

Our Heavenly Father loves & understands us  
Teaching February 3, 2022 by Rebeca Mekus  
I am grateful to Barney, Vikki, Jan, Bob & Jeanie for the  
opportunity to share God's Word. No matter the miles that  
separate us, it is a joy to fellowship live over the airwaves.

Last night it was a blessing to hear Dr. Pete's teaching and all  
that he shared about our fearfully and wonderfully made  
bodies, as well as, the kind of bodies we will have in eternity.

Tonight, the title of my teaching is:

"Our Heavenly Father loves and understands us"  
During 2021 I read a book The One Year Book of Christian  
History by E. Michael and Sharon Rusten. Tonight I would like  
to read an excerpt from that book found on pages 154 -155,  
regarding Charlotte Elliott, who authored the song "Just as I  
am " that was played prior to my teaching.

As I read the story, I would like you to ponder a verse familiar  
to us:

John 10:10: King James Version "The thief cometh not, but for  
to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might  
have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

"Charlotte Elliott was born on March 17, 1789 in England and  
grew up in a cultured and spiritual household. Her father and  
brother were ministers, and her grandfather was a famous  
preacher Henry Venn.

In her early thirties, Charlotte had a serious illness that left her  
in poor health and in significant pain for the rest of her life.  
Feelings of weakness and helplessness that stemmed from her  
physical problems resulted in a lifelong struggle with  
depression.

In 1822 a close family friend, Dr. Caesar Malan, who was a Swiss minister and musician, questioned her regarding her faith. He asked her if she had ever experienced God's peace in the midst of her difficulties. Charlotte became defensive and upset, but his words nagged at her heart. She sought him out later to apologize, as well as to ask him for help, confessing her sense of alienation from God. She said: "I want to be saved; I want to come to Jesus, I don't know how." He replied simply and sincerely, "Come to him just as you are." His words were from the Lord, and they spoke to Charlotte powerfully. She accepted Jesus in faith that very day, and peace filled her heart for the first time. She continued to struggle with depression as her physical problems plagued her, but now she had Jesus to help her through her difficulties.

On a particularly challenging day Charlotte could not attend a church function, she really wanted to attend because of her intense pain and weakness. She was deeply depressed, feeling she could do nothing to serve the Lord as a homebound invalid. In her misery she reached for a pen and paper and poured out her feelings. As she wrote, the words of Dr. Malan came back to her, and she felt as if her great burden was being lifted:

"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!"

She published the hymn anonymously in a small Christian newspaper. Unknown to Charlotte, over time the hymn gained popularity and was shared in churches and religious magazines. A wealthy woman was so moved that she had it published on a leaflet and distributed throughout England.

One day, Charlotte's doctor handed her the leaflet thinking that the poem might be of help to her. They were both surprised when she recognized the words as her own. Finding out how many people were touched by her hymn amazed her. "She realized then that writing was not only a source of comfort for her, but that she also could bring comfort to others. She had found her ministry. She continued writing hymns through the years, and although she remained in significant pain, her hymns consistently demonstrated gentleness, patience and spiritual strength. Charlotte died at age 82.

One of her brothers commented that her single hymn may have borne more fruit than his entire ministry. A century later Billy Graham accepted Christ at an evangelistic meeting to "just as I am". The song was played at almost all of his crusades." "March 17 - pp.154-155----excerpt from **The One Year of Christian History**"

The sufferings Charlotte experienced --- the thief---Satan----- meant for evil. God used it for good. Someone once said: "God is not surprised by what happens." He existed before time, and He chose us before the foundation of the world. He knew at what exact time and place each of us would be born, what our experiences, health, traumas and successes would be. He sent His Son to redeem us. If we, family or friends struggle with depression, anxiety, fear or anything else, these illnesses do not come from God, and He does not condemn us for experiencing them.

Romans 8:28

King James Version: <sup>28</sup> **And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.**

No matter what burdens we may have, God understands and has engraven us in the palms of His Hands. We are protected and continually before His blessed face!