

lnterviewl

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Meet David & Carrie Grant

in this issue

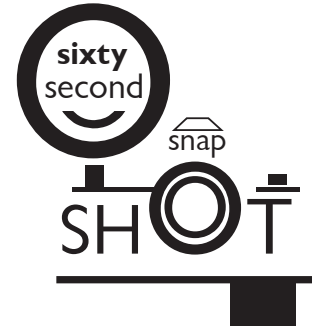
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releasing God's people into God's work





David & Carrie Grant



You will no doubt have recognised the faces on the front cover - if you watch television that is. David and Carrie Grant's most notable appearances have been on BBC1's *Fame Academy* in their roles as vocal coaches to the 'wannabe' music artists. The *Weakest Link* viewers will also have seen them once or twice on the celebrity shows.

They have worked with some of the biggest names in the music business and God has used them in significant ways over the years. Here they talk about their respective career journeys, being a Christian in the world of celebrity, and the pleasure of excelling at what God has gifted them to do.

Name:	David Grant	Name:	Carrie Grant
Age:	48	Age:	39
Favourite thing to do?	Be with family and friends, watch football (especially Liverpool FC)	Favourite thing to do?	Chill with those I love. Reading and tapestry.
What adjective best describes you?	Up	What adjective best describes you?	Truthful
Favourite food?	Japanese	Favourite food?	West Indian
Favourite movie?	The Godfather 2	Favourite movie?	Cry Freedom
Favourite place?	Anywhere Carrie is.	Favourite place?	My bed
Most embarrassing moment?	Someone asking for my autograph and then calling me by a completely different name because they thought I was someone else.	Most embarrassing moment?	Smiling encouragingly and saying, "Great," when someone told me they were a world championship ice skater. I later realised I had misheard and she had said she was the only surviving victim of Fred West. I still cringe at this now.
Favourite type of music?	There are only two types of music, good music and bad music. I like good music of any genre.	Favourite type of music?	All music as long as it's good quality.
Favourite Bible verse?	Nothing can separate us from the love of God.	Favourite Bible verse?	Nothing can separate us from the love of God.
If you could ask God for one thing, what would it be?	A revolution in love.	If you could ask God for one thing, what would it be?	An end to sin and all it's effects.
Who would you most like to meet?	Nelson Mandela	Who would you most like to meet?	Jesus

the bigger picture



What's your earliest memory of discovering your singing voice?

David: Singing in front of my class aged 6.

Carrie: My brother and I singing with hairbrushes, jumping on the sofa.

When you realised all you wanted to do was sing, did you face any conflicts when you were younger in your choice of career given the potential limitations of making a living from it?

David: My Mum and Gran were concerned that I would never make a living and so were initially reluctant to support me wholeheartedly. They put a strong emphasis on me gaining academic qualifications but when they saw how determined I was, they backed me all the way.

Carrie: My Mum was always totally behind me and believed in me completely. I only had discouragement when I became a Christian at 20 years old and certain people would tell me you couldn't be a Christian and be in the arts and that being a secular artist was second rate to working in the church. God soon showed me what he wanted for my life though and it taught me to stand in the face of opposition and to trust God.

Back in the 80s, you emerged into the pop scene as a member of the band Linx and then as a solo artist. How did your break into the music business come about?

David: After years of trying and failing to get into a band, I decided the only way forward was to form my own band. I gave up a career in journalism and focussed my time making my demos, in between cleaning toilets and being a nightwatchman just to earn enough money to pay for studios. We pressed a few copies of a track called "You're Lying" and radio started playing it. The rest is history!

Here's a question I'm sure many people will be curious about: how did you two get together as a couple?

Carrie: We met in Plymouth, where I was presenting a TV show and David was the guest. After the show we sat together on the train and David made me laugh for 4 hours. I was hooked!

Your respective careers have obviously dovetailed beautifully. How did that come about?

Carrie: I'd love to say it was all a big plan on our part but we have always just lived for today and followed our noses. We started doing singing sessions together and found that we loved working together. One day we were singing for *Take That* when the boys asked us how we got our "sound." We showed them and the next day their manager offered us a job coaching them. Gradually our own singing phased out and coaching took over. Then we were asked to coach on *Pop Idol*, then *Fame Academy* etc

Have you given up singing altogether for the sake of teaching others to use their singing voices?

David: No, if you love singing it's always part of your life. Singing is not just about making records. We love singing whenever we get the opportunity.

A lot of Christians struggle with the whole concept of celebrity. Now that you are recognised as artists at the top of your field, what conflicts have you faced in reconciling being a celebrity with being a Christian?

Carrie: I never succumb to labels. In my world I am just Carrie. For me there is nothing to reconcile between celebrity and Christian. The minute you become a Christian you are living your life as though you are in a fish tank so, from a Christian point of view I'm just the same as I ever was. Dysfunction breeds the need for celebrity. I grew up very dysfunctionally but by the time celebrity came to me at the age of 37, God had dealt with most of it. You learn who you are in the valleys and dark places and I've had plenty of those. Those experiences allow me to appreciate and cope with the mountain tops.

You've worked with some of the top names in the music business, like Diana Ross, Take That, Victoria Beckham and Fat Boy Slim. Although most of these people are in one sense just your clients or students, have you ever been totally star-struck by any people you've worked with?

David: I was once invited to meet Stevie Wonder and I chickened out because I was afraid he wouldn't live up to my expectations.

Carrie: Yes, for about five minutes when we first met the Spice Girls. But then it wore off. Famous or not I find most people I meet utterly fascinating.



On a much more serious note, what was it like coming face to face with Anne Robinson on *The Weakest Link*?

Carrie: She's terrifying. We've been on her show twice now. Am I a glutton for punishment or what?

What does it mean for you as a Christian to spend your days doing what you believe God has designed you for?

David: I love it. Having fought so hard to gain entry into the industry, I appreciate every day we work.

Carrie: Every day is a total adventure and I feel like my life has both purpose and fulfilment. Having said this, the arts are all I've ever known so I can't imagine what it must be like to not be doing the thing you were gifted to do.

You've just released a new book called 'You Can Sing!'. What's that all about?

David: It's a guide to learning how to sing and it also tackles attitudes to learning, performance and how to market yourself.

Do you think you can become good at something even if there's no obvious gifting there?

Carrie: If you want to enjoy a gift, I really believe you can develop it. In terms of singing this doesn't necessarily mean you'll become a pop star overnight. Enjoyment and career are two different things. I suppose the ultimate aim is to develop the things you are naturally gifted in.

How important do you think it is to discover what you do best and then find a way of doing it?

David: It's essential. Without vision the people perish. Passion for what you do in life whether it's parenting or performing gives you great purpose. Even if circumstances are against you, you should always follow your dream.

You spend your working lives mentoring and nurturing the gifts of others. Are there people you can look to for that kind of nurturing or people who have had a profound influence on you?

Carrie: We have a handful of people who mentor us. It's important to be accountable to others but you must choose these people wisely. They must be trustworthy, not flaky, jealous or controlling.

David: Our people are mature, wise and are able to listen as well as advise. They are also totally "for" us.

You clearly believe that you are doing what God has called you to do for now. What advice would you give to those who might be struggling with coming to terms with God's call on their lives and are not quite sure how to discover and use the gifts God has given them?

Carrie: I always believe it's God's responsibility to give us the heart for our "call," so I cannot imagine having to struggle with God's call on our lives. My Father was one of the most miserable men I knew but then he became Christian at 55, became a missionary in Africa at 58 and died on the mission field at 62. In the end I knew of few happier people than him. If, when he was 50, I had told him his call was to die on the mission field he would have laughed me out the door. I believe when God calls us it normally comes as a confirmation of something we already know and have a feel for.

David: How do we find and use the gifts God has given us? Mostly I believe they stem from God providing them when we need them. When he arrived in Africa, my father-in-law was discouraged by the leadership of his home church, considered too old to have any effect, not academic enough to teach, not charismatic enough to preach, too young as a Christian to lead, too poor to invest etc etc.

By the time he died, four years later, he had opened up 12 Bible Schools throughout Sierra Leone, across all denominations, in the army and in the police force. The effects of his work are still felt a decade later. Those whom God calls, he equips.



does God speak on the web?

designate

CV's designate programme has developed well since it was introduced over the internet in September last year. The modular approach that the programme offers enables people to access as much or as little as they need and has been used by a wide variety of people. Some have simply wanted to assess what skills and gifts they have to offer; others have been thinking and praying about their life's course or considering a change of direction or new role. The whole programme can be done from the comfort of home and provides useful tools, insights and advice. God really can speak on the web.

Let's hear from a few people who have used designate...

Q: 'What was your primary purpose for registering for designate, and what would you like to see as a result?'

“ 'To discover and respond to God's specific calling for this season of my life.'
From someone who's completed the programme...

Paul & Elizabeth who are engaged to be married write:

'Seeing where our gifting within the church lies. Considering a possible change of career, depending on God's guidance.'

“ 'Having had a successful secular career, I would like to move on to work that is more Christian and pastoral in focus. I would like an assessment of my gifts, my potential contribution to the Christian world and gentle pushing into directions that I have not yet thought of.'
Mary McIntosh

“ 'For some time now I believe God has been leading me into Christian ministry work but I am still unsure as to where I can best serve him. I have put myself in a position where I can now pursue God's leading but I am still unsure as to which route I should be following. At the moment all God is saying is 'wait' and 'trust me' which is what I am doing, but I know I should be making serious enquiries about what opportunities are available to see if there are any which would enable me to serve using the talents and experience God has given me.'
Christine Richardson

“ Designate causes one of our advisors to engage in some important reflection...

'You mentioned 'wrapping your mind around' the call and now having to unwrap it as it were. I think there is a sense (and I don't say this lightly, because I've experienced a lot of pain and heartache at times as I've followed God) in which the important thing IS to follow, particularly when things don't turn out as we'd anticipated. It seems to me that a lot of the learning is in KNOWING God and God's voice in things. It's about our formation and development, and about the way in which our relationship with God is stretched and expanded, and enabled to be more than it would have been without a certain period of testing.'

“ 'Thank you for closing the formal cycle of designate for us. It has been a challenging and inspirational time for us as we were progressively and increasingly confronted to respond to concise and transparent issues with regard to guidance and direction.'



It was a joy for me to meet a fellow listener; The Bride of Christ does indeed have ears.

The distillation process of working on focussed prayers, CVs, life purpose statements, spiritual testaments etc. through designate, so as to deliver at the interview stage proved inspirational.'

Bill & Margaret Saunders

“ 'I have enjoyed it and learned more about myself and God. I would say that it is an ideal tool for fairly new Christians (as well as those with more experience living the Christian life) to help them understand themselves more in the light of God's call to them.'



'The problem that I have experienced with face to face interviews is that I always come away from them thinking I could have said this or that as well as what I did say. The message board gave time to reflect on what the messages were actually saying, whilst still being able to be fairly spontaneous.'

Robin Williams

rebuilding Sri-Lanka



Mike Freeman is a long-time friend of CV and has served on our advisors network. Earlier this year, he went out to assist in the post-Tsunami relief operation in Sri Lanka, one of the areas worst hit by the disaster. Here, he relates something of the devastation he saw, but gives encouraging news of what is being achieved by agencies working together to rebuild the lives of those who survived.

On my first day, I visited the area where we were to be working - a region called Kulmunia. This really brought home the tragedy and hardship of it all; total destruction of families, buildings, roads, and even the landscape changed by the giant waves that struck.

As we drove down the coast, there were refugee camps all over where the surviving families were living. Drinking water was delivered daily to the black plastic reservoirs scattered amongst the camps, and latrines were still proving a major challenge. To give an idea of the later impact of the drinking water unit, on 1st June, the 16 millionth litre of water since February was produced! In the early stages of the operation, a lot of people didn't have basic facilities to prepare and cook food, let alone basic items such as bedding. The aid did come but everything was happening slowly because of the lack of infrastructure in the region.

The role I came out to fulfill was to manage a 'Relief Shelter Programme' alongside a Sri Lankan guy called Ramanam from Batticaloa, whilst employing local labour to erect temporary shelters for the victims of the disaster. Most families had absolutely nothing left. First of all, suitable land had to be identified and cleared of debris before building could commence. I also had the challenge of finding organisations that could assist us providing regular, clean drinking water and latrine facilities for the people living in the shelters. It is planned that these temporary shelters will provide accommodation for up to eighteen months to two years whilst local infrastructure is re-established and then proper buildings can be commenced. Now, after five months, we have provided over 1,000 shelter units for almost 3,000 people.

One of the most emotional moments for me since being here was the occasion when I walked back to my vehicle along what appeared to be a deserted paradise beach. I saw two boys of about eight and ten years sitting on the footings of what had been their home. Everything had been washed away for miles about, including all their family, their possessions and home. They had both been out at the time and survived. They apparently return to the site most days and just sit there trying to figure it all out. What can you say to them? Similar tragic stories are all too common.

We've enjoyed the partnership of others who have come out at various stages to help. A team of twelve people from St. Barnabas Church in North London (one of CV's main supporting churches) came to Sri Lanka for almost two weeks. They were superb - getting straight into children's work, sponsoring and building a new children's play park, totally painting a local tsunami - damaged school inside and out, assisting building shelters and even finding time to take a church service with a really dynamic programme.

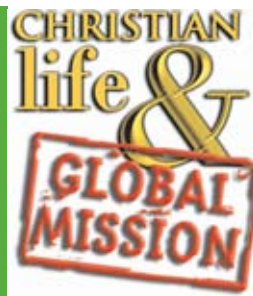
For me this time so far has possibly been the most rewarding I have ever spent work wise. Although I am doing so little in comparison to the needs, I also realise that every little I can do is contributing to a longer-term relief programme. I never ever thought I would need to learn so much in such a short time. Even my old engineering knowledge from 35 years ago is coming in handy!



globalise your home-group in six weeks

Christian Life and Global Mission is the latest home-group resource in the 'Christian Life and..' series from London School of Theology (formerly London Bible College). It follows the proven, series-format of discussion, Bible study and prayer material moved along by video. LST have worked with Interserve, partnered by Christian Vocations, to produce a home-group resource that helps church members with no global mission awareness at all to take some crucial first steps. Over six sessions, participants start to explore ways to follow Jesus into God's mission in the world, starting right where they are.

The video material (three hours over the six sessions) includes contributions from George Verwer, Elaine Storkey, Clive Calver, Paul Lindsay, Jenny Brown, Derek Tidball, Ram Goodimal, Michael Green and others.



In each session there is an opportunity to pray for the wider world. Prayer information is included on the CD-ROM.

You can order your copy for £25 plus p+p from Interserve, CV, LST bookshop or wherever you decide.

Interserve: 020 7735 8227

CV: 0870 745 4825

LST: 01923 456 000



Christian Life & Global Mission has six sessions.

Session 1 What Is Mission? - clearing the confusion

Session 2 When Is Mission?- living with a purpose

Session 3 How Is Mission? - crossing the barriers

Session 4 Where Is Mission?- an unequal and interconnected world

Session 5 When It Gets Tough - motivation for mission

Session 6 Getting Started In Mission

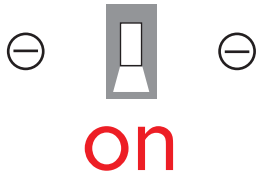
The newest edition of **missionmatters** is available from CV. In addition to the wealth of information about current overseas opportunities, special features include:

- **getting equipped for mission**
- **21st century church-planting in Europe**
- **living a mission lifestyle**
- **a Bible in every language**

Get your FREE copy now.
Bulk orders are also available for church groups.



what's



CV online

Over the past year we've been making some changes to our website, both to its look and its content. Just in time for the summer events, the home page will have a completely new look. Over the following months we'll be adding new features which will include making some of our publications available as downloads. One significant change will be the creation of an on-line system for our dovetail programme which connects churches with the leaders they seek. Check us out at www.christianvocations.org and make sure you tell others about us too!

the team gets more international

The team at CV already has quite an international feel to it. Bev, our Office Administrator, is American; Franco, our Graphic designer, is Italian (but with a Wolverhampton accent); and Jo adds to the mix with her Northern Irish accent (though N. Ireland is hardly international!). For seven weeks in July & June we've had a student working with us in the office. Alexandra Delgado is on an exchange programme studying at Wolverhampton University as part of her course in Applied Foreign Languages and Business. She is Portuguese but has been living in France more recently. It has been a delight having Alex as part of the team and her help has been much appreciated during what is undoubtedly our busiest season of the year.

events

It's that time of year again - the summer event season. It's all hands on deck at the CV office as we make preparation for a very busy time. If you happen to be at the Keswick Convention, New Horizon in N. Ireland or New Wine in Shepton Mallet, do make a point of coming to see us. At Keswick and New Horizon we'll be putting on the 'Stretch Your Faith' interactive exhibition with the addition of an internet café at Keswick which will be sponsored by CV. This year, we'll have a much bigger focus on FAIRTRADE products and we'll be encouraging guests to take action on ethical consumerism in their local communities. Pray for these events, that God will challenge many people to get connected with God's mission.

Keswick Convention:
16th July - 5th August
New Horizon:
23rd - 29th July
New Wine:
23rd July - 5th August



Do you want to help the ministry of CV grow?

If you have been encouraged by what you've read in this edition of interview and want to help us unwrap the potential of Christians all over the UK, why not think about a donation to our work, however small it might be. Details on how to help are below:

responseform

name _____
address _____

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signature _____
date _____

I / we would like to make a gift to CV and enclose.

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w: www.christianvocations.org

Thank you to those who continue to give sacrificially to our work.