

A lot of people want to know how James and Starla Dean came together so it's best if we start from the beginning.

James grew up in Wakeman, Ohio. He was raised in church and always loved to sing. He accepted Christ when he was 15 years old. From that point on he had a desire to sing for the Lord. He began to travel nationally at the age of 19 when he joined The Kevin Spencer Family which later became Kevin Spencer and Friends. This would lead him to meet his wife Starla in 2001.

Starla grew up in Durant, Oklahoma. Like James, she was also raised in church. She was saved at the age of 12 and never dreamed that singing—something she enjoyed doing, would be God's plan for her life. She participated in the choral program in middle school all the way through college and continued to sing with her sisters in her home church and local churches. Starla and her twin sister Sharla began singing at various events broadcasted by *The Gospel Station*, a local radio network, in Ada, OK. They also held concerts bringing in southern gospel artists from across the country. It was at one of these concerts where James, Starla, and Sharla would meet.

James always likes to tell that Sharla had a lot to do with his relationship with Starla, because the night of the concert Starla did not want to go. But Sharla convinced her to go along. Since Starla and her twin sister are identical, James said it took a while to figure out which one he wanted to date. As time went on, James and Starla began dating in 2004, became engaged in 2005, and were married on June 10, 2006.

As it turned out, Kevin Spencer and Friends were looking for a tenor about the time James and Starla were planning to get married. Kevin talked to James about it and the rest fell into place. They began singing as Kevin Spencer and Friends (Kevin, James and Starla) two weeks after James and Starla were married. It was from June 2006 to May 2010 that they sang on top charting songs and appeared on GMT (Gospel Music Television). They were also allowed the opportunity to be a part of the Gaither Gospel Series appearing on DVDs such as *Rock of Ages* and *Amazing Grace*. While with Kevin, their concerts took them to Canada, Honduras, and the Grand Cayman Island, as well as a majority of the fifty states.

Their singing journey came to a close with Kevin when their daughter Adalyn was born in June 2010. Throughout their time with this ministry, they witnessed the power of the Gospel in song as they saw lives changed for the glory of God. However, the Lord wasn't finished with them yet; He opened the door for them to start their own ministry as James and Starla Dean. By the age of one, Adalyn had been to 25 states; and by two, she had been to 30, as well as four different trips to Canada. She has celebrated more birthdays on the road than at home, but embraces it, and knows that serving the Lord is the sole purpose and reason. At the age of five years old, Adalyn recorded her first song on their CD, *Tell Somebody*. It may be her first, but it certainly won't be her last.

In November 2013, James and Starla were blessed with another baby girl, Kynsten. She is the personality of the family and keeps everyone on their toes. She loves music and being on stage when her older sister sings. It won't be long before she is joining her in song. She was born on November 5, and started her life on the road on November 20, with a 13-day trip! She has been a road warrior ever since and in her two years of life, she has made it to 25 states and numerous trips to Canada.

James and Starla feel blessed by the opportunity the Lord has given them to be able to minister together to people all across the United States and other countries. They pray that they will continue to be used by and for Him, with songs that reach the hearts of people.