so many people, the racial divide is an argument, a political position, a debate on TV. But keeping our distance isn't working. It's not an option anymore. This is about you and me. It's about our neighbors, our children, and our world. In this challenging look at race, bias, and justice, Benjamin Watson, tight end for the New Orleans Saints and social-media commentator, speaks from his deepest heart to articulate what many of us think and feel. Part memoir and part social commentary, *Under Our Skin* offers a look at both sides of the race debate and appeals to the power and possibility of faith as a step toward healing. It's a bold new path for us to follow as we come together to talk about the truths, myths, and realities of racial conflict. Change starts here. From the flap: Let's admit it. We all feel angry, offended, sad, hopeless, confused. But this is also true: We can be encouraged. Benjamin Watson is a tight end for the New Orleans Saints, a writer and speaker, and a widely read and followed commentator on social media. He attended Duke University as a freshman and transferred to the University of Georgia, where he majored in finance. After an all-SEC senior campaign, he was drafted in the first round of the 2004 NFL draft by the New England Patriots. He won a Super Bowl ring in his rookie season and appeared in another Super Bowl following the 2007 season. After a three-year stint with the Cleveland Browns—including the 2010 season in which he led the Browns in receptions, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns—Watson signed with the Saints in 2013. Watson serves on the executive committee of the NFL Players Association and is the founder of the nonprofit One More foundation along with his wife, Kirsten. They live in New Orleans with their five children. Ken Petersen is a veteran of book publishing, having worked for Tyndale House Publishers and Random House/Crown (WaterBrook Multnomah). He has written numerous books and lives with his wife, Rita, in Colorado Springs.

Benjamin writes at one point in the book about the movie "A Time to Kill" and Jake Brigance's closing trial arguments, which brings the jury to understand the personal, identifying nature of the injury caused to the young woman (the daughter of his defendant). He further talks about Brigance's interest in winning the trial, but really having no interest in his defendant, Carl Lee Hailey. Their daughters will never play together, because Brigance sees him the same as the jury does, on the "other side." It's not personal, but philosophical or political. The same can be said of recent examples of young black men who have died tragically: Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, and Eric Gardner. Benjamin writes about the perspective black men and women grow up with

toward the police: one that doesn't trust that they will be treated fairly, and a perception that has been proven accurate by their experiences. He talks about the divide between the races, and that for instance, white people don't understand what it's like to be targeted by the police, citing the example of driving his wife to the hospital for the birth of their child. Why were they pulled over? Why didn't the officer give a reason why he had pulled them over once he knew all was in order with them, and that they didn't violate any laws (or, why does the officer not offer well wishes on the birth of their child)? Would the officer have treated them differently or told them why he stopped them if Benjamin had been white, even (as Benjamin dreamed) leading them onwards to the hospital as they do in the movies? As a white male, I believe Benjamin did me a great service in this book. Just as the jury in the movie "A Time to Kill" I was able to close my eyes, as he led me through a story to bring me into the shoes of the "other side" and see it as my own. If this book, and others like it, could just get us to this point, of being able to see the other side, it would serve all of us. I long that one day our children would play together, not seeing any difference in color, same as that time before prejudices set in. I remember in my own youth, when I was in elementary school one of my best friends was a black girl, and I was teased that she was my girlfriend (with implication that it was wrong because of her color, that she was "other"). This was brought back to my memory after reading Benjamin's story about when his innocence was taken (over a white girl he liked). My innocence was also largely taken at that moment. I was made aware of prejudice for the first time. I am grateful for Benjamin Watson and this book. It has blessed me in countless ways, and is a book I will be recommending highly to all my friends, no matter the color of their skin or the condition of their heart. This is a message we so severely need in our nation. Thank you, Mr. Watson!

I cannot recommend this book enough. This book forces us to confront our own selves while not pointing the finger at others. It makes you understand your own weakness. Though written from a Christian worldview, I believe that it has many applicable truths that anyone would agree with. Buy it and read it. It is worth it.

It is difficult to find the right words to describe this powerful message in this book...except I see it as a divinely inspired and a book that needs to be read by every Christian. It is a message that can bring us to the answer for all the racial unrest we are experiencing across our country...the foot of the cross. To the place where we can replace all our fear, hatred, resentment, anger with love and forgiveness.... to Jesus. As Benjamin said, "It is not a skin problem, but a sin problem." This book moved me to tears many times and I would highly encourage every one to read this book....and to

join Benjamin in praying for our country.

This book is written by an active professional football player in the NFL, currently playing for the New Orleans Saints. He's a Christian, a father, a husband, a son, and an ambassador for Jesus. The book is based on a post he put up on Facebook after the Ferguson events of 2014. The post was somewhat elaborate, but the book expounds on the post. The book is not a novel or a story with a build-up, it is a series of chapters that are rather independent of one another but do flow well together. A great book, written by a very intelligent athlete. The one part of the book that I wish Mr. Watson would have spent a little more time on is holding accountable the black (African-American) community responsible for the perpetuation of certain behaviors that fuel the internal racism. Use of derogatory words, use of music to degrade one another or beef with one another is an example. Other than that, I really enjoyed this book and am lending it to one of my co-workers. God bless Mr. Watson and his ministry.

In the aftermath of the tragedies in Charlottesville this book is a "must read" for healing. I'm very impressed with Ben's insights. He mentions the stupidity of racism - with DNA we are predominantly 99.9% the same - flesh, blood and spirit. We're all human created by a loving God. Yet in America we allow something so insignificant (skin tone) to cause hatred, division, and pain. It fuels racism - that need to think you're better than someone you deem "different" than you or your group. God must be grieved. But at same time, God offers grace and represents the the answer for solving racism. Man can't solve this. Only God can. Anyway.....it's a great book and I highly recommend it.Smitty

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