

## Friend of Sinners Dies Worksheet

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### *Verse 1*

He dies! the Friend of sinners dies!  
Lo! Salem's daughters weep around;  
A solemn darkness veils the skies,  
A sudden trembling shakes the ground.

### *Verse 2*

Come, saints, and drop a tear or two  
For Him who groaned beneath your load:  
He shed a thousand drops for you,  
A thousand drops of richer blood.

### *Verse 3*

Here's love and grief beyond degree:  
The Lord of Glory dies for men!  
But lo! what sudden joys we see,  
Jesus, the dead, revives again!

### *Verse 4*

The rising God forsakes the tomb;  
The tomb in vain forbids His rise;  
Cherubic legions guard Him home,  
And shout Him welcome to the skies.

### *Verse 5*

Break off your fears, ye saints, and tell  
How high your great Deliv'rer reigns;  
Sing how He spoiled the hosts of hell,  
And led the monster death in chains!

### *Verse 6*

Say, "Live forever, wondrous King!  
Born to redeem, and strong to save;"  
Then ask the monster, "Where's thy sting?"  
And, "Where's thy vict'ry, boasting grave?"

## Vocabulary

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

*Verse 1:* solemn, veils

*Verse 2:* saints

*Verse 3:* lo, revive

*Verse 4:* forsakes, tomb, vain, Cherubic

*Verse 5:* ye, Deliv'rer, reigns

*Verse 6:* redeem, thy, vict'ry

**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, without drawing a picture of Christ, draw your idea of the *imagery* or *figurative language* the author uses!

*Verse 1:* Salem's daughters weep, solemn darkness veils the skies, sudden trembling shakes the ground

*Verse 2:* Come, saints, and drop a tear or two

*Verse 3:* sudden joys

*Verse 4:* Cherubic legions guard

*Verse 5:* Break off your fears

*Verse 6:* ask the monster, "Where's thy sting?"

**Mechanics** Verbally discuss

***Who is the speaker?*** (Does the speaker have a specific personality or has the author remained in the background so the message of the poem will be more clear?)

***What does the poem reveal about the speaker's character?*** (Sometimes, poems reveal nothing about the speaker's personal thoughts, feelings, or attitudes. Yet, the poem may demonstrate those character traits that are important to the author like courage, loyalty, perseverance, etc.)

***Is the speaker addressing someone in particular or is it to anyone?*** (Sometimes poems are not directed to anyone in particular, but to anyone that may read it.)

***Does the poem have a setting?*** (Does the author tell where the poem occurs? Is the poem about a specific event?)

***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?*** (Some poems are straightforward and are meant to be taken literally. In songs, the theme may be presented in the refrain or in the last few lines. Sometimes the theme is a little bit more difficult to discern as it is made with figurative language or symbols.)  
How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?

***What point of view or perspective is the speaker?*** (What meaning do you think the poem has for the author?)

***How did you respond to the poem when you read it the first time?*** (Did your thoughts and feelings change after you took time to study it?)

### **Comprehension Questions** Verbally discuss

*Verse 1:* Who dies? Did you notice the author's use of the term "Lo"? Why do you think the author used this term? Explain and discuss: "Salem's daughters weep around." What veils the skies? What happens to the ground?

*Verse 2:* What does the author mean by the use of the term "saints"? What does the author ask Christians to do in the first line? Why? What was shed? Why does the author term this "rich"? Do you agree or disagree?

*Verse 3:* What is beyond degree? Who dies? Who does He die for? What is the "sudden joy"? Explain and discuss: "Jesus, the dead, revives again!" Why would this be important?

*Verse 4:* What is forsaken? Explain and discuss: "The tomb in vain forbids His rise." Is the tomb successful? Who guards Him? What welcomes Him?

*Verse 5:* What are Christians to break off? What are Christians to tell? Did you notice the author's use of the term "Deliv'rer"? Why do you think the author used this term? What was spoiled? What was led in chains?

*Verse 6:* What does the author tell the reader to do in the first line? Why do you think the author holds that to be important? Do you agree? What is the Christian to ask the "monster"? Why? Did you notice the author's use of the terms "thy" and "vict'ry"? Why do you think the author decided to use them?

After reading this poem, what character traits did you think of? What does the Bible have to say about these character traits?

## **What Does the Bible Say?**

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

This poem exhorts Christians to “Break off your fears.” Discuss this in light of 1 Corinthians 16:13, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.”

Caleb (Num 13:30), Joshua (Josh 1:1-11), Jonathan (1 Sam 14:1,6-14), and Daniel (Dan 6:1-28) all seem to take courage seriously. Courage is doing what is right even though one is afraid. Give other individuals in the Bible that demonstrated courage. Give historical examples of courage. After reading the newspaper, listening to the news on radio, or watching the news, can you think of any examples of courage presently? What will you tell your grandchildren about courage? How will you encourage your grandchildren in this character trait?

Relate the message of this poem to education with respect to 2 Corinthians 10:5, “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” Do the same for other areas of human activity (e.g., civics, finances, the arts, dance, sports, etc.). Are all these areas equally important to a Christian?

## **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 name of the author for this poem or lyric is Isaac Watts (1674-1748). He was born 17 July 1674, in Southampton, England, and died 25 November 1748, in Stoke Newington, England. He is buried at Bunhill Fields Cemetery, London, England. Watt’s had an interesting father who was imprisoned two times for his religious views. Mr. Watts studied Greek and Latin but declined an offer for a standard university education preferring to attend the Nonconformist Academy at Stoke Newington in 1690. When Mr. Watts was 20-22 he stayed at home and wrote the majority of the hymns for *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* that were published in 1707-1709. For six years he was the tutor Mr. John Hartopp’s son. Mr. Watts was ordained in 1702.

### *"Give 'em Watts, boys, give 'em Watts!"*

Interestingly, Isaac Watts is intimately connected with the American War of Independence. In an attack upon Springfield when the patriots' wadding gave out, Rev. James Caldwell (of Huguenot descent) ran into a Presbyterian church returning with his arms and pockets crammed full with *Watts' Psalms and Hymns* saying, "Now, boys, give them Watts!" The British offered large rewards for the capture of Rev. Caldwell, but to no avail. Therefore, the British burned his church, shot his wife while she was in the midst of their nine children, dragged her body into the street, and burned his home and out buildings.

## **Geography**

Locate Southampton, England, and Lond on a globe, map and atlas.

*Challenge* Locate Stoke Newington (England) on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast England’s weather with your own for one week.

Make an English 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). 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 this poem could illustrate (e.g., family members, soldiers, President George Bush the Younger, Oliver Cromwell, Patrick Henry, 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 *The Friend of Sinners Dies*.

7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Isaac Watts (1674-1748) and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.