

We Gather Together Worksheet

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Verse 1

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known.
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.
Sing praises to His Name; He forgets not His own.

Verse 3

We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

Verse 2

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, were at our side, all glory be Thine!

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

Verse 1: blessing, chastens, hastens, wicked, oppressing, cease, distressing

Verse 2: ordaining, maintaining, divine, glory

Verse 3: extol, Thee, Thou, triumphant, congregation, tribulation

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: ask the Lord's blessing, sing praises; He forgets not His own

Verse 2: beside us to guide us; from the beginning the fight we were winning

Verse 3: Leader triumphant

Mechanics are the nuts and bolts of a poem. 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.)

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 does it mean to gather and ask His blessing? How have the wicked oppressed Christians? Since this song is usually connected with the Pilgrims and sung around Thanksgiving, who were the wicked oppressing them? Under what circumstances did the wicked cease from distressing the Pilgrims? Why should Christians sing praises to His Name? What does it mean, “He forgets not His own”?

Verse 2: The first line of this verse states that God joins with us to guide us. Who is “us”? Why would He guide us? What does it mean to ordain His kingdom divine? What does it mean to maintain His kingdom divine?

Verse 3: Explain: “We all do extole Thee, Thou Leader triumphant.” Why would the Pilgrims and present day Christians wish God to be their Defender? What tribulation did the Pilgrims experience? What tribulation did other Christians experience around the Pilgrims’ time? Why would these Pilgrims and other Christians wish to escape those tribulations? Would you? “O Lord, make us free!” becomes much more understandable when knowing the turbulent history of this timeframe (also known as The Great Reformation). Why?

After reading this poem, What is the theme to the lyrics of this song? 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 five verses and the refrain.

What does the Bible have to say about thankfulness? Give biblical and historical examples those that were thankful. Discuss this poem in light of Deuteronomy 28 and discuss blessings.

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 Adrianus Valerius (1575-1620). This poem was written in 1597 to celebrate a Dutch victory (see PrestonSpeed Publications, 51 Ridge Road, Mill Hall, PA 17751 -- *By Pike and Dyke* and *By England's Aid* for this historical victory. Refer to <http://www.prestonspeed.com>) He was born in Middleburg, Holland, and died 27 January 1620, Veere, Holland.

Geography

Locate Holland on a globe, map and atlas.

Challenge Locate Middleburg and Veere on a map or in an atlas.

Compare/contrast the weather from Holland with your own for one week.

Make a meal from Holland for your family.

Activities

1) Make your own book! Without making an image of Christ, draw pictures representing each verse. (Note: that will be three 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 connected with this poem (e.g., pilgrims, Crusaders, soldiers, Daniel Boone, repentant sinners, Paul - formerly referred to as Saul, 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 *We Gather Together*.
- 7) Scavenger Hunt. Go to the library to learn what you can about Adrianus Valerius and share it with your family. If possible, discover the story behind this poem.

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