

# work songs

exploring frustration,  
compromise, stress and joy  
from the Psalms



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# Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home, in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, students, business colleagues or teens. That’s why we’ve designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the ‘big picture’ of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to apply appropriately what we have discovered to our lives. Let’s take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** most groups need to ‘break the ice’ at the beginning of a session, and here’s the question that will do that. It’s designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** the Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. **The Leader’s Guide** contains **guidance on questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional ‘follow-up’ questions.
- ⓘ **Explore more (optional):** these questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to understand how the Bible relates together as a whole.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you’ll keep coming across **apply** sections. Some of these have questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. Sometimes, a 🗣 **getting personal** section is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have discovered.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God’s Word—in line with His concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader’s Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God’s Word.

# Why study *Work Songs*?

In the Disney version of *Snow White* the seven dwarfs go off to work each morning singing happily. These studies look at six psalms to sing in the workplace. For many Christians there is a gap between church on Sunday and work on Monday. These psalms will help you bridge that gap. They re-tune our hearts to the new song of God's redemption (see Psalm 40 v 3).

There is an annual 'take your daughter to work day'. The aim is for girls to experience the world of work and break down prejudices about women's roles. These psalms will help us take our God to work – or maybe to discover that He is already present in the workplace.

They address the frustration we often feel with work, the temptations to compromise, the busyness and stress of the workplace, and the sometimes overwhelming expectations of colleagues. They also give something to sing on fantastic days when everything goes brilliantly!

Use these studies to encourage yourself, or, if you have some Christian colleagues, why not gather them together, to bring the richness, truth and insight of God's word to bear on your daily grind.



Psalm 8

# A SONG FOR YOUR JOURNEY TO WORK

## **talkabout**

1. How do you usually feel on your journey to work in the morning?

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2. Why do you work?

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## **investigate**

### **Read Psalm 8**

3. Look at verses 1-3. God is a worker (v 3).  
How do we see the majesty of God's name in what He has made?

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4. How should we respond to God's work (v 2)?

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5. God is a worker! How can that truth change our attitude to work?

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### explore more

optional

**Read Matthew 21 v 1-17.** How does Jesus use Psalm 8 v 2 to rebuke the religious leaders? Why does He do so? What does the rest of Psalm 8 v 2 add to our understanding of what is happening in Matthew 21?

6. Look at verses 3-4. What is the point of the comparison between God and humanity that the writer makes?

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### getting personal

Do you ever feel small in the universe?

Do you ever feel your work is insignificant?

Think about a time when your 'smallness' has been very apparent to you.

7. Look at verses 5-9.  
What is the position God has given to us in His world?

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optional

## explore more

**Read Psalm 104 v 1-24.** What are the signs that God has created an ordered world? What is humanity's place in that order? What is our role?



## apply

God gives humanity the job of ruling His world under His rule (Genesis 1 v 26-28). We are to care for it as steward's of God's good creation.

8. What significance does this give to our work?

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9. How would you rate humanity's performance as stewards of God's world?

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Humanity has rejected God, so we do not rule God's world under God. As a result, work is often frustrating, oppressive and futile.



## investigate

**▶ Read Hebrews 2 v 5-9**

10. Look at verse 8. What is the writer's verdict on humanity's stewardship?

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11. What is God's solution? **See 1 Corinthians 15 v 20-28**

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12. How will our hope in Jesus transform the way we think about our work?  
**See Romans 8 v 19-22.**

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13. How should following Jesus transform our work in the present?  
See also **Colossians 3 v 22-25** and **Titus 2 v 9-10.**

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## pray

- Use Psalm 111 to praise God the worker for the work He has done.
  
- Pray that, even when work is frustrating, oppressive or futile, you may have a sense of working for God and His glory.