



God Loves Me, Just as I am!

by Gaylene Haugen
Central District Christian Growth

During our life's journey, there are times when we have excelled. Perhaps we have been praised for singing in a renowned choir, bringing about a positive change in our church or community, or for managing to complete the spring-cleaning list for our home. The accolades we receive can be empowering and inspire us to continue. On the other hand, we all have times when things are not going well—difficulties in our relationships, our time is needed by others, or we are struggling daily to participate beyond the must dos of life. In any case, we need FAITH.

Faith is a gift from God, given to us in our baptism. As sinful people when life runs smoothly, our faith can sometimes be pushed into the background. We think it is our own effort that has brought our success. But when life is difficult, we question why God has turned His back on us. As baptized members of the Christian faith, we need to nurture that faith by regularly hearing God's Word preached and receiving His sacraments.

The nineteenth century English hymnwriter Charlotte Elliott wrote the hymn "Just as I am, Without One Plea" In her early thirties, Charlotte's health had begun to fail, and she became an invalid for the rest of

her life. While enduring her own trials, the underlying message of the hymn is clear. We, as sinful people, cannot be good enough to deserve God's forgiveness. It is through His grace that we can come to Him. In Romans 5:8 we hear, "*but God shows His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" Thankfully through Jesus' life, death and resurrection we can come to God, just as we are!

Revelation 3:17 says, "*For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.*" In John 6:37 Jesus says, "*All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never cast out.*"

Charlotte's hymn completes the law and gospel message. May it act as a confession of our sinfulness and the proclamation of salvation through Jesus, the Lamb of God.

Let us pray,
*Just as I am without one plea,
but that Thy blood was shed for me
and that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come. Amen.*



Prepared by the Christian Growth Committee, LWML—Canada, Inc