

ONWARD, CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS Worksheet

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1. Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go!

Refrain

Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.

2. At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee;
On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory!
Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise;
Brothers lift your voices, loud your anthems raise.

Refrain

3. Like a mighty army moves the church of God;
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod.
We are not divided, all one body we,
One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

Refrain

4. What the saints established that I hold for true.
What the saints believèd, that I believe too.
Long as earth endureth, men the faith will hold,
Kingdoms, nations, empires, in destruction rolled.

Refrain

5. Crowns and thrones may perish, kingdoms rise
and wane,
But the church of Jesus constant will remain.
Gates of hell can never gainst that church prevail;
We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail.

Refrain

6. Onward then, ye people, join our happy throng,
Blend with ours your voices in the triumph song.
Glory, laud and honor unto Christ the King,
This through countless ages men and angels sing.

Refrain

Vocabulary

In one or two words define the following terms from the poem.

Verse 1: foe, banners

Verse 2: triumph, host, doth, quiver, anthems

Verse 3: treading, trod, doctrine, charity

Verse 4: saints, established, endureth

Verse 5: wane, constant, gainst, prevail

Verse 6: ye, throng, laud

Word Pictures Word pictures is another way of saying *imagery*. *Imagery* or *figurative language* helps us form a picture of what the author is trying to present. Discuss what these word pictures mean and, perhaps, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

Verse 1: marching as to war, Forward into battle

Verse 2: Satan's host doth flee, Hell's foundations quiver, lift your voices

Verse 3: mighty army moves, treading where the saints have trod

Verse 4: earth endureth

Verse 5: Crowns and thrones

Verse 6: happy throng, triumph song

Mechanics Verbally discuss

Who is the speaker?

What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character?

Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone?

Does the poem have a setting?

Is the poem about a particular event? Is the event past or present? If it is about a past event, does the remembrance of the event have a particular meaning to the speaker?

Is the theme of the poem stated directly or indirectly?

What point of view or perspective is the speaker?

How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?

Comprehension Questions Verbally discuss

Verse 1

What is the happening in the first line? Does this remind you of any historical event(s)?

Who is at the head of the army?

Who or what is the foe? Do you agree?

Verse 2

At what signs, must the enemy flee? Why must they flee?

Who is the enemy?

What quivers when the army shouts?

What is the army shouting?

What does the author recommend in the last line of this verse? Why do you think the author made that recommendation?

Verse 3

Explain: "Like a mighty army moves the church of God."

Discuss "treading where the saints have trod." What exactly does this mean?

Obviously, the author knew about various Christian groups (e.g., Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and the various sects in Protestantism.) So, what could the author possibly mean with "We are not divided, all one body we"?

Verse 4

The Bible defines the saints as believers (Matt 27:52, Acts 9:32,41, etc.). What did the saints "establish" and what did they "believe"?

Explain and discuss: "Long as earth endureth, men the faith will hold."

Why do you think a nation, a kingdom, or empire is destroyed? Relate same to, "If My people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Verse 5

Explain the “church ... constant will remain.”

Discuss “Gates of hell can never gainst that church prevail.”

What cannot fail? Why?

Verse 6

What does the author recommend the reader do in the first line? Do you agree? Why?

What type of song is being sung in the second line?

What three things, according to the author, should be given to the King? Do you agree? Why?

Explain and discuss “countless ages.”

According to the author, what are the two groups of beings that sing in the last line of this verse?

What Does the Bible Say?

Find Scripture proofs for each of the assertions or statements made for each of the six verses and the refrain.

How does the Bible define love? For Scripture verses help, check out this internet web page at <http://www.lovetolearnplace.com/SpecialDays/Valentines/Bible.html>

Loyalty means being true to a person or cause. Can you think of any heroes in the Bible that were loyal?

Compare/contrast this poem to Exodus 4:11, “And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man’s mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?”

The Author/Poet

Based on what you have studied about this poem so far, would you guess that the author was a Christian or a humanist? How did you arrive at your decision?

The author’s name for this poem or lyric is Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924). He was born 28 January 1834, in Exeter, England, and died 2 January 1924, in Lew Trenchard, Devonshire, England. He is buried in the churchyard across the road from his home at Lew Trenchard. Mr. Baring-Gould had a privileged life being educated in Germany and France. Later, he would attend Clare College at Cambridge. He learned six languages, entered the ministry at age 30, and served in Yorkshire, Essex, and Devonshire. Not only did he write a 16-volume *Lives of the Saints*, 100 books (30 of which were novels), but Mr. Baring-Gould was an archaeologist, architect, artist, teacher and collected English folk songs.

Geography

Locate England, Devonshire, Germany, France, Cambridge, Yorkshire, and Essex on a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Locate Lew Trenchard (England) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather of England, Germany and/or France with your own for one week. Make an English, German or French meal for your family.

Activities

1) Make your own book! Without making an image of Christ, draw pictures representing each verse. (Note: that will be six different illustrations plus the refrain). With construction paper and other items readily available at home, make a title page with the name of the song and the author's name which will be your book's cover. You may want to illustrate your cover and include this poem in your book.

2) Make your own play! Re-enact with your siblings or friends the message discussed in this poem. Keep it lively, simple, and short. You may want to end your play with singing a rousing chorus of this poem or reading Scripture verses. Videotape your creation.

3) Radio Drama! With a handheld tape recorder, create your own radio show dramatizing the message of this poem.

4) Be a Reporter! Either with your family camcorder or with a handheld tape recorder, "interview" various individuals that reflect the message of this poem (e.g., Patrick Henry, George Mason, Oliver Cromwell, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, etc.). In order to have the fast paced style of a reporter, watch and/or listen to the news with your parents' permission. Keep the interviews lively, quick, and to the point.

Remain objective! Being objective means just reporting the facts and not giving your opinion of the situation.

5) What is one of the things you most enjoy? Is it literature? math? science? sports? cooking? Take that area of interest and relate that to this poem. If you enjoy dance, for example, develop a dance routine that physically expresses the sentiments of this poem. If you enjoy shop, create something out of wood that helps to clarify this poem. Do you enjoy creating stories? Write a story based on any time period you desire that expresses the sentiments of this poem. Do you enjoy creating things in the kitchen? Make an ancient meal from this time or develop your own meal that symbolizes the many different points this poem makes.

6) Poster. Create a poster illustrating the the author's view of the impact of *Onward Christian Soldiers!*

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Sabine Baring-Gould and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.