

## Emily's interview

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3 **Interviewer:** Okay, Emily, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Here's  
4 the first question. What do you believe about God?

5 **Emily:** It's nice of you to start off with a question that I find hard to  
6 answer.

7 **Interviewer:** That's right.

8 **Emily:** Um – doesn't exist.

9 **Interviewer:** Okay.

10 **Emily:** A bit harsh – um -

11 **Interviewer:** No, if that's what you believe that God doesn't exist, then we can  
12 work with that. Okay?

13 **Emily:** I think there may have been at one point, but – like maybe – at  
14 one stage, but not anymore. Or there's no interaction with us.

15 **Interviewer:** Okay. So is that based on personal experience for you?

16 **Emily:** Oh, yes. That's what I believe.

17 **Interviewer:** So have you always thought about God in that way, that if God  
18 did exist, God doesn't exist now?

19 **Emily:** Um – not really 'cause when you're little, you're told something,  
20 so you believe what you're told, so –

21 **Interviewer:** Can you remember what you were told when you were little?

22 **Emily:** Not like – We're not a religious family. Like, we don't go to  
23 Church, or anything, but jist that pretty much God existed an'  
24 that if you pray to him he'll answer you an' stuff like that.

25 **Interviewer:** Okay. Can you recall where these ideas came up?

26 **Emily:** Okay – um – Christmas along with Or if there was like – er –  
27 maybe a death in the family, or something. Or – um – I  
28 remember at school having little people who come and tell us  
29 about God an' we get to colour in sheets. (*laughs*)

30 **Interviewer:** You said little people.

31 **Emily:** (*laughing*) Well, they were big because we were little but they  
32 were just two people and they would come in every now and  
33 then like an' tell us about God an' do Scripture in school.

34 **Interviewer:** Okay. That would be a State primary school?

35 **Emily:** Yeah.

36 **Interviewer:** Can you remember what you thought when those sorts of things  
37 happened?

38 **Emily:** Not really. (*laughs*) Just (*short pause*) I think I accepted them. I  
39 didn't (*indistinct word*) not to. I didn't really think about them. I  
40 jus' like (*short pause*) yeah.

- 41 **Interviewer:** How is now different to then?
- 42 **Emily:** Um – just I’m older an’ I’ve got my own mind an’ stuff an’ like –  
43 yeah.
- 44 **Interviewer:** Could you talk about what you’ve heard at school, what people  
45 have tried to teach you.
- 46 **Emily:** What, this school?
- 47 **Interviewer:** Yeah.
- 48 **Emily:** Okay. Um (*long pause, then laughs*) We’ve jus’ been taught  
49 about Jesus an’ God an’ freedom – freedom lately, all about  
50 that. No, jus’ – um – (*short pause*) like we’ve learned about other  
51 religions as well – um – it’s – it’s not that we’ve like learnt – we  
52 haven’t really been told anything, jus’ – it’s sort of incorporated  
53 like into every day. So weird. I’m used to it now. I don’t see it as  
54 learning anything. Does that make sense?
- 55 **Interviewer:** It does. Could you explain what you mean about being  
56 “incorporated in everything”?
- 57 **Emily:** Like morning prayer an’ assemblies an’ RE every day an’ it’s just  
58 like another subject though like, it’s jus’ weird. Masses an’  
59 everything.
- 60 **Interviewer:** Could you explain for me the word “weird”, what that means for  
61 you?
- 62 **Emily:** When did I say “weird”? Did I say “weird”?
- 63 **Interviewer:** Yeah. You said “That’s weird.”
- 64 **Emily:** (*laughs*) Did I? About what?
- 65 **Interviewer:** About being incorporated in everything and RE every day and  
66 Masses and things.
- 67 **Emily:** Did I? I don’t – (*laughs*)
- 68 **Interviewer:** Is that use of the word just a throwaway thing that you don’t  
69 think about?
- 70 **Emily:** Probably. (*laughs*) Can’t remember saying it. (*laughs*)
- 71 **Interviewer:** That’s okay. So in all of the things you’ve heard about God while  
72 you’ve been here in this school, do you see any difference  
73 between God and Jesus from what you’ve heard?
- 74 **Emily:** From what I’ve heard? Um – Yes.
- 75 **Interviewer:** Are you able to explain the differences as you understand them?
- 76 **Emily:** But it’s hard for me to think of difference because I don’t think  
77 either of them exists, or have existed, so it’s really hard for me to  
78 explain like the differences, but so (*pause*) Jesus like lived on  
79 earth, an’ stuff, and didn’t God send him here, or something?  
80 But I – it says in the Bible, or something, that they’re the same  
81 person, or something like that, like connected or something. I  
82 don’t understand that. Also that they’re different.

- 83 **Interviewer:** You've picked out this notion of Jesus living on earth. Is this  
84 something you learned at school?
- 85 **Emily:** Yeah.
- 86 **Interviewer:** That would make him different from God. Why would you come  
87 to that conclusion?
- 88 **Emily:** Um – because – oh – God would have sent him here, so God  
89 never lived on earth, so he did and he interacted with others and  
90 he taught us things and he preach – he was the preacher of  
91 God's word, like – example of God, like – (*pause*)
- 92 **Interviewer:** If I said God is everywhere, what would be your response?
- 93 **Emily:** (*laughs – initial comment indecipherable*) Um - I would probably  
94 jus' not say anything because, y' know (*pause*)
- 95 **Interviewer:** Because it's basically meaningless?
- 96 **Emily:** Pretty much. Not like trying to deny people's beliefs, or anything
- 97 **Interviewer:** No, you're not.
- 98 **Emily:** I understand how people think that like 'cause it's in the nature,  
99 and the people that you see, like everywhere around us, like  
100 exhibits some sort of God essence.
- 101 **Interviewer:** Could you explain that a bit more?
- 102 **Emily:** Um – okay, well God created the earth an' stuff an' people in  
103 there, so – um – like when we look at nature, like the trees an'  
104 stuff over there, it's like seeing some part of God. When we look  
105 at someone else, it's like seeing something like that's accepted  
106 that God's created like when people do acts of kindness an' stuff  
107 like (*laughs*) What did you ask?
- 108 **Interviewer:** What people believe God to be?
- 109 **Emily:** Yeah, sorta thing.
- 110 **Interviewer:** Is that what you mean by it?
- 111 **Emily:** Kind of.
- 112 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about the Holy Spirit? When you hear people talk  
113 about the Holy Spirit?
- 114 **Emily:** I don't even know what you're talking about. I've never been  
115 taught about it.
- 116 **Interviewer:** Okay. Have you ever found yourself praying?
- 117 **Emily:** (*long pause*) Don't think so. Not like – I hope for things but I  
118 don't like apprec-so that praying but not to God, so it's not really  
119 praying. Like, it depends on your interpretation of praying.
- 120 **Interviewer:** No, you've got a pretty good interpretation of it which means  
121 you've been taught well because you understand its connection  
122 to God. If God exists, has God left the world? God's not here  
123 any more?

- 124 **Emily:** Yes. That's right. Or he just doesn't interact with us. He ceases  
125 to communicate with us sort of – sort of thing. He's like moved  
126 on to maybe like – If he does exist, which is pretty unlikely in my  
127 mind, he's probably gone to some other universe or whatever.
- 128 **Interviewer:** Do you have any understanding as to why God might have  
129 moved on?
- 130 **Emily:** 'Coz why would you like – Wha- what's the point in, you know,  
131 like we're not that exciting, like we're not that great – um –  
132 there's probably like other things out there, or (*long pause*)
- 133 **Interviewer:** Okay. So what are you saying about human beings?
- 134 **Emily:** Maybe he's left us to our own devices, like he could've just – he  
135 could've just – yeah – like he created us and left us there like  
136 gave us opportunities to work things out for ourselves, like live  
137 for ourselves without watching over us, sort of thing. Or he  
138 doesn't – 'coz we're not like – yeah – if you get what I mean.
- 139 **Interviewer:** I understand what you're saying. How does that make you feel if  
140 this is what a God – and a God that you think could possibly  
141 exist, if he exists, wouldn't be interested in us? So how do you  
142 react to that?
- 143 **Emily:** I dunno. He created us, so – Well, if he – if he did create us and  
144 we weren't like created from – like an amoeba – um – If he were  
145 alive, he'd be the same like watch over everyone like – (*short*  
146 *pause*)
- 147 **Interviewer:** Why would you do the same?
- 148 **Emily:** Because – I dunno, like he would've given us the rights to live,  
149 like – so, he'd given us the right of free, like freedom an' stuff  
150 like do our own way, like without – you know, he's (*The words*  
151 *are indecipherable.*) - you, know
- 152 **Interviewer:** Okay. We might come back to that one. So do you see yourself  
153 as a person who has faith?
- 154 **Emily:** What do you mean by that?
- 155 **Interviewer:** I'm getting you to interpret it.
- 156 **Emily:** Don't get me to interpret it! It's a confusing question.
- 157 **Interviewer:** Can you tell me why it's confusing?
- 158 **Emily:** Well, it depends what you're talking about faith in what? Are you  
159 taking about faith in God?
- 160 **Interviewer:** Okay.
- 161 **Emily:** I don't think that faith is just a completely religious thing. You can  
162 have faith in other things, like yourself an' other people an' kind  
163 of stuff like that.
- 164 **Interviewer:** Okay. Can we talk about faith at that level? Faith in yourself,  
165 faith in others?

- 166 **Emily:** Am I a faithful person? So do I have faith? I don't think about it  
167 that much, to be honest like in everyday life you don't go: "Hmm,  
168 I suppose I am like sometimes, depending – like there are  
169 always circumstances that affect your reasons an' stuff like  
170 when I'm in a good mood like you're more positive and have  
171 more faith in myself than if I'm in a like bad mood or whatever.  
172 I'm a bit less (*pause*)
- 173 **Interviewer:** So is faith something that can rise above moods?
- 174 **Emily:** Yeah.
- 175 **Interviewer:** Can you talk about that from personal experience?
- 176 **Emily:** (*pause*) Mmm, I don't know, like let's just say if I was to have a  
177 bad day, or whatever, um – the only way to get yourself out of it  
178 is to have like faith in improving an' things are getting better.  
179 Otherwise, if you don't have any faith, or whatever, you're not  
180 gonna pull yourself out of it, like it's nothing (*The next word is*  
181 *indecipherable.*)
- 182 **Interviewer:** Have you ever found yourself in that sort of situation?
- 183 **Emily:** Yeah.
- 184 **Interviewer:** How do you pull yourself out of it?
- 185 **Emily:** Um (*pause*) I try to relax myself like and to do other things or  
186 listen to music an' stuff. Or I go to the beach, or whatever, and I  
187 start thinking positively. Like maybe I'll go see some – like I'll go  
188 maybe – um – see something that makes me look at the world in  
189 a better way like – or when my nephew was here I may go an'  
190 see them an' stuff because they cheer me up. They make you  
191 look at the world like better an' stuff. Or, you know, something  
192 like that.
- 193 **Interviewer:** Do you think your faith, in the sense that you mean it, has grown  
194 stronger or weaker in the last twelve months?
- 195 **Emily:** (*pause*) Probably weaker.
- 196 **Interviewer:** Do you know why?
- 197 **Emily:** (*pause*) Mmm, not really. I jus' (*long pause*) I'm tryin' to think. It's  
198 jus' hard because school's really stressful and stuff like that, like  
199 you don't really have time to think about things anymore.
- 200 **Interviewer:** Okay. Are there people in your school life who actually help you  
201 to have more faith in yourself?
- 202 **Emily:** In school life, do you mean like anyone at school?
- 203 **Interviewer:** It could be anyone in the school.
- 204 **Emily:** Well, I have my friends. And that's it. (*She laughs.*)
- 205 **Interviewer:** What about RE?
- 206 **Emily:** What about it? (*She laughs.*)

- 207 **Interviewer:** Does it have any influence on you in terms of your  
208 understanding of faith, like faith in yourself, or faith in others?
- 209 **Emily:** Ah, not really because my views are really strong like they're  
210 very – mmm – so I participate in RE. because I understand  
211 that's what you have to do being part of a Catholic school an' I  
212 don't resist that or anything but I just sort of just do it. I don't  
213 really think about things so much because (*long pause*) yeah.  
214 (*pause*) So it's sort of there to pass over but I don't think about it  
215 too much because it's not really anything that impacts on my life  
216 all that much.
- 217 **Interviewer:** Of all the subjects that you do, is there any subject that you think  
218 impacts on your life?
- 219 **Emily:** Um – English, maybe.
- 220 **Interviewer:** Why would that be?
- 221 **Emily:** Because I always – when I'm in English then I always analyse  
222 everything. It frustrates me. Like if I watch a movie – when I  
223 watch TV (*The rest of the statement is indecipherable.*) Oh, what  
224 am I doing? An' it teaches you all about values an' stuff. Even  
225 though RE does that as well because it's RE I sort of like switch  
226 off sort of thing, so –
- 227 **Interviewer:** Okay.
- 228 **Emily:** Maths. When I have to do Maths – like when I'm at the shops an'  
229 I'm tryin' to add up how much like is twenty per cent off the  
230 shoes – that I want.
- 231 **Interviewer:** So that's the extent of the influence?
- 232 **Emily:** (*laughs*)
- 233 **Interviewer:** What about teachers?
- 234 **Emily:** Teachers?
- 235 **Interviewer:** Yeah. Over the time that you've been here, has there been any  
236 teacher who you think has helped you understand yourself  
237 better, or have a better view of yourself, or a better view of  
238 others?
- 239 **Emily:** (*pause*) Maybe. Not r- Like teachers – for me teachers do that  
240 but there hasn't like been a significant way like a lot of teachers  
241 do that in like just every day type of thing.
- 242 **Interviewer:** Are you able to say why they do that every day?
- 243 **Emily:** Um – because they tell me to focus more an' stuff an' I've more  
244 potential an' stuff, just (*pause*) at retreats an' stuff when you get  
245 close to teachers they're – (*pause*)
- 246 **Interviewer:** Okay. What about your parents? What have they said or done  
247 that's prompted you to have greater faith in yourself and greater  
248 faith in others? Can you think of anything that's happened that  
249 would speak to you about that?

- 250 **Emily:** (pause) Ah, not really.
- 251 **Interviewer:** Okay. If we come back to the whole God thing and the position  
252 you have on God, do you think your Dad or your Mother has had  
253 influence on you in relation to that?
- 254 **Emily:** No. I don't think so because – yeah, I dunno. We never discuss  
255 religion that much at home. Not really.
- 256 **Interviewer:** What about the influence of your parents? Where are the  
257 differences?
- 258 **Emily:** Differences? What do you mean?
- 259 **Interviewer:** The differences between your mother and your father in terms of  
260 your faith in yourself, faith in others.
- 261 **Emily:** I'm like my Dad, very stubborn.
- 262 **Interviewer:** Sorry?
- 263 **Emily:** I said I'm like my Dad. That's the difference.
- 264 **Interviewer:** That's the difference. Okay. Can you think of any stories about  
265 your life with your Dad where you think your Dad has influenced  
266 you to be a better person?
- 267 **Emily:** Um (pause) There has been things like – um – it happens all the  
268 time, I s'pose, like you don't really think about it, like when  
269 they're bringing you up an' they sort of like, you know, like give  
270 you morals an' they teach it to you like – well, he would teach it  
271 to me ev'ry day, like – there's not really – like if I would get in  
272 trouble for doing something that sort of teaching me not to do it  
273 an' stuff like that, like when he would tell – like tell me stuff like –  
274 there's not really been like a certain significant things that  
275 happened all the time like because I've been raised correct.
- 276 **Interviewer:** Okay. Could you reflect for a moment on how your faith in  
277 yourself and others have an influence on you in your attitude  
278 towards suffering and death?
- 279 **Emily:** (pause) I don't think they do, really, because everyone has  
280 different beliefs to me towards death. I think you die an' that's it.  
281 That's just what I think. Like, in my family, beliefs that you like go  
282 somewhere else, or you go heaven, or maybe an after life like  
283 sorta that, so maybe it should say they've – they could've  
284 influenced me in a reverse way since that like that like since that  
285 their beliefs I've gradually gone outside of that an' like explored  
286 other things.
- 287 **Interviewer:** Do you know how you came to that belief?
- 288 **Emily:** (long pause)
- 289 **Interviewer:** When you hear things being said at school that relate to faith,  
290 whether it's religious faith or human faith, and it's different from  
291 what you currently believe to be true, what do you do with those  
292 other ideas?

- 293 **Emily:** Um – I sort of (*The next word is indecipherable.*) in my head  
 294 because I've already thought about it all an' stuff and at the  
 295 moment – um - I just haven't seen anything in my life that makes  
 296 me believe in a God or anything so I've given up.
- 297 **Interviewer:** Have you ever pulled yourself, have you ever been pulled up by  
 298 an idea and, in a sense, you have started to change your own  
 299 ideas as a result of what you've heard?
- 300 **Emily:** (*pause*) Probably, like a few times like – not about God though –  
 301 but very strong belief about death an' stuff – um – but I always  
 302 come back to the same conclusions that – that's all that like in  
 303 the future it might change I think right now
- 304 **Interviewer:** What about your attitudes towards people?
- 305 **Emily:** What do y' mean?
- 306 **Interviewer:** Anything that's ever happened that made you stop and  
 307 reassess.
- 308 **Emily:** So – yeah, well, if I'm seeing this, or whatever an' then maybe  
 309 like (*pause*) other people have shown me that's not right or  
 310 whatever or maybe not just showing me but if I look at other  
 311 people, then look at what they're doing an' stuff like – you know  
 312 how we always do community service an' we did that last year  
 313 an' stuff like that that sort of makes you stop an' reassess the  
 314 way that you are like how we become selfish and stuff like that  
 315 like –
- 316 **Interviewer:** So how did that affect you last year?
- 317 **Emily:** Um – pretty much come back to the same way this year (*laughs*)  
 318 I don't – unfortunately, but – I dunno – it makes you like sort of  
 319 more aware that you're a lot luckier than things an' stuff like that  
 320 and just like (*pause*) mmm that we take a lot of things for  
 321 granted and that sometimes we become very selfish in our own  
 322 worlds an' stuff like an' that there's a lot like more out there than  
 323 we think.
- 324 **Interviewer:** How do you relate that to your comment that you seem to have  
 325 less faith or that your faith has grown weaker in the last twelve  
 326 months?
- 327 **Emily:** It's just that I can't be bothered – bothered having faith, like it  
 328 seems so much effort right now (*pause*) I'd like to have, but right  
 329 – just right now, I dunno.
- 330 **Interviewer:** You name school as being a major influence in that happening  
 331 to you.
- 332 **Emily:** Yeah.
- 333 **Interviewer:** And you use the word “stress”
- 334 **Emily:** I don't have time to think about faith really. Like – yeah, because  
 335 I'm just doing all my homework and doing work an' getting  
 336 everything done an' sleeping an' waking up an' the same thing,

- 337 so I'm not really – I mean I might be without really realizing it,  
338 but –
- 339 **Interviewer:** Consciously you've called a halt on all this?
- 340 **Emily:** Yeah. Because that takes a lot of like thought an' the whole  
341 confusion an' a lot of like analyzing an' stuff then I can't be – I  
342 don't really have the time or the effort to be thinking about stuff  
343 right now. I really am start realizing it like in little aspects of my  
344 life it probably comes up but I'm not really seeing grow faith, you  
345 know, like thinking about like stuff like where I would do like  
346 more so last year.
- 347 **Interviewer:** So it seems to me that you sense that your faith is weaker now?
- 348 **Emily:** Yeah, because I'm too tired.
- 349 **Interviewer:** So what gives you a sense of purpose in your life?
- 350 **Emily:** Um – just having fun, like – I mean I have fun like with home in  
351 my life an' like I went to Italy an' I saw heaps of stuff then, so  
352 (*pause*) I think like you might as well just live like be alive an'  
353 see as much as you can an' do as much things as you can –  
354 that type of thing like – (*pause*) (*The next three words are*  
355 *indecipherable.*) in the world an' stuff an' like – (*pause*)
- 356 **Interviewer:** How did the trip to Italy change you?
- 357 **Emily:** Um – you hell forget that like there's a whole other world out  
358 there other than like where you are an' that it's so different an'  
359 that there's like so much to see an' so much to do, so many  
360 more people to meet, like it'll get you out of your own world an'  
361 stuff an' it's good – it was good to get away from here as well,  
362 an' like have a break from like here an' –
- 363 **Interviewer:** So how has that influenced your understanding of what life is  
364 meant to be about?
- 365 **Emily:** Just – um – it's just (*The next two words are indecipherable.*) to  
366 think that, you know, like it's about having fun, about seeing  
367 things, like I saw heaps of new things in Italy an' I had heaps of  
368 fun an' I met heaps of new people like – an' it was jus' a whole  
369 other – like it was so different over there like – an' it was jus'  
370 really good to go and experience that an' be part of that an' so it  
371 shows you that like there's – now I wanna do even more, like go  
372 to more of Europe an' more of those countries – an' see heaps  
373 more stuff.  
374

- 375 **Emily:** Um – well, if you don't have faith in yourself then you're not  
376 gonna get the motivation to go out an' do that type of stuff. Then  
377 – well, y' not gonna –
- 378 **Interviewer:** What motivates you?
- 379 **Emily:** What motivates me? Um – mmm – well, (*pause*) so I want to  
380 have a successful job an' stuff, and so that's why I'm motivated  
381 before and I can be motivated with my school work an' stuff. I  
382 like I like getting good grades – Oh, well I like getting good  
383 things like because I get satisfaction out of that so that sort of  
384 motivates me an' I like praise an' stuff like that an' that motivates  
385 you, yeah, and – um – I like having fun like I like relaxing stuff so  
386 that will motivate me to go out an' stuff like that.
- 387 **Interviewer:** Do you have plans to travel when you get out of school?
- 388 **Emily:** Yeah, well, like not definite plans but yeah I've got – I want to – I  
389 don't – no particular plans, but yeah I want to.
- 390 **Interviewer:** Well, we'll end the interview at this point, Emily. Thank you for  
391 allowing me to ask you questions about yourself and your faith.