



My journey started when my wife and I were invited to the Christmas carol service at Trent Vineyard which we really enjoyed. Following that we came along to some Sunday services and later were invited to do the Alpha course. I decided to go along not because of curiosity about God, but because someone asked me. However, during Alpha, I started to pray and through this felt God leading me through an important career decision. I chose to trust God and follow His way rather than my own thoughts and feelings. This resulted in me moving jobs to work at a charity in the care sector despite it costing me time and money, and not improving my CV!

Looking back though, I can see how I've become much more compassionate and humble through my work there and have been rewarded with fulfilment for the first time in my working life, knowing I am where God placed me. During Alpha, I also had a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit. During a time of worship, I felt God say He was now my Father and would lead me in life. This was very significant for me because my own father left home when I was a young boy. Even though God was drawing me closer, it began to dawn on me how the call to follow Jesus would change my whole life. I brought many questions and objections to Him in prayer

but found He either answered them or they just melted away as I got to know Him and how trustworthy He is. I remember one challenging and humbling moment when I was reading the Bible and felt the Holy Spirit reveal to me the depth of my sin. I became aware I had a debt with God which I could never repay, but also knew that Jesus had paid the price for all of my sin by dying on the cross, giving His life as a ransom for mine.

I wanted to get baptised, but being a very private person at the time, I couldn't see how I would do this in front of hundreds of people so I prayed (somewhat irreverently!): "God, I'd get baptised right now but can't in front of all those people so you're going to have to sort that out for me". I can see God answered my prayer because not only did I get baptised at the next service, but also shared my testimony from the stage. God has changed my heart through the work of the Holy Spirit, reading the Bible and prayer. I've found Jesus to be the rock He promises to be. I now even count it a joy and privilege to go onto the streets of Nottingham with a team from Trent Vineyard, to share the good news of God's kingdom with people I've never met!

**Changing Lives**