

I've called myself a Christian for as long as I can remember, so it has taken quite a long time for me to get round to getting baptised. The thing that brought it on was a sermon in which the speaker said that Jesus commands us to get baptised. And I know I don't have to be baptised for Jesus to save me, but I want to do what Jesus asks and that is why I am getting baptised now.

But as I've prepared for today I've found myself trying to justify my position. Why do I believe what I believe, what is it that actually convinces me? And I got quite nervous thinking about whether my reasons were good enough and what other people would think of them. But I realise that this isn't some exercise where I can succeed or fail – all I have to do is tell the truth.

One of my early memories is of bursting into a room I thought would be empty but turned out to be full of people. Jesus was there, he told me not to be frightened but to come in. But I was frightened, and I ran away.

I don't tell people that very often because I don't think they'll believe me. But all the times when I have doubted God's existence, that memory has stuck with me.

I'd like to be able to say that I studied the Bible hard and I read and listened to all the arguments either way, studied long into the night in various libraries and finally came to the conclusion, that yes, God exists and he loves me.

But it hasn't been like that at all. I neglected the Bible, I stopped going to Church, and I didn't do the research – but all the times that I've been in danger of falling away and deciding I do not believe, that memory from my childhood has been there.

Over the years when I have found things difficult or struggled, God has been there and has answered my prayers. And when I've prayed, sometimes it has felt like talking into an empty room, but other times I have felt his presence and I have realised that the God of the Universe really does exist. And that instead of dictating his will from on high, he has chosen to talk to me and help me and comfort me.

I've heard people talk about the "leap of faith" like it means believing despite having no reason to. But for me, it's about learning to trust God even though I don't have all the answers.

In some ways, I'd prefer it if I had worked everything out for myself and could lean on my understanding. But I didn't. I didn't find God, God found me.

I'm getting baptised today because God has sought me out. He has shown me that he exists, shown me his kindness and has helped me to begin to understand the truth. The truth about who he is and his amazing gift to us if we'll only accept it. My sin would cause me to die. But because God loves me, Jesus came and died instead.