



My family background didn't include church so I didn't know a lot about faith. Growing up, I often had questions about the purpose of my life. I also became stressed about things I couldn't control to the point where my anxiety sometimes felt overwhelming. I had a low opinion of myself too, which led to downward spirals of depression. Secondary school was especially difficult because I faced a lot of bullying. I built up hate and bitterness towards the people who had caused me so much emotional pain. The thought of forgiving them was at that time just incomprehensible. The reality of carrying so much emotional baggage is that it's exhausting. I had to find a way to get rid of it. Rather than asking, "Why me?" I started to think about whether God could be the answer. The first time I came to Trent Vineyard was when I realised I needed Jesus. A friend invited me at just the right time because of what was happening in my life. When I arrived, I sensed a strong feeling of love in the room. It just felt like God was there. I joined in with the songs of worship and suddenly all the storms inside me were at peace. Looking back, I know it was the Holy Spirit.

I think I said "yes" to Jesus on that day, without even realising. How could I not

want to follow Him? In such a short space of time, He brought me so much inner peace and self-acceptance. Later I got baptised, which was so significant for me and the best day of my life so far! It felt like God had washed away my old life and made me a new creation. The experience gave me a new confidence that I was a child of God made in His image, just as He intended. My life makes sense now. I'm viewing everything through a different lens and that missing spiritual puzzle piece has been filled. My own journey of following Jesus is helping me be a better person for others too. Forgiveness is now possible with Jesus, which is helping me find freedom from all the emotional baggage.

I have gone from somebody who never went to church to finding it the highlight of my week. From someone who struggled with self-confidence to someone who is brimming with it. From someone with lots of questions to someone who takes my questions to God each day. From someone who was questioning my future to someone who is looking forward to it with hope, excited to discover what God has in store for me. Jesus thank you for helping me get my spark back and for welcoming me into your church family.

Changing Lives