

JUST AS I AM
Charlotte Elliott

When many of us were growing up, we were taken along to the meetings and missions halls where the Gospel was faithfully preached. Often, at the end, this hymn of Charlotte Elliott was sung,

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
Hath broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am—of that free love
The breadth, length, depth, and height to
prove,
Here for a season, then above—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Charlotte Elliott was born on 18th March 1789, the daughter of a silk merchant, from Clapham in south-west London. Her mother was a minister's daughter, and Charlotte's two brothers, - Henry and Edward, - became Church of England ministers. Her grandfather was a famous evangelical preacher, and her niece (Emily Elizabeth Steele Elliott) wrote the hymn, Thou didst leave Thy throne and Thy Kingly crown.

Charlotte though, did not come to faith until further into her life. Ira D Sankey tells of how she was visiting friends in the West End of London and César Malan, a famous Swiss preacher and pastor, was also visiting. While sitting at the meal table César Malan said to Charlotte he hoped she was a Christian. She took offence, and replied she would rather not discuss that question. Dr. Malan apologised if he had offended her. However, 'by chance' they met in another friend's house three weeks later, and Charlotte told him that since he had spoken to her she had been trying to find the Saviour. She then asked him to tell her how to come to Christ. And he simply said, "Just come to Him as you are". ... And she did, when she was thirty-three years of age.

When she was in her forties, her health declined and she basically became bed-ridden, an invalid. Previously, she had enjoyed a happy carefree life ... but that changed. Even though she was now a Christian, she began to feel as if she was unworthy of God. She began to have doubts ... how could God love me? *Why* would He love me? ... How can I be sure all is well with my soul?

She searched her Bible for answers, and she began to list reasons from Scripture for believing that she was truly a born-again child of God. Despite her poor health and how it was affecting her moods, she believed beyond any doubt the power of Jesus' blood had redeemed her at the cross, - she did not lose confidence in what Jesus had done for her at Calvary. She remembered His promise to receive all who come to Him by faith ... and His willingness to pardon, cleanse, and save ... and that is how she continued to trust, by faith.

And one day, in 1834, - by this time (45 years old), she was living in Brighton with her brother Henry (a minister) and his wife, - she was on her own. She was feeling worthless and lonely ... and she remembered what the Swiss Pastor, - César Malan, - had said to her before she became a Christian, "Just come to Him as you are". ... And that resonated within her ... "Just come to [*Christ*] as you are".

Even though this hymn is recognised as a great Gospel hymn, originally it was written by a believer battling with her own sense of failure. She begins with, "Just as I am" ... the yearning in those words, and the sense of her despondency. Nevertheless, she understands she is a child of God, redeemed through the work of His Son, "Thy blood was shed for me". Despite her condition, she was trusting in Christ Who died for her on the cross, Who shed His precious blood for her. She knew His saving power, - for she believed He had saved her, - and she knew there was relief with Him ... and that is how, - in each of the verses, - she responded, "O Lamb of God, I come". ... She was determined to leave the place where she was at, and *cling* to the Saviour, no matter how much it took out of her.

Look at her mention of the blood of Jesus, - "But that Thy blood was shed for me ... To Thee Whose blood can cleanse each spot". ... The blood of Jesus lay at the heart of why she loved Him. Through His blood she was saved, - He shed His blood for her because He loved her, even long before she first loved Him ... and that is how the Bible explains it for, **Heb. 9:22** *without shedding of blood is no remission*. Jesus died and shed His blood so that our sins our sins would be removed, to the perfect satisfaction of His Heavenly Father.

Of course, we are not referring to the actual blood being poured upon us in some type of macabre ritualistic ceremony, for the blood of Jesus was shed only once at Calvary, and there is none of His blood left and stored away in some religious chalice ... We don't mean His actual blood was poured upon us, but what we mean is that when they pierced His hands and feet, and nailed Him to the cross, the blood which came out of His wounds, - the blood He shed, - was sufficient to save every man, woman, boy and girl, - from the very beginning to when Christ returns, - who would believe and trust in Him as Saviour.

You have probably heard the story about Napoleon meeting with his generals after the Battle of Waterloo. He drew their attention to a map of Europe, hanging on the wall. He pointed to the British Isles which was highlighted and covered in red, and he said, "If it were not for that red spot, I would have conquered the world". ... If it had not been for the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, *Satan* would have conquered the world for there would have been no salvation from sin.

The writer to the Hebrews has explained, **Heb. 9:15** And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament [*διαθήκη, covenant*], that by means of death, for the redemption of [*setting free from*] the transgressions that were under the first testament [*the covenant made under the Law of Moses*], they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. **16** For where a testament [*covenant, will*] is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator [*i.e. the one who made the covenant ... if someone is going to leave you something in their will, they must die first*] ... And so, Paul assures us, **Eph. 2:13** But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. In other words, there is only one means of salvation for there is only one Saviour, ... only one way to God. *Only through the cleansing of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ shed on the cross of Calvary can any man, woman, boy or girl attain to the holiness God requires for citizenship in Heaven.* ... Christ's death on the cross is our guarantee!

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.

It is not about being a good person, - as commendable as that is ... And neither is it about coming to the church, - and we love to see anyone coming to the church ... but the only means by which anyone can be sure of their salvation is

by trusting in Christ Who shed His blood and died for them at Calvary! ... It is not about what *I* have done, but the Gospel, - the Good News, - is all about what *Jesus Christ* has done for us.

Charlotte Elliott referred to her troubles,

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.

There are many obstacles which would threaten to get in the way of coming to Christ, - they will make every attempt at stopping you from coming to the Saviour. If you are not saved, but you think you want to be ... all sorts of barriers appear to stop you from trusting in Him. It can be anything from “people will laugh at me” to “I could never keep it” to “maybe God would not want me, - it might work for others but not for me”. No, if the Holy Spirit is impressing the Gospel upon your soul, humbly but confidently trust in Christ to be saved.

At the cross, - through the shedding of His blood, - the Lord Jesus defeated the devil for you. That is what He did when He shed His blood, - He paid the price to purchase you, - as if you were a slave, and a ransom price had to be paid for you ... Well, He paid the price for your salvation by pouring out His own blood, - so that when you would believe in Him, He would take your life from out of the hands of the enemy, the devil ... and you would become a child of His Father. It cost Him to save you!

And when you believe in Jesus Christ as your Saviour, the devil is defeated, - he is not your master any longer ... he used to be, but not anymore, for you now belong to God,

Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Hath broken every barrier down;
Now, to be Thine, yea, Thine alone—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Even as a Christian, Charlotte Elliot was being ‘tossed about, with many a conflict, many a doubt’ ... *Christians* come under the devil’s attacks, but when the blood of Christ is mentioned, he runs! ... The devil is afraid of the blood of the Lord Jesus, - he despises the subject of the blood, - because the moment the soldiers banged the first nail into the Saviour’s precious body on the cross the victory over hell and the devil was won. No wonder, it is the devil’s number one hated subject ... *the blood!*

And not only is *the devil defeated* when the blood of Christ was shed, but *the believer was delivered*. You are a Christian, not because your name is on a church roll, or you have been baptized ... you are a Christian now because Jesus has washed away your sins ... He has 'broken every barrier down' and, - through His grace, - you come before God as His redeemed child. You are not a stranger. You need not worry about whether He will receive you ... This hymn was written by Charlotte Elliott who heard and responded to the simple invitation, "Just come to Him as you are".

The devil is defeated, the believer is delivered, and because of the shedding of Christ's blood, *the power of sin is demolished* for **I Jn. 4:4** *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. ... You are already a winner, says Paul, for Rom. 8:37* *in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

That does not mean we shall not go through trials and opposition, but it *does* mean that when we *do* go through them, we have the promise, **Rom. 6:14** *sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. ... that means we are now in God's care, under His supervision and protection.*

The devil is defeated, the believer is delivered, the power of sin is demolished, and eternity is decided. When you know Christ has shed His blood for you, and washed your sins away, and when He has come into your life and He is your Master, and when you have no longer the desire to follow those things which are not fitting for a child of God, then, eternity is decided! ... *You have changed!!*

You are not trusting in anything *you* have done to get into Heaven, but you are trusting in what Christ has done, - trusting in the power of His blood He shed when He was dying for you. And when you finally leave this earth, - the very moment your soul departs, - you will be absent from the body and present with the Lord ... and that is why He created you, - for His glory, **Eph. 1:3** *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. ... He created you for His glory. He saved you for His glory. On the cross of Calvary, He died for you, He shed His blood for you ... He showed His glory, - that is what the writer to the*

Hebrews says, **Heb. 1:1** God ... ² Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; ³ Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

As His glory shone, His Father was satisfied for Jesus had purchased His people ... and there was no other reason He died, other than to be your Saviour, for **Is. 53:10** it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief ... and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.

Just as I am—of that free love
The breadth, length, depth, and height to prove,

That is *eternity decided!* Charlotte Elliott lived a long life, - she died on 22nd September 1871. She faced many a struggle, in fact, she used to say she was like a limpet on a rock ... clinging to her Saviour... *That* is a *good* description ... ‘a limpet on a rock, clinging to her Saviour’, for she knew she would never be parted from Him, as she concluded in the final lines of her hymn,

Here for a season, then above—
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!