

# JUST AS I AM

*Charlotte Elliot, Lyrics, 1835; Tune: WOODWORTH, William Bradbury, 1849*

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“Just as I Am” was written by Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871). At the age of 32 she suffered a serious illness that left her a semi-invalid for the rest of her life. Within a year she went through a spiritual crisis and confessed to the Swiss evangelist Henri A. Cesar Malan that she did not know how to come to Christ. He answered, “Come to him just as you are”.

Twelve years later, while family and friends were busy preparing a bazaar to support “St. Mary's Hall”, a school designed by her brother, the Rev. H. V. Elliott, to give, at nominal cost, a high education to the daughters of clergymen, Elliott, an invalid, was distressed at her apparent uselessness, and questioned the reality of her whole spiritual life, and wondered whether it were anything better than an illusion of the emotions. But, her love of poetry and music was great, and she was able to set down in writing, for her own comfort, 'the formulas of her faith'. So in verse she restated to herself the Gospel of pardon, peace, and heaven. Thinking back on her experience with Malan twelve years earlier, she named the hymn, “Just as I Am”. The next day, her sister-in-law Mrs. C. V. Elliott brought her an update of the bazaar, and after reading the hymn, asked for a copy, taking it out from that quiet room into the world, where it went on to be widely translated, bringing consolation to millions.

“Just as I Am” was first published in the 1836 edition of “*Invalid's Hymn Book*”. She added a seventh stanza that same year, when the hymn was also published in her “*Hours of Sorrow Cheered and Comforted*” (1836). Her brother also published her hymn in his, “*Psalms and Hymns*”.

The words to this hymn are most commonly paired to the tune: WOODWORTH by William Bradbury (1816-1868). He composed the tune in 1849 after returning to New York following a tour of the Swiss Alps.

Billy Graham claims that he was saved in 1934 revival hearing the altar call song “*Just as I Am*”. This song became an altar call song in the Billy Graham crusades in the latter half of the twentieth century.

~Tull