

## **What does Jesus mean to me?**

I wanted to come here and talk about my faith and my relationship with God and how it's shaped my life.

Honestly, having a relationship with Jesus is 100% the reason why I keep going. It's the reason why I don't give up even at times when things are not going well in my life but knowing that He is there always gives me peace.

To me, Jesus is my comforter. He's my saviour my best friend, He is my provider, and He is always listening to me. The conversations I have with Him are the best conversations that I ever have because I know that He knows me inside out, and He listens.

Sometimes people get confused with Christianity and think it's just a religion and there's all these rules to follow but the thing is it's not the rules that make up Christianity. It's the relationship that you have with Jesus and because you love him and you have a hunger for him and you desire him and you desire the plans that He has for you. You want to honour him. You want to worship him because He provides you with so much.

When I sit in my room and I am praying or I'm worshipping him I feel his presence. It's a feeling that you can't describe but it's so powerful even at church the atmosphere during worship is just unbelievable.

Some of you may not know in 2021 to about 2023 I had some really hard times and I was trying to find my friendship group and where I belonged. It was very disheartening, and I was really down, and I started to think that OLSH was not the place for me. But I held onto hope, and talking to my parents about this situation, my mum said to me that "God put you there in that school for a reason", which I can see now.

I knew that Jesus was there to care for me to provide me that Godly Love and show me that I have a purpose because He did not put anyone on this earth as a mistake. He put me on this earth for a reason and I wanted to glorify him and go and serve him, even though there are so many things that I have done wrong and had to ask for forgiveness He still has a purpose and a plan for me. At that time I was questioning why Jesus

put me in this position. Now I look back and realised what came out of it. I am able to tell people the things that Jesus has done in my life. The reason that I'm telling you about Jesus right now is because I know what He is capable of. Nothing is impossible for him.

A man in the bible named Job had the most traumatic events happened to him. His children died. His wife died. His cattle died. His home was completely destroyed. there were times where He did doubt God but his friends were always there to keep him strong in the faith, which is why who you surround yourself with is so important. They would always remind him. God is there for you even though these catastrophic events are happening. He went through so much yet God never failed him so this brings me to one of my favourite verses I wanted to read out.

Psalms 18:2

"The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold."

This reminds me that God is always there he's not leaving my side and even though at times I did not want to seek him I felt He always wanted a relationship with me. He's always going to be there even if I stay away from him. He will always be waiting for me to come back to him and will never ever resent me, no matter what I've done in my life.

For me personally I've always grown up in a Christian household so I was always going to church every Sunday. There was always praying in my house but I only really experienced God for myself in year 6 at a church conference. All of a sudden I seemed to understand the things that were being told about Jesus better - it all clicked. Then as we stepped into a time of worship, I felt a heat running down my body and I felt the sense of peace and love that isn't given by humans. It's supernatural. That is when I realised I personally want a relationship with Jesus.

Being so close to finishing school has definitely given me stress and left me confused about how I'm going to continue my life after high school like what courses am I going to do, what university I want to go to. I'm sure a lot of us think about this - we have to figure our life out at such a young age.

In Jeremiah 29:11 it says

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

This verse tells me that God already has plans for me so it was just knowing that He already has things aligned in my life and as long as I seek him and I seek his guidance He will give me the steps to get there. I don't need to know exactly what I'm going to do because you just have to have faith. It also tells us that the plans that God has is not to my detriment, but for me to succeed in life, and to live my best life, however that may look.

I just wanted to come and share my experience with my faith and how I have grown as a person and how much a relationship with Jesus has changed my life.

I encourage you to seek your purpose and surround yourself with friends who will lead you towards that and maybe even some of you will be like me and seek Jesus to find your purpose.

**Lucille, Year 11**