

Alyssa's first interview

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3 **Interviewer:** Alyssa Paige, thankyou for agreeing to be interviewed.

4 **Alyssa:** Thankyou.

5 **Interviewer:** What do you believe about God?

6 **Alyssa:** Um - I believe there's a God. Um - I believe that - um - there is
7 something bigger in the world than us and that - um - he (pause)
8 - he helps - he helps form us - um - (pause) Yeah, I - I do - I do
9 believe in - in God an' what he's about an' stuff (pause) jus'
10 parts of religion I'm just a bit wary about. But I do believe in the
11 whole God thing. Yeah.

12 **Interviewer:** Have you always thought about God in this way?

13 **Alyssa:** Um - I've always believed and just lately- as you get older an'
14 stuff you just ask more questions about it. Um - but I - I have
15 always believed just like - so - Yeah, just lately I've just started
16 wondering about - some - some aspect of it.

17 **Interviewer:** Good. We'll come to that later. Okay?

18 **Alyssa:** Yeah.

19 **Interviewer:** What words would you use to describe your relationship with
20 God?

21 **Alyssa:** Um - (long pause) I'd say probably friendly.

22 **Interviewer:** Yes.

23 **Alyssa:** I'm not as close to him like as I probably should be 'cause I - I
24 don't pray at night and go to Church all the time, an' stuff. Um - I
25 do - I do talk to him sometimes, ask him like for help an' stuff an'
26 Yeah.

27 **Interviewer:** Do you have any image of God?

28 **Alyssa:** Aw that really old weird image, y'know, the whole - like long
29 white hair an' beard an' ...

30 **Interviewer:** Have you always had that image?

31 **Alyssa:** I think so. Yeah.

32 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. You started to talk about how your faith is sort of
33 changing lately. Can you think about how it might be different
34 from what it was years ago, like when you were in primary
35 school?

36 **Alyssa:** Just - My- my - my faith in primary school was stronger. It's still
37 very strong today. Um - I guess I just believe that whatever was
38 said was fact but I just started to think that maybe not everything
39 that was said was right and not like it's not what - like it's not
40 gospel like it's not set in - just, yeah, just querying some parts
41 that

42 **Interviewer:** Good. You're handling this well.

- 43 **Alyssa:** Thankyou.
- 44 **Interviewer:** Is Jesus different from God?
- 45 **Alyssa:** Yes. I believe - um - I believe Jesus came down on earth two
46 thousand years ago to - um - show us our wrongs and to try fi-
47 an' help fix up us people. I believe that Jesus is God's son. I
48 believe that they're two different people. There's Jesus and
49 there's God and they're not one person, if that makes sense.
50 Um - yeah. So I do believe that he sent his son to help us
51 become better people and to become - (pause) to try an' help fix
52 our wrongs so that we won't make the same mistakes we made
53 two thousand years ago today, like so we don't go backwards
54 instead of forwards.
- 55 **Interviewer:** Okay. These differences between God and Jesus, are they
56 important to you?
- 57 **Alyssa:** (long pause) I've never really thought about it.
- 58 **Interviewer:** That's alright.
- 59 **Alyssa:** Um - (long pause) I guess it gives you something to believe.
60 That there's the almighty great God who controls everything and
61 then there was Jesus his son who couldn't always control
62 everything and when he couldn't he asked his father for help.
63 Um ...
- 64 **Interviewer:** That's pretty deep.
- 65 **Alyssa:** Yeah.
- 66 **Interviewer:** Good on yer.
- 67 **Alyssa:** Thankyou.
- 68 **Interviewer:** Do you think there might have been a time when you
69 didn't see any difference between God and Jesus?
- 70 **Alyssa:** (long pause) I don't think so. I think I always believed they were
71 two people.
- 72 **Interviewer:** Okay. Now what about the Holy Spirit? How would you explain
73 the Holy Spirit to a friend who does not believe in God?
- 74 **Alyssa:** I believe the Holy Spirit is God. Just in another form. Um - just
75 (long pause)
- 76 **Interviewer:** Okay. How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a friend who
77 doesn't believe in God?
- 78 **Alyssa:** I guess I'd explain him as being the (pause) one God is like the
79 being like the physical form and the Holy Spirit is like the not
80 physical form. It's the Spirit of God actually being on earth, I
81 think. (pause) Um - (long pause) Yeah. I've never - I've never -
82 I've never really thought about this before. This is making me
83 think more.
- 84 **Interviewer:** And you're thinking really well.

- 85 **Alyssa:** Thankyou.
- 86 **Interviewer:** Now, do you pray?
- 87 **Alyssa:** (pause) Sometimes.
- 88 **Interviewer:** To whom do you pray?
- 89 **Alyssa:** Oh - yeah - I pray to God. Um - (long pause) just - asking him to
90 - to help other people who aren't as well off and who need a
91 bit of guidance an' stuff.
- 92 **Interviewer:** How often do you pray?
- 93 **Alyssa:** Not as often as I should. Um - I actually sit down and pray once
94 a week at Luke 18. Um (pause) depending on what's happening
95 in my life, I guess, like if I've got something (pause) I need help
96 with, or - (pause) y'know, I jus' need to ask him to try and help
97 me with I guess I will pray. But I'm not one of these - not - I don't
98 sit down and pray every night an' stuff an' - .
- 99 **Interviewer:** Good. How do you pray.
- 100 **Alyssa:** Sometimes I jus' - I might jus' stand or sit an' jus' say, y'know,
101 "Please God, help me." Y'know. Um - at Luke 18 I actually like
102 sit down, y'know, this is - this is praying time, y'know, an' just -
103 you sit down an' think you jus' absorb what everyone is saying.
104 Um - yeah, probably how I pray.
- 105 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Good. To whom do you pray most often: God? Jesus? the
106 Holy Spirit?
- 107 **Alyssa:** God, I'd say. Yeah.
- 108 **Interviewer:** Okay. Could you talk a bit more about that, for instance, why
109 you think you pray more to God than to Jesus or the Holy Spirit?
- 110 **Alyssa:** Um - I guess I pray more to God because I know he's up there
111 listening to me. He'll take everything I say on board (pause)
- 112 **Interviewer:** How does your belief in God influence or shape the way you live
113 your life?
- 114 **Alyssa:** I try - I - I try to live my life not necessarily the way he said to but
115 the way I think is right because of - because of how I've been
116 brought up. I've been brought up like not to steal, murder, or
117 anything, and I think it always comes from - I try to live a good
118 life so that (pause) the way he like - not necessarily the way he
119 wanted to but - because like I said that's what I've been brought
120 up to believe: you know, you don't steal, you don't murder, you
121 don't do anything like that because, you know, it's - it's - it's just
122 not right, the way he said an' stuff. Yeah.
- 123 **Interviewer:** Do you see any difference between the way you've been
124 brought up to live your life and what you think Jesus would want
125 you to live, or God would want you to live?
- 126 **Alyssa:** (long pause) Um - no - um - I did - I try to live a good life - um -
127 so that (long pause).

- 128 **Interviewer:** Is it a tough question to answer?
- 129 **Alyssa:** Kind of.
- 130 **Interviewer:** Could you talk more about - you said "the way he would want
131 me to live my life"?
- 132 **Alyssa:** Um - I - when you - when I say you shouldn't like steal or
133 anything that's (pause) um - I can't think of the words - um -
134 that's a value of God that's not what you do you're wrong if you
135 do it and it not necessarily comes from like the Ten
136 Commandments or anything but it is shaped around it, I think
137 because like you just know not like not to do it you'll be - you'll
138 be wrong. It's not what he wants you to do. He - he wants -
139 he'd like you to try and live a good life so that you're happy with
140 your life an' you don't think: Aw, y'know, I shouldn't have done
141 this because, you know, whatever. (short pause) Yeah. (pause)
142 This is all I can say.
- 143 **Interviewer:** You're doing very well. So what impact has your faith had on
144 your attitude towards suffering?
- 145 **Alyssa:** Um - I don't like to see people suffering. Um - when I - when I
146 think about suffering, or war, or anything, I think this is not the
147 way we're supposed to be living. You know, you know, this could
148 be one of the things that God came - Jesus came down two
149 thousand years jus' to try and stop. Now it's gone back to,
150 y'know, war an' people dying an' (pause) you know,
151 unnecessarily, I think - um - in some cases. Um - (pause) Yeah.
152 I don't - I don't like to see people suffering because I just think
153 it's - it's horrible an' wrong an' it's not the way the world should
154 be. The world should be good an' happy an' not having that.
- 155 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. What impact has your faith had on your
156 attitude towards death.
- 157 **Alyssa:** Um - I believe if you've had a good life, then you will go to
158 heaven. Um - I think if you've had a bad life, like you haven't -
159 like you've led a bad life - like you've done the wrong things an'
160 stuff, um - you won't get in as easy. Um - I think if you've had a
161 good life he'll think "Yes you know, this person deserves to be
162 here. This person - depending on how they are after they've
163 done whatever they've done, if they're remorseful or whatever,
164 but if they're just like Aw yeah, you know, it's all right, you know,
165 de-de-de, then they shouldn't necessarily - um - be just allowed
166 in with y'know, open arms sort of - Um - yeah but if you have
167 had a good and decent life and you've made up for the sins - for
168 your sins like you're actually remorseful about them then you
169 should be allowed in with open arms because y'know, you're
170 sorry and you're trying to make your life better. Yeah.
- 171 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. So in what ways does your faith help you to live
172 your life, or to give your life a sense of purpose or fulfillment?
173 Does your life have meaning because of your faith?

- 174 **Alyssa:** Um - I think so because I think with your faith it gives you
 175 boundaries, y'know, what you can do. So I think like going back
 176 to the whole stealing thing that's a boundary that you know you
 177 shouldn't cross unless like - unless you know if you have like a
 178 good faith and you believe and all that, then that's a boundary
 179 you know you have to choose to cross it. That's another thing.
 180 But if you - if you choose not to cross it, then (pause) yeah,
 181 that's - that's - that can be a good thing because it - ah - you
 182 know that (pause) you won't - you won't have anything to feel
 183 bad about or - ye - y'know, you won't feel guilty about
 184 something that is preventable um - I just think yeah just try to
 185 live a good life and you'll be happy with yourself.
- 186 **Interviewer:** The next thing we talk about are the events in your life, the
 187 events in your life that have led to changes in your relationship
 188 with God. What have people said or done that has contributed
 189 to or not contributed to your relationship with God?
- 190 **Alyssa:** I think - I think when you hear someone get up and say - say
 191 something that - like they've done, something good in their life
 192 and they're willing - they're like they're able to get up and talk
 193 about it and actually grab a person and make them feel -
 194 y'know, just touch them, I think that's - that's - you think "Yes",
 195 y'know, this person has, y'know, they're able to get up and talk
 196 about business. It shows you that there's - there are good
 197 people out in the world and that there are people who are willing,
 198 y'know, to stand up and make a difference to maybe one
 199 person's life an' I think that can make you feel -um - closer to
 200 God. Um -
- 201 **Interviewer:** So has there been anyone like that in your life?
- 202 **Alyssa:** Um - (long pause) I think when I was in - oh, 'cause I did InStep
 203 with World Vision last year. Um, I think - That really opened -
 204 like - showed you that hey, there are good people in the world
 205 who are willing to try and make a difference, y'know, to help, to
 206 help people who aren't as fortunate as us so that they can have
 207 a good life and a happy and a full life. I think that just made me
 208 feel, y'know, it was really good to, like it was good to see
 209 because, y'know, sometimes you meet people who aren't - very
 210 good - don't like really care about other people an' stuff an' it's
 211 really good to see that there's - a lot of peop- like an
 212 organisation of people who are willing to say "Hey, this is wrong.
 213 We need to - we need to fix it." Um - yeah, I guess that'd be -
 214 yeah, like that'd be them. There's not anyone specific that has
 215 made me feel, y'know, made me like done something good to
 216 make me feel 'cause it's God, but it'd just be a group of people
 217 that would do it for me, I guess. Yeah.
- 218 **Interviewer:** Good. What about events in your life? Are there any events
 219 that'd be important for you that either have led you closer to God
 220 or made you move away from God?

- 221 **Alyssa:** (Pause) Um (pause) Events? (long pause)
- 222 **Interviewer:** Can't think of any?
- 223 **Alyssa:** Not any specific events.
- 224 **Interviewer:** That's okay.
- 225 **Alyssa:** Maybe – I'm just thinking now maybe joining Luke 18 was a way
226 for me to get closer to God, learn more about him an' be more
227 appreciative of him. Maybe that was –
- 228 **Interviewer:** Good. Has your faith grown stronger or weaker in the last
229 twelve months?
- 230 **Alyssa:** (long pause) My – my faith in God is still strong, but like I said
231 before certain aspects of religion an' faith have grown weaker
232 maybe because of certain – like certain things you hear an' stuff.
233 You jus' think an' think 'cause I think like – when y' like be-
234 starting to go into adulthood, you do jus' start to – you – you
235 start to question a lot of things. An' I think maybe religion's one
236 of them 'cause you are growing up an' you're just starting to –
237 um – yeah. Not everything's the hear or say, y'know. So
238 (pause) what – I – I guess like that that's jus' why it has possibly
239 gotten a bit weaker. Bu' (short pause) yeah.
- 240 **Interviewer:** Okay. What has been the impact of your school on your faith?
- 241 **Alyssa:** Um – (pause) School – (pause) I think school has always like
242 (long pause) it's (sigh) it has like helped my faith in God to grow
243 and to – to develop because I think if I hadn't have had the last
244 five years at St Clot's – um – where it was – um – (pause) where
245 – where we did religion an' stuff – um – I guess, yeah, it helped
246 to keep me grounded on that there is a God an' we should
247 believe in him an' we should try to live our life good – um – yeah
248 – So – um – yeah. so I'd say it's made my – my faith still be
249 strong. Yeah.
- 250 **Interviewer:** Have there been any significant people or moments in your
251 school life that have led you to change the way you think about
252 and relate to God?
- 253 **Alyssa:** Um – not really. No, not really. Not that I can think of anyway.
- 254 **Interviewer:** Have there been any moments in your school life that jump out
255 at you now that I've said that?
- 256 **Alyssa:** Um – not really. Aw, probably moments – um – I think Year 12
257 Retreat was good because it was – um – it wasn't focused – this
258 can sound really bad – but it wasn't focused entirely on God. It
259 was, y'know, your – your pas- like – your past life like your life –
260 life like when you were younger an' it jus' – it made you see
261 what other people's lives were like an' that, y'know, if you
262 thought you had a really bad life whatever it just – it just made
263 you see that, hey, what your – your life has been pretty good.
264 Um – jus' like – um – I guess that was – that was, I think that
265 was a really good experience in my life, especially in my Year 12

266 life because, y'know, you were away from everyone – like you
 267 were away from your family an' – you were – y'know, you were
 268 with your friends an' you were jus' sitting around jus' talking an'
 269 learning about y'self an' about other people an', y'know, y'r – y'r
 270 – y'r faith to – um – sorta – um – yeah. I think that was – I think
 271 that was an – an important time in my – um – my Year 12 year
 272 at St Clot's, I'd say. It was – it was definitely a highlight for me.

273 **Interviewer:** Good. Has anything happened, or been said in RE that has
 274 influenced you in your faith?

275 **Alyssa:** Um – (pause) – um – (pause) Maybe when y' (sigh) 'cause we
 276 were – w – w – w – we like recently been talking about – it hasn't
 277 necessarily influenced my faith, but it's that – like we been
 278 talking about groups that help people, like Amnesty International
 279 an' United Nations an' stuff. An' it's – it's – I think it's really good
 280 to see that there are such positive groups out there helping
 281 people an', y'know, to saying, y'know, "If you need help with
 282 stuff, y'know you can come to us and' talk an' – (pause) Maybe
 283 in a way it's God coming true in them groups because it's – it's
 284 something good and it's what he (pause) It's – it's the sort of
 285 groups that he would want to have in a group – groups – in – um
 286 – in the world jus' focusing on people an' good people like,
 287 y'know, Gandhi an' stuff, who were – who didn't jus' say – didn't
 288 jus' sit down an' say, y'know, "This is our situation. We're jus'
 289 goin' t' have t' deal with it." Y'know, they – they say, y'know,
 290 "Hey, this is the situation, but we can do something better to –
 291 we can do something more to make this situation better an',
 292 y'know, we don't have to put up with this. We can – we can free
 293 ourselves. We can make ourselves good, y'know. We can – we
 294 can change this. We can make this positive, y'know." I think
 295 that's – that's really good.

296 **Interviewer:** Good.

297 **Alyssa:** Have I gone off the track?

298 **Interviewer:** No, that's excellent.

299 **Alyssa:** I think I'm just rambling along.

300 **Interviewer:** You might feel that way, but in actual fact – um – you're saying a
 301 lot of things that make sense that fit in well with what other
 302 students have said. What impact have your RE teachers had on
 303 your relationship with God?

304 **Alyssa:** I think they've been positive influences because they – um –
 305 they – they – they teach – they teach you about God an' – um –
 306 (pause) what he wants an' (pause) what, y'know, you can do
 307 perhaps to try an' make the world a better place through certain
 308 things you've learned – um – from RE. An' – sometimes –
 309 sometimes y' jus' think, y'know, if I could be like such a person,
 310 or not necessarily like them, but do something good, like what
 311 they've done, then you can make a positive contribution to the
 312 world to – to help – um – people an' stuff. An' I think – I think

313 the teachers (*pause*) have shaped me in a way to think like
314 them.

315 **Interviewer:** Can you think of any teacher in particular, in primary or
316 secondary?

317 **Alyssa:** Um – No, no, not really. No, not specifically.

318 **Interviewer:** Okay. What have your parents said or done that has prompted
319 you to grow closer to God, or to move away from God?

320 **Alyssa:** Um – my Mum was actually – my Mum actually told me about
321 Luke – Luke 18 an' about – She's like "Oh, you should go, you
322 know. Be good for you." An' I think, "Nuh! I'm not goin' to that,
323 y'know." Um – but I think if she hadn'ta pushed me I don't think
324 my faith in God possibly would be as strong as it is because
325 when you got write – 'cause we do talks an' stuff – an' when you
326 go down an' listen to a talk, you think, y' know, "Wow!" Y' know,
327 this is, y' know, good, this is, y' know, another person's
328 perspective on our God an' faith, an' whatever it is they're talking
329 about. Um – um – yeah, I think she's – Mum, my Mum has been
330 pretty good with my faith. So's my Dad. Um – he – he – he
331 recently – um – at Easter, he went down – he was one of the
332 disciples to get their feet washed. An' – um – yeah – an' – oh –
333 if – possibly if he hadn't have done that I wouldn't have gotten to
334 see that 'cause I've never – I've never seen that before an' I
335 thought, "Oh, my God!", y'know, it's like during Easter because
336 I'm not – I'm not a big churchgoer like I don't go to Church every
337 week. Um – because it was our way of, you know, of giving our
338 time to him in a special time like Easter when it is leading up to,
339 y'know, the big – whole Easter thing. Um – I guess it's al- – it's
340 always been the two of them, like my Mum an' my Dad an' my
341 Gran even, um – that have – um – helped me grow with my faith
342 an' what I believe. Um – I won't say – say there's been anything
343 specific, but – um –

344 **Interviewer:** So you can't recall any stories of things that might have
345 happened in your past that you link to your faith?

346 **Alyssa:** Um – this doesn't ac- – act- – actually link to my faith but I
347 remember – it's actually quite funny – um – when I was four –
348 um – in Ireland in some Church, whenever, ah – I – Christmas, I
349 think it was. They actually used to – um – like christen a baby.
350 It's really funny. And – um – um – yeah – and – this one year
351 they didn't have a baby to christen and I was already being
352 christened. And – um – Mum an' Dad walked in with me an' the
353 priest goes, "You have a baby!" An' I was christened again! Um
354 – yeah, that was quite funny.

355 **Interviewer:** So apart from being funny, does that story have any special
356 meaning for you?

357 **Alyssa:** Yeah. Um – it kinda does because I – (*pause*) I guess in a way I
358 could be an individual in the fact that I was christened twice
359 instead of once. Um – (*pause*) mmm.

360 **Interviewer:** So, blessed twice?

361 **Alyssa:** Yeah, blessed twice, y'know. Maybe it could mean an extra bit
362 of – something. I don't know. Um – it doesn't really have a
363 massive impact on my faith, but it – um – yeah, I guess it jus' –
364 um – y'know, that one time I was an individual and important in a
365 Church, I think. Yeah, a really funny story. So, yeah, I guess
366 that would be it. I can't think – yeah.

367 **Interviewer:** Okay. Now are there any questions that you would have liked
368 me to have asked you and I haven't asked you?

369 **Alyssa:** No, not really.

370 **Interviewer:** No?

371 **Alyssa:** No.

372 **Interviewer:** Alright, Alyssa Paige. We'll close the interview. I'd like to thank
373 you very much. It's been great listening to you.