

Inspiration From the Archives

Since the program began in 1992, Face to Face has aired interviews with hundreds of Christian athletes from all walks of life. Whether in the limelight, retired or recognized as an “up-and-comer” in the world of sports, we think you’ll enjoy past highlights of these sports figures’ careers. Here’s a look back at a “Face to Face” encounter with former Harlem Globetrotter Derick Grant.



Derick Grant: Former Harlem Globetrotter Holds Strong in Faith

Derick Grant saw the Harlem Globetrotters at the tender age of 7. He was dazzled and immediately started playing basketball the next day. Little did he know that he would someday play for the world’s most famous basketball team.

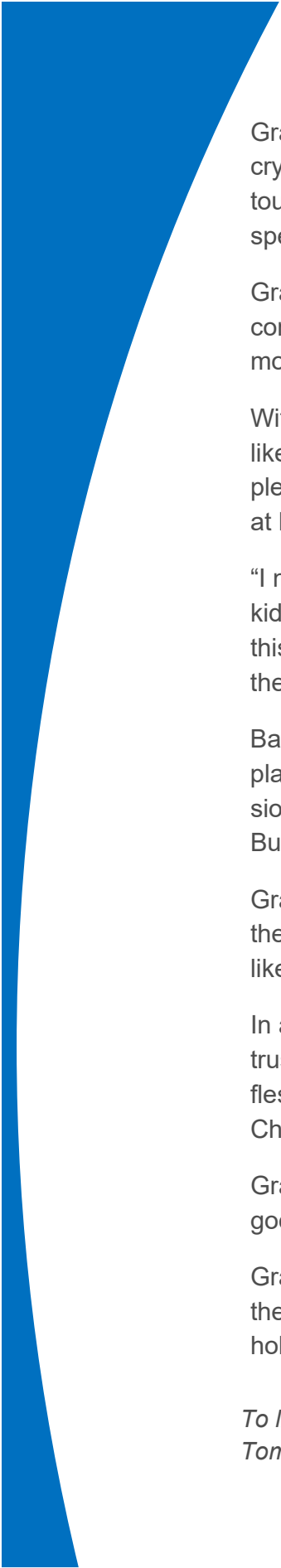
At the College of New Jersey, Grant was a first team all-conference selection in both his junior and senior year, Grant was the New Jersey Athletic Conference player of the year during his senior year. Among his other college accomplishments, Grant led the league in scoring for his senior year with 20.8 points per game. In addition, his 1,542 points are the second highest in his school's history, and he ranked third in the conference in 3-pointers made per game.

After graduating in 2005, Grant was recruited by the New York Nationals (the team the Harlem Globetrotters played against) and the name the Washington Generals were going by at the time.

According to an article at the Washington Generals Fan Blog, “After playing a season for the Nationals, Globetrotters owner Manny Jackson liked what he saw, and Grant was ‘traded’ to the Harlem Globetrotters.” Grant took on the name “Dizzy” and was with the Globetrotters for eight years visiting more than 70 countries.

Grant made Globetrotter history in December 2010 when he scored the first ever 4-point shot in a game against the Generals at the ESPN Wide World of Sports complex, which aired nationally on ESPN2. Both the ball, and the 4-point circle he scored the shot from, have since become immortalized in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Grant grew up going to church with his parents, but it wasn’t until later when he got serious about his faith. On the road with the Globetrotters he found himself bored and lonely. One day in Providence, Rhode Island, Grant left his hotel to get something to eat. With a long line for food, Grant decided instead to go to a movie and the only one showing was the epic biblical drama, “Son of God.”



Grant ended up in the theater by myself. “I remember watching the movie and crying like a baby,” he explained. “I couldn’t understand why this movie was touching me, but that’s when I say I became ‘born again.’ I could hear God speaking to me through the Holy Spirit.”

Grant says it has been a spiritual transition for him ever since then. “I’ve been continually growing in my faith, teaching my kids the same things and being more actively involved in church.”

With a 2-year old son at home and a desire to have more children, Grant felt like it was time to do something outside of the Globetrotters. He prayed a simple prayer that he could continue to be around the game of basketball and be at home. Not long after that Derick Grant Basketball was born.

“I never thought I could come to work and train NBA players on down to little kids,” explained Grant. “God opened that door for me...and showed me that this is what I am meant to do. I’m supposed to be impacting lives and teaching the Word.”

Based out of Best Choice Fieldhouse in Fishers, Indiana, Grant works with players on skills development, but says it goes beyond that. “My whole mission is: If I can teach you the game of basketball and make you better. Great. But if I can help you become a better person, then that’s even better.”

Grant says he asks the players he’s training to trust him; that he can help them become better at the game of basketball, even if it doesn’t always seem like they are making progress.

In a similar way, Grant says God asks him to do the same thing. “You have to trust him wholeheartedly and that’s hard to do sometimes,” admits Grant. “The flesh says, ‘Oh, I can do that myself.’ But you have to be strong enough as a Christian with your faith to say, ‘God’s got it and I need to let go.’”

Grant’s favorite Bible verse is Galatians 6:9: “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary (NASB).”

Grant says that’s the way he tries to live his life. “Things may not always go the way you would like right now. But if you do things for the right reason and hold strong in faith, eventually things will work out.”

To listen to the full interview of Derick Grant, conducted by Face to Face host Tom Rust, visit <http://face-2-face.org/listen-now/shows-archive/>