

# Jake



*Jake Bennett spent 2022 in Mozambique with his parents and the Baptist Mission Australia team. Here he reflects on the experience and how it changed him.*

Hi, my name is Jake, I'm 20 years old and I live in Australia. Last year I went on a mission trip to Mozambique for 11 months. I decided to go at the last minute as it wasn't something I thought I would be interested in. Other countries can be uncomfortable and strange, *and who likes being uncomfortable?*

Not to mention it would be a year away from all my friends and people I knew and trusted. I went to school in a relatively small town so this would be a big adjustment! I ended up going purely because I thought that if perhaps God was calling me to go, it would be bad to ignore Him.

My time in Africa was completely life changing for me. I went with very low expectations and was amazed time and time again with God's love and provision for me. Before I went, I prayed something like, "Alright God, I'm doing this crazy thing for You so please look after me!"

God blessed me with good relationships, not only with the lovely hospitable Baptist Mission Australia family that we stayed with, who went over and above to meet my needs, but also a few local guys my age. He blessed me with amazing food, beautiful scenery, deepened relationship with Him, exposure to a completely new culture and escape from the superficial western world. My previous worldview was turned upside down by the beauty and rawness of a developing country.

I experienced so many blessings that it felt like my cup was always running over! All the things I used to rely on were taken away from me, and I began to realise what I actually value and where I truly find my identity.

But even so, my year wasn't completely without hard times. Many days I would feel lonely and awkward. Sometimes I would feel so exhausted that I couldn't move, and so sick that tears would stream down my face.

No, my trip wasn't without hard times. But those hard times made me so much more grateful for when life is going well and also put into perspective how fragile happiness is.

How much greater it is to your find your joy in the steadfast love of God! Looking back, I can see that before I left for Mozambique my faith in God was weak and now it is firmer than it has ever been.

Coming back to Australia, I've found it difficult to not just let my experience in Mozambique be a distant memory. It's a battle for me to serve God in a country with so many distractions and values that don't align with Jesus. But I feel more confident to share my faith in Jesus now, even if other people around me think differently.

I loved my time in Africa. It changed my life for the better and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

**Want to explore short-term opportunities for yourself?**



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