

## Cameron's interview

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3 **Interviewer:** Cameron, thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. I have five  
4 major questions to ask you and each question has sub-  
5 questions to it. My first question is this: what do you believe  
6 about God?

7 **Cameron:** Um – I believe that he's a greater force, that he's above humans  
8 as we couldn't actually be the greatest things on earth, an' I  
9 think it's sort of an idea that's there that he's there an' he can  
10 comfort us an' if we do need help that's there's always someone  
11 there listening.

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

13 **Cameron:** Um – I think being brought up in a Catholic family, a Christian  
14 family that – um – attend Church rather regularly – that it was  
15 sort of not my decision until I'd come to high school an' sort of  
16 started to grow up an' then it's sort of become more of my own  
17 prerogative to think of it like this way an' things like that.

18 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. What words would you use to describe your  
19 relationship with God?

20 **Cameron:** Um (*long pause*) I guess – um – that it's – he's a support  
21 structure for me – um – that's someone who can sort of listen  
22 an' just be there, so, maybe a comforting – comforting spirit.  
23 Yeah, sort of I- that, along those lines.

24 **Interviewer:** Thank you. You've spoken about how once you came to  
25 secondary school and you took charge of your own growth and  
26 your own faith, so in what ways is your faith today different from  
27 what it was when you were in primary school?

28 **Cameron:** Um – it's not a chore any more. It's not a chore to go to Church  
29 every Sunday an' sit there for an hour. It's more of a choice  
30 between if I got homework, then Mum says, "Well, you don't  
31 have to come", but it's more of a – if when I do go then it's my  
32 own choice an' it's my own prerogative sort of thing. An' like  
33 being active in even in school things with when it comes to  
34 churches an' stuff, you don't have to be all the time an' it's just –  
35 I think it's good to get in there an' be part of it.

36 **Interviewer:** Is Jesus different from God?

37 **Cameron:** Um (*pause*) um – yes because Jesus was a man an' God – an'  
38 God – God is not – he's not man, he's not woman. Um – I think  
39 Jesus being God's son – um – an' going up to heaven whole, he  
40 wasn't just an ordinary man. He was someone who (*pause*) is  
41 one of us but a role model and I think that has to be taken into  
42 consideration that they're exactly the same at all. They're two  
43 different entities, two different beings sort of thing.

44 **Interviewer:** Is that difference between Jesus and God important to you?

45 **Cameron:** Um – not important. Um – I don't think it's completely relevant as  
46 everybody's different an' everything's different, so I don't think it  
47 affects in any way how I see both them or how they affect me in  
48 my life. I think it's just – um – something that you've just come to  
49 accept – accept, just another piece of information.

50 **Interviewer:** Was there a time when you didn't see a difference?

51 **Cameron:** Um – maybe when I was very young, around five an' six, an' just  
52 starting to learn all these sort of things. It was just an easier  
53 concept to see them all as one person, but as you grow up, you  
54 mature an' you sort of – logic takes hold an' it's – you can't just  
55 have questions that are unanswered an' that you just believe  
56 and you have to ask those sort of questions an' work it out for  
57 yourself.

58 **Interviewer:** Could you talk a bit more about the logic aspect.

59 **Cameron:** Um – sort of when you're little, it's – it's too complicated to see –  
60 um – too complicated to even comprehend what God is. Um –  
61 and Jesus performing miracles is that something I can't do  
62 myself. It's just easy to say that he's also – he was also God  
63 because he could do things I couldn't do that have been written  
64 down and God is there and he's nothing like me, whereas now  
65 it's – you've been – we've been taught in RE that Jesus was a  
66 man an' he – he lived an' he died an' he did all these other  
67 things that I might not be able to do, but it was through his  
68 intense faith in God an' being the son of God that did that, so I  
69 think with more knowledge you can build a better an' more –  
70 more like strong image of what is really going on an' what you  
71 see.

72 **Interviewer:** Good. We might come back to that later on. What about the Holy  
73 Spirit? How would you explain the Holy Spirit to a friend who  
74 doesn't believe in God?

75 **Cameron:** Um – I'd explain that as rather than an entity or figure of the  
76 passion that is within all of us sort of – um – that – that drive to –  
77 to want to know the meaning of life an' that sort of thing that  
78 asks all those questions an' that drives you to – to go to Church  
79 every week and – or feel guilty if you don't go to Church, that  
80 sort of thing.

81 **Interviewer:** Okay. That's very good. A set of questions: Do you pray? To  
82 whom do you pray? How often do you pray? How do you pray?

83 **Cameron:** Um – I wouldn't describe myself as a very prayerful person. Um  
84 – I guess I get caught up in along the lines of thinking  
85 sometimes before I'm asleep I'll be looking up at my roof an'  
86 tryin' to work things out in my head, tryin' to clear up stuff, an' –  
87 um – for me I think that – that is my equivalent of praying rather  
88 than sitting down or kneeling down and praying to a figure or  
89 something, just tryin' – just tryin' to work out what's going on in  
90 *my* head an' having someone there or – to – that will listen an'  
91 not comment or judge, just be there an' listen so I can sort it all

- 92 out an' then it can be done with. An' I'd say that's sort of how I  
93 pray an' when I pray.
- 94 **Interviewer:** Very good. And to whom do you pray most often? God? Jesus?  
95 or the Holy Spirit?
- 96 **Cameron:** Um – probably God.
- 97 **Interviewer:** Why would that be?
- 98 **Cameron:** Um – I think as God is creator of everything – um – he created  
99 me, obviously an' – um – from that he knows – he knows me  
100 best sort of thing, so if I – 'cause I'm there trying to solve – solve  
101 things for me normally, an' work out things to do with me, I think  
102 that he probably has the best understanding out of those three  
103 to help me out, to listen an' that sort of thing.
- 104 **Interviewer:** Okay. How does your faith in God influence or shape the way  
105 you live your life?
- 106 **Cameron:** Um – I think – um – having faith as part of your life is important  
107 as it gives you a whole new dimension to life, like some people  
108 play sport, some people – um – play music an' run an' do all  
109 sorts of different things – um – and religion, having God as part  
110 of your life just adds another aspect, another way that you can  
111 grow, as you are grow up and while you're growing up and I –  
112 even after you've grown up. It adds another aspect to life an'  
113 how you live.
- 114 **Interviewer:** What impact has your faith had on your attitude towards  
115 suffering?
- 116 **Cameron:** Um – I believe everything happens for a reason and – um – from  
117 – from suffering – um – you gain strength. So through painful  
118 experiences that are inevitable, you have to sort of – um – look  
119 back and work out what you gained from it and view everything  
120 as positive rather than as a negative.
- 121 **Interviewer:** Have you arrived at that from your own personal experience, or  
122 is that an idea that you've developed?
- 123 **Cameron:** Um – I'd say a little bit of both. Um – definitely it's a – way of  
124 deal – that I find dealing with bad things, but also – um – it's  
125 something that I've probably picked up from my parents, or from  
126 people that I know as well on the way.
- 127 **Interviewer:** Okay. Good. What impact has your faith had on your attitude  
128 towards death?
- 129 **Cameron:** Um (pause) ah, I sort of see death as another stage of life. I'm  
130 worried because I don't know what's gonna happen next an' you  
131 can't plan for it an' I sort of like to have that control, but – um – I  
132 think it's one thing especially that you just have to sort of – it's  
133 out of your hands an' you've just gotta trust that it's gonna be all  
134 right an' that it all works out when it happens.

135 **Interviewer:** So in what ways does your faith help to give your life a sense of  
136 purpose and fulfilment?

137 **Cameron:** Um – I think as I've said previously, that religion is a sort of  
138 support, a support structure for humans an' it gives them  
139 something to believe in, an' something to help them an' listen an'  
140 be there for them when they need that extra bit of help and it  
141 does add that extra dimension to life. It – it gives you someone  
142 who's always there, a sense of ideas and stories that have been  
143 passed down that you can turn to for guidance. It gives you set  
144 rules an' set things that you should do an' shouldn't do and I  
145 think that sort of – um – like guidance is important in your living  
146 and it makes it a little bit easier, like even though we'd all like to  
147 think that we're independent. If you have guidelines an' things  
148 we are set to follow it makes it easier and we can have that  
149 sense of fulfillment.

150 **Interviewer:** So the relationship between faith and religion: could you  
151 comment on that?

152 **Cameron:** Faith *is* believing in religion to me. Um – you have faith in a  
153 religion you believe an' you follow that because you can relate to  
154 or you've been taught to relate to the ideas in the religion.

155 **Interviewer:** Okay. What events in your life have led to changes in your  
156 relationship with God?

157 **Cameron:** Um – I think growing up – like turning thirteen an' coming to high  
158 school an' having a higher workload an' then me having to  
159 personally make the choice rather than Mum or Dad dragging  
160 me out to down to Church or whatever. Um – I think that has sort  
161 of strengthened and made me realize that if that's something I  
162 want to have in my life that it's something that I've got to put  
163 there and it's up to me rather than up to everyone else, which I  
164 think is a sort of a positive thing because it happens a lot with  
165 life now even. You have to – you're not being driven any more.  
166 You have to do your own thing an' take your own path.

167 **Interviewer:** Could you comment on what people have said or done that has  
168 contributed to your relationship with God or maybe not even  
169 contributed to it? Maybe even harmed it?

170 **Cameron:** Um – um (*pause*) I think parents being like the main thing in my  
171 life, up to now my main support structure, sort of taking me to  
172 Church an' talking to me afterwards about it an' if I understood it  
173 all an' commenting an' listening to my comments an' making  
174 sure I understood it all when I was little helped me to have that  
175 sense that – um – it's – it's part of your life and you should have  
176 it as part of your life because it can help you. I think the whole  
177 idea that religion's out to help you is what – is one of the key  
178 reasons is why I choose to follow now an' choose to believe now  
179 an' practise now because it – it does help an' without that sort of  
180 – um – reinforcement at the start, doing something new, sort of  
181 being pushed into it, I don't think, or I doubt that I'd have the

182 courage to actually be able to go and do that myself. So I think,  
183 yeah, that's probably the main contributing factor.

184 **Interviewer:** Is there a difference between your Mum and your Dad in terms  
185 of influence on you and developing a relationship with God?

186 **Cameron:** Ah, I think Mum – Mum cares a lot more about it than Dad does  
187 only because Dad was – um – in one of those families from what  
188 I've heard that went to Church two times a week an' all that and  
189 it sort of fell out with him. He doesn't really worry about it too  
190 much any more an' just as there – um – if you need to talk about  
191 it or if you need some clarifications or something, rather – um –  
192 and he sort of just makes sure that I have the opportunity and  
193 every opportunity that I have like he's given me every  
194 opportunity that is possible for me. Whereas, I think, for Mum it's  
195 – um – sort of the same with her an' me that she sees it as a  
196 support system as well and that she uses the support system,  
197 whereas Dad finds it in other sources now because I don't – it  
198 mustn't be as big for him as it is for me, or something. I don't –  
199 yeah.

200 **Interviewer:** So, is that something you don't talk about at home with your  
201 Dad?

202 **Cameron:** Um – yeah. It's sort of – yeah, we don't. Yeah, it hasn't been  
203 brought up too much. We're normally doing other stuff around  
204 the house, or –

205 **Interviewer:** And with your Mum?

206 **Cameron:** Um – mmm – Sometimes. I wouldn't say it's huge, but every  
207 now and then, we sit down. You can't – 'cause with me an' Dad,  
208 we are always outside doing something and – an' it usually  
209 takes concentration, whether it be retic work and you don't have  
210 that sort of type of conversation, whereas with Mum it'd just be  
211 inside. Perhaps she'll be ironing, or something an' I'll be folding  
212 up my clothes, or whatever, an' then – an' then we'll talk about  
213 things an' – an' yeah, have that sort of conversation, whereas  
214 with Dad, there's not that much time, no time for thinking, that  
215 sort of idea.

216 **Interviewer:** Good. Has your faith grown stronger or weaker in the last twelve  
217 months?

218 **Cameron:** Um – stronger in the sense that I needed more support and  
219 needed that extra sort of comfort in my life, but weaker in the  
220 fact that – um – with Mum breaking her – um – aw – stress-  
221 fracturing her tibia an' things it's been much harder an' me  
222 having a lot of homework, it's been much harder to get to  
223 Church an' actually be active. But – um – yeah, overall I think it'd  
224 be a – a strength – more growing.

225 **Interviewer:** Could you talk about how you've managed to have it stronger  
226 even if you don't go to Church as often?

227 **Cameron:** Um – I think while the Ten Commandments say that you should  
 228 keep the holy Sabbath an' go to Church on Sunday, that religion  
 229 is more about your frame of mind and more about how you feel  
 230 about it an' how much you need it an' how much you're getting  
 231 out of it. So, even though I'm not going to Church ev'ry – ev'ry  
 232 Sunday, um – I still – I'm using religion, I'm using God, I'm using  
 233 prayer, the whole – in my own sense – a whole lot more to get  
 234 through life an' I'm – it's becoming a bigger part of my life 'cause  
 235 I need it and it's supporting me through the times when I do  
 236 need it.

237 **Interviewer:** What has been the impact of your school on your faith?

238 **Cameron:** Um – I think school being probably my biggest challenge in life –  
 239 well, one of the biggest challenges in my life – um – it adds that  
 240 sense that I need the support and it also – um – you learn more  
 241 things about yourself, like on the retreats an' in RE class. You  
 242 learn what religion means to you an' you learn to put that sort of  
 243 idea into words an' make so it is useful for you, so it does help  
 244 you rather than just being an idea that you have to follow or you  
 245 just choose to follow for the heck of it.

246 **Interviewer:** And have there been any significant people or moments in your  
 247 school life that have led to these sorts of changes in the way you  
 248 think about and relate to God?

249 **Cameron:** I think both the retreats – um – very big, like you go onto the  
 250 retreat as one person and you definitely come out as someone  
 251 else, someone that – um – you know better yourself an' that you  
 252 like more – um – yeah, you definitely undergo changes and you  
 253 work out who your real friends are an' you work out what you  
 254 want out of life an' how you're gonna achieve that. Um – yeah,  
 255 so all the teachers on the retreat, all the people that are on the  
 256 retreat – um – yeah, countless memories, countless sort of  
 257 things that have been said that have really sort of impacted you  
 258 on those retreats an' things. Probably be biggest.

259 **Interviewer:** Okay. Has anything happened or been said in RE that has  
 260 influenced you in your faith?

261 **Cameron:** Um (*pause*) ah, in RE sometimes I feel it's more about actually  
 262 writing what they want you to write rather than what you actually  
 263 feel sometimes. I think in some ways you have really great class  
 264 discussions an' you really get to sort of voice your opinion and  
 265 listen to other people's opinions in a forum that you wouldn't  
 266 normally have outside of RE class- um – which is very good, but  
 267 other times – um – it seems like you're just writing whatever to  
 268 get the grade that you want, to get whatever you want to achieve  
 269 out of the class at the end of the day and not really growing as a  
 270 person. So – um – I sort of – in some ways it adds to your  
 271 religious experience, but in other ways it sort of detracts from  
 272 growth because you're not really growing, just saying what other  
 273 people want you to say, so yeah.

- 274 **Interviewer:** Has there ever been an RE teacher who has impacted on your  
275 relationship with God?
- 276 **Cameron:** Um – I think all of them in their own way bringing their own  
277 experience an' their own style of religion that every – every RE  
278 teacher I've had has definitely sort of broadened my outlook in a  
279 different way – um – yeah, just it – in a different group of people  
280 each year, you're gonna draw different experiences from it each  
281 time, that sort of idea.
- 282 **Interviewer:** Before we finish the interview, would you like to comment on the  
283 place of prayer and liturgy in the development of your  
284 relationship with God?
- 285 **Cameron:** Um – I think – ah – being forced into prayer and liturgy probably  
286 isn't as beneficial as actually – um – not being forced and not  
287 doing it an' then doing it when you really need it and then finding  
288 out how much it really does help 'cause you can continuously tell  
289 people that it's good an' that it's gonna help them an' force them  
290 even to do it, but then they're never – if they don't want to  
291 they're never gonna do it, so I think it's better to leave people to  
292 – if they want that sort of relationship, if they want to do that, an'  
293 if they find that it helps them to let them do it rather than to force  
294 people that don't want to do it to do it 'cause normally what I find  
295 happens is people that don't want to do it ruin it for the people  
296 that are actually in the mood an' actually wanna participate an'  
297 do that sort of thing.
- 298 **Interviewer:** Okay, Cameron. Is there anything that you would want to say  
299 and I haven't asked you a question about it?
- 300 **Cameron:** No. I'm fairly happy, yeah.
- 301 **Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you very much for the interview.