

## “Just As I Am” ~ Charlotte Elliott's

The story of Charlotte Elliott's protracted struggle against the oppressive power of sin provides a helpful lesson to Christians and non-Christians alike. At an early age, Charlotte began to be aware of her sinful nature and of her impotence to resist sin's enticements. Growing up, Charlotte felt herself increasingly unworthy of God's grace and incapable of facing a perfect and righteous God. She visited many churches and solicited the help of many pastors, all of whom counseled her simply to pray more, to study the Bible more, to perform more noble deeds, and to resolve to do better. However, all the advice she received was unavailing. For seven or eight more years, Charlotte continued struggling in vain against sin, all the while mired in self-condemnation. She experienced at length the despondency of the human condition described in Romans 7:18: “I know that in me...nothing good dwells; for to will [the good] is present with me, but to work out the good is not.”

After some time, Charlotte Elliott met an eminent preacher named Dr. Caesar Malan. This encounter would prove to be a great turning point in Charlotte's life. She asked him, as she had asked many others, how she might be saved. Sensing the enormous burden weighing upon her conscience, Malan responded compassionately, “Go to God just as you are.” Charlotte asked him incredulously, “Do I not have to do better, make more progress, and improve more before I believe in the Lord Jesus?” Malan simply repeated this simple, priceless phrase: “You must come to Him just as you are.” These few liberating words of fellowship had a deep and indelible effect on Charlotte Elliott and would later inspire the composition of her best-known hymn, “Just as I Am.”

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy Blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To thee, whose Blood can cleanse each spot,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

*Just as I am, though tossed about*

With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!  
Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!  
Just as I am; Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because Thy promise I believe;  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!  
Just as I am, Thy Love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

From **Hutton, Favorite Hymns**

From the age of 33 until her death, Charlotte suffered crippling fatigue. "My Heavenly Father knows, and He alone, what it is, day after day, and hour after hour, to fight against bodily feelings of almost overpowering weakness and languor and exhaustion, to resolve, as He enables me to do, not to yield to the slothfulness, the depression, the irritability, such as a body causes me to long to indulge, but to rise every morning determined on taking this for my motto, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.' "

Despite her ailment, she made herself useful. For example, she edited the *Religious Remembrancer* magazine.

In 1835, about twelve years after her conversion, her brother was raising funds for a school for the daughters of clergymen--St. Mary's Hall. Unable to help with the project, Charlotte felt useless. Perhaps God had even rejected her!

She fell into deep doubt. As she pondered her situation, she remembered the words of Cesar Malan and decided to write a song for others who were in her situation. The words she wrote became one of the greatest soul-winning songs in the history of hymns. – **Christianity.com.** by **Dan Graves.**