



## Cara Carmelo

As a child I grew up in a Roman Catholic household, church, and school. It was very strict with harsh punishments while love and kindness weren't outwardly shown much. My perception of religion started to distort when I realized that the people in my church, school, and even my family at home didn't live their lives daily the way they taught me

to. So why should I? Trauma within the church and outside of it in the time to come, I began to turn my back on my faith and God completely. Living without His guidance or understanding His love ultimately led me to rely on the world and the evils that remain in it to get through the traumas I endured and wasn't equipped to. I spent many years of my life lost, addicted, broken and hopeless not realizing that Jesus had already paid the price for me to be freed from all I suffered from. I took the first step of healing from what I once knew the Church to be, and rebuild the new version of what it truly is for me today. I then gave my life to Christ and want to honor this next step in signifying the commitment and dedication I have to living a life by faith and celebrate the freedom God has given me.



## Damajah Maue

The reason I've decided to get baptized is because I want to reconnect with God and follow Jesus. I walked away from God when I was younger because I felt as if he took the person I was closest to in life. I had so much anger after I turned my back on God. I taught myself to hate before I'd allow myself to love again. For so long I stayed in the

dark with my demons allowing them to drag me down. I allowed them to take my self-esteem, my personality, my joy, my happiness, and my love for far too long. I grew up going to church with my grandfather, until he passed away when I was 9, then I just stopped and lost all faith and hope. It was 11 years later when I first laid eyes on my daughter that I began to love and care again. It gave me a whole different perspective on life. Ever since then I've been wanting to get close to God again, but I've been too scared or ashamed to think he would accept me. My reason for being baptized is to reconnect with God and follow the Jesus that my grandfather knew, loved, and followed.



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To learn more about baptism, go to [granthamchurch.org/baptism](http://granthamchurch.org/baptism).

## Seth Derliunas

I was raised in a Christian home. So, I grew up going to church every Sunday and I even attended a private Christian school pre-K through 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Although I grew up experiencing the Christian faith, I never experienced the transformative power of a relationship with Jesus. As a child I believe I enjoyed the programs and going through the motions because it was what we did as a family. I didn't know anything

else. However, as I became a teenager, I began experiencing sin and fleshly desires in new ways, which I knew were wrong. Over the course of the next eight years or so I was living a quietly rebellious life, indulging in sinful behaviors while simultaneously still attending church to continue the façade. Eventually, everything slowly came to the surface as I got further into drug abuse and eventually was arrested, which ruined my plans for joining the military. Through all of my brokenness God still relentlessly pursued me and bestowed mercy on me. After my parents divorced my dad was reminded of Grantham Church, because he was looking for a new church home. I begrudgingly came along, which is one of the greatest things to ever happen to me. God's amazing love and grace continued meeting me where I was at and reminding me that only he can truly fill the void in my heart. Grantham Church has displayed this love to us, which is why I want to become a member and be baptized as an adult, to share with my brothers and sisters the transformation Jesus has started in me. Since deciding to follow Jesus two years ago, it hasn't always been rainbows and cupcakes, it's been quite a bumpy journey. Yet, because of God's amazing love for me and grace to continue moving forward and growing I remain faithful to my covenant with God to love and serve him and those around me.



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