

TV drama prompts musician's crusade against human trafficking

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NASHVILLE, Tenn.—As the four-time Dove Award winning female vocalist of the year, most-played female artist on Christian radio and the top-selling adult contemporary female solo artist in Christian music, [Natalie Grant](#) is one of the genre's biggest names.

All the while, she balances ministry and motherhood while bringing up twin 2-year-old girls—and seeking to make a difference in the world by raising awareness about eating disorders and by fighting modern-day slavery.

“I think God is really showing me what it means to live a life that's daring and in relentless pursuit of him and the things he's called me to—thinking about: What did Jesus do? How did he live? And how can I model the time I have on this earth after his example?” she said.

Grant has been a featured speaker on the [Revolve Tour](#), a nationwide conference for girls in grades 7 to 12, discussing self-esteem issues and sharing more about her own past struggle with bulimia. She has written *The Real Me: Becoming The Girl God Sees*, a book that addresses those issues from a spiritual perspective, encouraging girls to accept God's view of them and his purpose for their lives.

In addition to her music, she has become an outspoken advocate for victims of international human trafficking—thanks to a TV drama.



Natalie Grant

After watching an episode of *Law and Order*, Grant's life was changed by a story "ripped from the headlines"—a fictionalized version of the harsh reality of human trafficking, where children often are exploited as cheap labor and many as sex slaves.

"I couldn't believe what I was seeing—10-, 11-, 12-year-old girls in cages, shipped over to America to be used as sex slaves by being forced into prostitution," she recalled. "As I sat there in my comfortable home, sipping my tea, I thought to myself: 'There is no way that is true. I mean, maybe somewhere else in the world, but not here in America.' I had never even heard the term 'human trafficking.'"

Grant began researching the subject and was horrified to learn that each year, more than 600,000 people are sold and abused worldwide, with at least 14,000 shipped to America.

While researching this issue, Grant found an organization devoted to rescuing children from prostitution and giving them a home, an education and the skills to make a living on their own.

She called the organization's office and expressed her desire to help. Within a matter of months, she and her husband, Bernie Herms, traveled to India to visit the red-light districts, witness human trafficking up close and see what is being done to stop it.

"I was walking down the street in Mumbai, in broad daylight, when my eyes locked on a little girl, maybe 6 or 7 years old, peering out of a cage, looking at us on the street below. I'll never forget that moment. That was her life. Every day people walked by, and they didn't even notice her."

Grant subsequently established the Home Foundation, which helps organizations educate people, builds shelters and orphanages and provides medical equipment for doctors ministering to the victims of trafficking. She chose the name "Home Founda-tion" because she wants to help provide a way for children to feel safe.

"As a little girl, I was given many comforts. I lived in a suburb with two parents. I had everything I could want and more. And here, I look at these girls who have nothing familiar: no mother or father, no playground, sports, school—all the things we take for granted that are a part of a normal childhood. No matter who we are, we need a place where we belong and where we feel safe," she said.

"These girls have none of that. It has been ripped away from them. Home is where they should be able to discover who they really are. We ask the relief organizations what they need—food, clothing and whatever resources they need to keep building relationships. I want to do whatever we can to help them be able to become kids again and to give them their childhood back. I see some innocence still intact.

"Every day, I'm amazed how God is opening doors for me to share about this. What I thought was going to be my life all along, playing music, is now my platform to encourage the church to get involved beyond their four

walls—to do something that Jesus has taught us: to love your neighbor as yourself.”