

Sweet is the Work Worksheet

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Verse 1

Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise Thy Name, give thanks and sing,
To show Thy love by morning light
And talk of all Thy truth at night.

Verse 2

Sweet is the day of sacred rest,
No mortal cares shall seize my breast.
O may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp of solemn sound!

Verse 3

My heart shall triumph in my Lord
And bless His works and bless His Word.
Thy works of grace, how bright they shine!
How deep Thy counsels, how divine!

Verse 4

Fools never raise their thoughts so high;
Like brutes they live, like brutes they die;
Like grass they flourish, till Thy breath
Blast them in everlasting death.

Verse 5

But I shall share a glorious part,
When grace has well refined my heart;
And fresh supplies of joy are shed,
Like holy oil, to cheer my head.

Verse 6

Sin (my worst enemy before)
Shall vex my eyes and ears no more;
My inward foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan break my peace again.

Verse 7

Then shall I see, and hear, and know
All I desired and wished below;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy.

Verse 8

And then what triumphs shall I raise
To Thy dear Name through endless days,
For in the realms of joy I'll see
Thy face in full felicity.

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

Verse 1: Thy

Verse 2: sacred, mortal, seize, O, solemn

Verse 3: triumph, counsels, divine

Verse 4: fools, brutes, flourish

Verse 5: refined, holy

Verse 6: sin, vex

Verse 7: employ, eternal

Verse 8: realms, felicity

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: sweet is the work, give thanks and sing, morning light, truth at night

Verse 2: sacred rest, David's harp

Verse 3: heart shall triumph

Verse 4: fools never raise their thoughts so high

Verse 5: refined my heart

Verse 6: inward foes shall all be slain

Verse 7: I see and hear and know

Verse 8: realms of joy

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: What is sweet? Who is the author speaking to (line 1)? Explain and discuss: "To praise Thy Name, give thanks and sing, To show Thy love by morning light, And talk of all Thy truth at night." Why would this be important? Why do you think the term "Thy" was used?

Verse 2: What is sweet? How does the author describe that he will not worry in line two? In what condition does the author want his heart to be? Why would this be important? To what does he compare it (line 4)?

Verse 3: What shall triumph? What shall be blessed? Who shall do the blessing? Why? What does the author admire in lines 2, 3, and 4?

Verse 4: What do fools never do? How does the Bible describe a fool? How do fools live and die? To what does the author compare the life of a fool (line 3)?

Verse 5: What does the author mean by "But I shall share a glorious part, When grace has well refined my heart"? Explain and discuss lines 3 and 4.

Verse 6: What is the author's worst enemy? When will this enemy no longer annoy the author? What shall be slain? What will Satan not be able to do?

Verse 7: What will the author be able to "see, and hear, and know" (line 2)? Explain and discuss: "And every power find sweet employ, In that eternal world of joy."

Verse 8: What shall be raised? Explain and discuss: "For in the realms of joy I'll see, Thy face in full felicity."

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 eight verses.

What does the Bible have to say about gratitude and thankfulness? Identify Biblical characters that demonstrated gratitude and thankfulness. Can you think of anyone else in history that demonstrated these character traits in the genuine or Biblical sense? What will you tell your grandchildren about gratitude and thankfulness? How will you encourage your grandchildren in these character traits?

What does the Bible say about love? Identify Biblical characters that were demonstrated love. Can you think of anyone else in history that demonstrated this character trait in the Biblical sense? What will you tell your grandchildren about love? How will you encourage your grandchildren in this character trait? For more scriptural helps in learning what the Bible says about love, go to the internet page <http://www.lovetolearnplace.com/SpecialDays/Valentines/Bible.html>

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 London 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 eight 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, Oliver Cromwell, Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, Moses, 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 *Sweet is the Work*.

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.