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ACCESSIBLE BACH CANTATAS FOR CHURCH CHOIRS COMPRISED OF AMATEUR SINGERS AND BWV 133 AS DEMONSTRATION

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A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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ABSTRACT

Johann Sebastian Bach composed five annual sets of sacred cantatas based on the Lutheran liturgical calendar. Bach carefully constructed cantatas with his exceptional musical ability and deep theological understanding to enhance the sermon of the given day. Nevertheless, Bach cantatas have often been left unperformed in modern churches due to the intricacy of the vocal parts, limited resources in modern churches and historical instruments that are no longer readily available.

The purpose of this study is to explore accessible Bach cantatas for church choirs comprised of amateur singers. Through the research process, about thirty-five cantatas were revealed to be relatively accessible. The selections are discussed under the following five categories to elucidate general features and facilitate their performance by church choirs: style, orchestration, Baroque instruments, substitution of modern instruments, and issue of vocal range.

The last chapter specifically discusses BWV 133, one of the most approachable cantatas, to demonstrate how Bach achieved the spiritual goal of the given day through musical interpretation of the text and his theological acumen.

Many church choirs are unfamiliar with Bach cantatas. However, once they work through the whole rehearsal process and completely master an approachable cantata, they will gain confidence to perform more difficult works in the future. In this way, more of Bach's church cantatas will be heard beyond concert halls, and in the setting for which they were originally intended.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Why Bach Cantatas?

J. S. Bach composed five entire annual cycles of sacred cantatas based on the Lutheran liturgical calendar in Leipzig.[1] As a cantor, he was responsible for providing a cantata for every Sunday and feast day of the ecclesiastical year, except for the Lenten weeks.[2] Of Bach's five full annual sets of cantatas, only the first three have been preserved in a relatively intact and recognizable form.[3] Unfortunately, scholars consider about two-fifths of Bach's cantata repertoire to be lost.[4]

The cantata was the *Hauptmusik*, the primary music of the Lutheran service, and functioned as a musical sermon.[5] It was placed between the daily Gospel reading and sermon. The purpose of church cantatas was to enhance the Gospel reading prescribed for the day, reinforce the sermon and persuade listeners by delivering the theological theme of the day through music.[6]

Bach cantatas are magnificent works both musically and theologically. The cantata as a genre was already mainstay in liturgical music when Bach began composing. However, Bach's cantatas were superior to other cantatas composed by his contemporaries. According to Jan Chiapusso, an authority on the works of J. S. Bach,

> Of course the voluminous production of many of the eighteenth-century composers is awesome, and Bach was by no means the only prodigious musician. Telemann is reputed to have written seven yearly series of cantatas; Fasch, if called upon, was capable of

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[1] Jan Chiapusso, *Bach's World* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 209.
[2] Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 254.
[3] Ibid., 268.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Chiapusso, *Bach's World*, 209.
[6] Ibid.

> penning four cantatas in a week; Graupner produced no less than 1,418 cantatas in 50 years. . . .Bach's output seems quite normal, if not rather modest, and in fact, Bach worked with more care, more conscience than his contemporaries did. The vast production of others pales, however, in the face of the richness of Bach's polyphonic texture, the depth of the religious feeling he translated into music and the thought bestowed upon his work.[7]

Otto L. Bettmann also emphasized the exceptional quality of Bach's cantatas comparing them with works of Telemann, who composed a large enough number of works "that he gave himself an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records."[8] However, these pieces were generally somewhat dull, lacking the quality of "sparkle, surprise and uplifting that Bach was to add to the genre."[9]

Bach was well-versed in illustrating and illuminating the message of the sermon through his cantatas. In Lutheran churches, pastors were expected to study music alongside theology, and church musicians were also required to master theology.[10] In addition, cantors were responsible for teaching the substance of Lutheran doctrine and the Small Catechism in the boarding schools attached to the churches they served.[11] Bach was neither a pastor nor a theologian, but he had deep knowledge of both music and theology. This led him to compose cantatas that vividly illustrate and express the message of the day and effectively move the hearts of the congregation.

Bach's outstanding ability to illustrate the message of the sermon with his cantatas is closely related to his educational background. The curricula of the schools Bach attended, and the teachers with whom Bach studied while he was young heavily influenced his later

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[7] Chiapusso, *Bach's World*, 210.

[8] Otto. L. Bettmann, "Bach the Rhetorician," *The American Scholar* 55, No.1 (Winter 1986): 113-118. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41211296

[9] Ibid.

[10] Robin A. Leaver, "Johann Sebastian Bach and the Lutheran Understanding of Music," *Lutheran Quarterly* 16, (2002): 24. http://www.lutheranquarterly.com/uploads/7/4/0/1/7401289/timelinebach.pdf

[11] Leaver, "Johann Sebastian Bach and the Lutheran Understanding of Music," 26.

compositional style. At the age of eight, Bach entered the *Gymnasium* at Eisenach.[12] The discipline of the school was strict, and he learned to read and write German and Latin.[13] According to Chiapusso, "Latin remained the mainstay of study, and the reading material in German for the first year consisted of the Catechism, the Psalms, the Gospels, the Epistles, and Bible history, all of which were also read in Latin."[14]

After the deaths of Bach's parents, he was taken to his eldest brother's house in Ohrdruf.[15] There Bach began studying theology at the age of twelve in the *Klosterschule* monastery school, in which "theology formed its main course of study…"[16] Music was considered second to theology, and very often, the same master taught both.[17] The blending of music and theology and potentially later aspects of Bach's career were heavily influenced by his teacher at Ohrdruf, Ealias Herder.[18] According to Chiapusso, "Approximately one-fifth of the study time was taken with singing lessons, and an equal amount devoted to theology, and the remainder was grudgingly divided among arithmetic, history, and geography."[19] Bach continued to study music and theology after he moved to Lűneberg, where he sang in the prestigious Matins choir at the *Ritteracademie* of St. Michael's church.[20]

Bach's education was deeply rooted in theology. Chiapusso states that "basic to an understanding of early influences on Bach the artist was the belief among all Bach's teachers that the purpose of all education was religious."[21] This early influence formed the foundation of his

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[12] Chiapusso, *Bach's World*, 9.
[13] Ibid., 10.
[14] Ibid., 11.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid., 12-13.
[17] Ibid., 13.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., 16.
[21] Ibid., 17.

music and led to the composition of his cantatas, which are among his most important works.

Need for Researching Accessible Cantatas for Church Choirs Comprised of Amateur Singers

Bach cantatas are idiomatic for performance in church services due to their musical and theological excellence and their functions as musical sermons. However, they are challenging to perform in most modern-day churches for two reasons.

First, the intricacy of vocal and instrumental lines in Bach's cantatas leads few churches to include them in the choir repertoire. Both vocal lines and instrumental parts are extremely florid and ornate in almost all Bach cantatas. Performing such styles in aria, recitativo and orchestra may be achievable by hiring professional soloists and instrumentalists for special church events and occasions. However, mastering the intricate vocal writing in the chorus parts is not approachable for many church choirs. In addition, Bach's sensitive, daring and unique harmonies and complex polyphonic textures can also be challenging for singers with limited experience in performing a variety of styles in the classical repertoire.

Most church choirs are constrained by amateur singers and limited rehearsal time. Such singers are familiar with modern or contemporary church anthems but are less likely to have experience in singing major works by classical composers. In addition, rehearsal times are limited compared to those of university choirs, professional choirs, and local choirs, due to the aim of mastering one piece for performance in each Sunday's service.

A second important reason why some Bach cantatas are less often performed is that historical instruments of Bach's time, such as oboe *d'amore* and oboe *da caccia*, are not readily available or no longer exist. Conductors often struggle to substitute modern instruments for

historical instruments, which may create balance issues between a modern instrument and the rest of the orchestra or between the instrument and the singers, as the tone colors of historical instruments are generally softer and less penetrating.

The purpose of this study is to explore accessible cantatas for church choirs comprised of amateur singers and to discuss one of the most approachable cantatas, BWV 133, to demonstrate how Bach expressed the spiritual theme of the given day through musical interpretation of the text with his theological acumen. The subject church choir is comprised of amateur singers and is defined by the following features:

Table 1. Definition of the Subject Church Choir Comprised of Amateur Singers

Type	SATB Mixed Choir
Size	Modest size consisting of 25-35 singers
Balance	Imbalanced. Outer parts are larger than inner parts
Competence	Each part includes two or three singers with one or more of the following backgrounds: who have majored in music who have had private or group music lessons as amateur singers who have sung in choir for several years without previous musical training
Vocal Range	Sopranos are mostly confined to E5 or F5, and Tenors are mostly E4 or F4

Research Procedure and Criteria for Accessible Cantatas

In 1950, Wolfgang Schmeider organized a total of 224 Bach cantatas with BWV numbers, including both extant and lost cantatas.[22] The 224 cantatas are categorized into 3 groups: sacred cantatas (1-200), secular cantatas (201-216), and cantatas for which Bach's authorship is not firmly established (217-224).[23] For this study, only sacred cantatas (1-200)

[22] "Wikipedia: Bach Cantatas," Wikipedia Foundation, accessed March 9, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bach_cantata.

[23] Ibid.

were examined, excluding a few works written for secular occasions or described as different genre, and cantatas for which Bach's authorship is uncertain.

In addition, solo cantatas that have no chorus at all or only a chorale at the end were also excluded for this study. In order to be considered as a possible selection, a chorus should present at least one significant chorus movement other than a chorale. According to Whittaker, "about one third of the existing cantatas are for solo voices, the number of participants ranging from one to four, and the chorus being either entirely absent, or confined merely to simple concluding or intermediate chorales."[24] When the list of Bach cantatas was narrowed in the current research process, almost one third of the existing cantatas were omitted for these reasons.

First, the solo vocal and instrumental parts are generally extremely florid requiring technical skills in almost all of Bach's cantatas, however, there are cantatas with relatively less intricate chorus parts. Mostly, they are less melismatic and more syllabic, and rhythms are relatively simple in the chorus part. Therefore, cantatas featuring intricate chorus parts that contain many long and extremely melismatic vocal lines, highly chromatic harmonic progressions or rhythmically complex passages within contrapuntal textures were excluded in the research process. Many of the chorale cantatas and the cantatas written in the old motet style have stylistic features making them relatively performable, compared to Bach's early cantatas.

Secondly, a small orchestra scored for strings, basso continuo and two obbligato woodwind instruments are preferred for the list for the desirable balance between the orchestra and the choir. However, an additional obbligato woodwind or brass instrument may be added for the possible selection as obbligato instruments are usually not employed throughout the entire

[24] W. G. Whittaker, *Fugitive Notes on Certain Cantatas and the Motets of J. S. Bach* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), 19.

cantata but appear in only one or two movements. In addition, instruments that simply double the voice parts or other instruments are considered optional. A cantata scored for a large orchestra possibly including three trumpets, timpani, three oboes, two flutes, strings and a basso continuo group written for a festive season or event is more likely to engender balance issues with a church choir of thirty to forty singers.

Lastly, the early cantatas written during the first ten years of Bach's career are not considered for the list of the performable cantatas, though they are not many. The early cantatas are a continuous alternation between chorus and aria in which the cumulative chorus parts noticeably take a large portion of each cantata. In addition, the chorus movement is divided into individual sections that present a wide variety of styles with different tempi, meters and motives. No doubt singers want to sing as much of the chorus portions as they can. However, most of them are challenging, requiring a great amount of time and effort to achieve. To better understand this, the development of the stylistic features of Bach's cantatas will be specifically discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPMENT OF THE STYLISTIC FEATURES OF BACH CANTATAS

During the first ten years of Bach's career (1703-1713), when he served as an organist successively in Arnstadt, Mülhausen, and Weimar, his duties did not include the composition and performance of cantatas for church services on a regular basis.[25] Yet even at Arnstadt (1703-1707), certainly at Mülhausen (1707-1708) and Weimar (from 1708 onward), Bach composed cantatas occasionally for special occasions.[26] According to Johns, among the six surviving early cantatas (BWV 4, 71, 106, 131, 150 and 196), BWV 71 and 131 are known to have been composed at Mülhausen.[27] The other four were formerly thought to have been composed during the same period.[28] However, scholars have recently considered it possible that the period of composition may have begun as early as Bach's time in Arnstadt and extended as late as Bach's first years in Weimar.[29]

Lutheran tradition regarded the polyphonic settings of biblical words and chorales as the most significant church compositions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[30] Within this tradition, Bach mainly drew the texts for his early cantatas from biblical words and chorales, with the addition of free strophic verses since the late seventeenth century.[31]

The early cantatas followed an old-fashioned style that was prevalent in Europe in the seventeenth century.[32] The libretto was articulated in the traditional sectional form and close

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[25] Richard D. P. Jones, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1:98.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 99.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 97.
[31] Ibid.
[32] J. A. Westrup, *Bach Cantatas* (1969; repr., Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 25.

thematic relationships between individual sections were not very strong.[33] The early cantatas were a continuous alternation between chorus and aria. No recitatives were included. The cumulative chorus parts noticeably comprised a large part of each cantata and played an important role in interpreting texts.[34] The chorus part consisted of brief sections in a mosaic pattern. Individual sections featured distinctly different tempi, moods, characters and textures.

In Weimar (1708-1717), after Bach was promoted to concertmaster in March of 1714, he was expected to compose one cantata per month.[35] Twenty-two cantatas are extant from the Weimar period, though some cantatas composed between 1714-1716 (chiefly those from 1715) are assumed to be lost.[36]

In 1700, Lutheran pastor Erdmann Neumeister introduced the modern style of libretto, which began to significantly impact Bach's cantata compositions, shaping them in a new direction.[37] At first, influenced by opera, the new type of libretto was solely written with madrigalian verses that were designed for recitatives and arias in alternation.[38] The Weimar cantatas based on this type of libretto are solo cantatas BWV 54 and 152, and related to this type, BWV 199.[39]

According to Johns, "not long afterwards, however, the new type of libretto was modified by reintroducing biblical words and chorales alongside the madrigalian verse, thereby creating an element of continuity with past traditions."[40] This mixed type, comprising the third and fourth

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[33] Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach: With Their Librettos in German-English Parallel Text*, ed. and trans. Richard D. P. Johns (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 12.
[34] Westrup, *Bach Cantatas*, 25.
[35] Christoph Wolff, ed. *The World of the Bach Cantatas* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 14.
[36] Ibid., 12-14.
[37] Johns, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach*, 1:243.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 16.
[40] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 1:243.

cycles of Neumeister's cantata librettos, is considered the most relevant type of libretto for Weimar cantatas.[41] The mixed type is representative of Salomo Franck, the Weimar court poet who collaborated with Bach for a majority of the Weimar cantatas.[42]

Twelve cantatas, almost half of the Weimar cantatas, are based on this mixed type of libretto (recitative and arias, with biblical words or chorale, or both).[43] The majority of cantatas based on the mixed type of libretto (seven of the twelve) are made up of three or two arias (typically three) separated by recitatives, with a final chorale: A-R-A-R-A-chorale (BWV 80a, 165, 185, 163, 132 and 162) or A-R-A-R-chorale (BWV 155). According to Dürr, "by the time Bach's Weimar output of cantatas was complete, the forms of the Bach cantata-both those of the individual movement and of the overall work-were, in all essentials, established."[44]

Weimar cantatas featured a secularly influenced style with the dominance of aria and recitative based on the madrigalian verses. Even the chorus movements were often designated as "aria" in Salomo Franck's printed libretto, as the texts for the chorus movements were also drawn from freely invented madrigalian verses.[45] In many of the Weimar cantatas, a chorus was absent or only present at the end for the final chorale. Among twenty-two cantatas, three are solo cantatas. In nine cantatas, the chorus only participates in the concluding chorale.

At the Calvinist court of Cöthen (1717-1723), as a capellmeister, Bach was not obliged to write any secular music for church service.[46] His assignment was to provide secular congratulatory cantatas twice a year for the birthday of Prince Leopold and for the New Year

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[41] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 1:243.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 16.
[44] Ibid., 20.
[45] Richard D. P. Johns, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 2:121.
[46] Wolff, *The World of Bach Cantatas*, 15.

between 1717-1723.[47] Only two complete cantatas survive.[48]

Bach was most prolific and productive as a church composer at Leipzig (1723-1750). Appointed as cantor at St. Thomas in the spring of 1723, he was expected to perform a cantata for every Sunday and feast day except the two *Tempus Clausum* periods preceding Christmas and Easter, when there was no concerted music.[49] According to Bach's official obituary, he wrote five complete annual cycles of cantatas during his first several years at Leipzig.[50] Unfortunately, only the first three cycles have survived in a recognizable and relatively intact form, while the remaining are considered lost.[51]

The first cycle started on the first Sunday after Trinity Sunday in 1723, and extended to Trinity Sunday in 1724.[52] According to Johns, "during his first year as Leipzig music director, Bach performed at least sixty-three church cantatas, of which forty were new compositions and twenty-three were revivals of existing works from the Weimar or Cöthen periods."[53]

Wolff states that the revival of older cantatas with revision or adaptation is a significant feature for the first cycle,[54] and Bach apparently lightened his heavy compositional burden by using revivals.[55] Most Weimar cantatas were revived in the first cycle.[56] Bach made no major changes in many of the Weimar cantatas, however, for some of these cantatas, he expanded the orchestration and/or enlarged the chorus part, employing the larger resources available in

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[47] Johns, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach*, 2:106.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 253-54.
[50] Ibid., 254, 268.
[51] Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach: The Learned Musician*, 268.
[52] Malcolm Boyd, *Bach*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 131.
[53] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:117.
[54] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 269.
[55] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:118.
[56] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 269.

Leipzig.[57] In addition, secular cantatas of the Cöthen period were adapted by furnishing them with sacred texts.[58] Bach also ambitiously composed new large-scale cantatas, such as two-part cantatas or two separate, complimentary cantatas, placed before and after the sermon.[59]

Although the librettist cannot be identified in the majority of the Cycle I cantatas, the emergence of three favorite text forms can be traced:[60]

1. Biblical dictum (from the Gospel lesson)-R-A-R-A-Chorale
   (BWV 136, 105, 46, 179, 69a, 77, 25, 109, 89, 104)
2. Biblical dictum-R-Chorale-A-R-A-Chorale
   (BWV 48, 40, 64, 153, 65, 67)
3. Biblical dictum-A-Chorale-R-A-Chorale
   (BWV 83, 144, 66, 104, 166, 86, 37, 44)

In the Cycle I cantatas, the settings of ecclesiastical texts taken from biblical words and chorale verses constituted outer movements, whereas secularly-influenced madrigal verses comprised the inner movements.[61] A magnificent biblical-dictum chorus opens many of the cantatas and is one of the remarkable features of the first cycle.[62] The heading of each cantata with words of God made the first movement akin to the text of a sermon, providing it divine authority.[63] The chorale-finale, which became a standard in the later Weimar cantatas, continuously played an important role in the Leipzig cantatas.[64]

The second cycle, unified as chorale cantatas, was discussed earlier when the styles of the selected cantatas were examined. The second annual set was abruptly ended after nine months on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25, 1725.[65] As early as the summer of 1725, and

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[57] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:118.
[58] Ibid., 119.
[59] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 269.
[60] Ibid., 270.
[61] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:128.
[62] Ibid., 123.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 125.
[65] Boyd, *Bach*, 133.

subsequently, Bach made later additions to the cycle with chorale cantatas based on un-paraphrased hymns, namely the old *per omnes versus* type.[66] Nevertheless, the second cycle remained incomplete.[67]

The time span of the third cycle is about two years (1725-1727), unlike the previous two cycles.[68] During this period, since Bach did not compose cantatas on a regular basis, he performed not only his new compositions but also works by other composers, particularly at least eighteen cantatas by his cousin Johann Ludwig Bach, capellmeister at Meiningen.[69] The third cycle presents heterogeneous styles. Nevertheless, according to Wolff, the relatively frequent occurrence of solo and dialogue cantatas, reworkings of preexisting concerto movements as opening instrumental sinfonias, and virtuosic obbligato organ parts are all notable features of the third cycle.[70]

With only a few surviving sources, the majority of the fourth cycle is considered lost.[71] Like the second cycle, the fourth cycle is based on the uniform series of librettos.[72] Prolific and gifted author Picander, as an important librettist, provided texts for Bach over the years in Leipzig.[73] Though the total number of cantatas based on Picander's libretto is not known, nine cantatas are extant.[74]

It is hard to identify the fifth cycle among the surviving sources, although Bach's obituary reported a total of five annual cycles composed by him.[75] Bach continued to compose church

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66 Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 280
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., 281.
69 Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:169.
70 Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 283.
71 Ibid., 283-84.
72 Ibid., 284.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 285.
75 Ibid., 286.

cantatas and related works, but in reduced numbers. The list of surviving works lacks evidence for postulating a late (post-1730) cantata cycle.[76] According to Wolff, "as far as we can see, the cantatas written after 1729 contribute nothing essentially new to Bach's output in this genre."[77] However, it is notable that Bach endeavored to employ new stylistic trends in arias of later cantatas, and also revised existing works for re-performance.[78]

In the Leipzig cantatas, the development of the opening chorus movement is noteworthy. Due to the dominance of aria and recitative in most of his Leipzig cantatas, the chorus is confined to the opening movement and final chorale.[79] Westrup assumes that Bach's demanding schedule of weekly performances would have made preparation of his choir for each Sunday difficult, leading to the limitation of chorus movements to the beginning and concluding movements.[80] Although the chorus sings in a relatively smaller portion of the overall piece, particularly compared to the early cantatas, the chorus movement displays astonishing compositional development in the Leipzig period. First, the opening movement is usually magnificent in scale.[81] Bach enlarged the choral and orchestral forces to employ the range of resources available in Leipzig.[82] Moreover, Bach completely integrated the chorus and orchestral sections in the opening chorus movement, in contrast to the traditional type of cantatas, and the chorus and orchestra interpret, express and elaborate the text altogether as one unit.[83]

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[76] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 283.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Westrup, *Bach Cantatas*, 32.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 273.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid., 274.

CHAPTER 3: SELECTED ACCESSIBLE CANTATAS AND GUIDANCE

Accessible Cantatas

The research process has revealed about thirty-five cantatas to be relatively approachable for church choirs. The difficulty level of parts for solo voices and instrumentalists was not considered, as finding cantatas accessible for all three categories (orchestral, choral and solo singers) is almost impossible. Therefore, this study focuses solely on the accessibility of the chorus movements in each cantata.

The selected cantatas are organized by BWV number, composition year, period, occasion, total number of movements, numbers of chorus movements as they are located in the cantata, and forces (orchestration and soloists) in the list (Table 2). The last two columns indicate the accessibility of the vocal range and tessitura for the soprano and tenor parts. If the overall tessitura for either the soprano or tenor is accessible and a few high notes are confined to no higher than G, it is left blank. On the other hand, if the overall tessitura is high, standing on the passaggio area (E and F) and frequently presents notes above F, such as F#, G, G# and A, it is marked as V.

For the orchestration, instruments marked in bold designate the least instrumental forces required for performance for each selected piece. As doubling wind instruments may be omitted when resources are limited, only obbligato wind instruments which function independently are marked in bold regardless of the number of the movements in which they occur. All cantatas require strings at least one on each part, and basso continuo is indispensable in the Baroque orchestra. Therefore, these instruments are all marked in bold. (Table 2)

Table 2. List of the Thirty-Five Selected Cantatas

L2	BWV	L1	Year	Period	Occasion	Total	Chorus	Orchestra	Soloists	Sop	Ten
*	**2**		1724/6/18	Leipzig	Trinity 2	6	1,6	4Tbn, 2 Ob, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B	V	V
*	**5**		1724/10/15	Leipzig	Trinity 19	7	1,7	**Tr da tir**, **2 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**9**		1732-5	Leipzig	Trinity 6	7	1,7	**Fl trav, Ob d'am**, **2Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
	12	**V'**	1714/4/22	Weimar	Easter 3 (Julibate)	7	2,7	**Tr**, **Ob, 2 Vl, 2 Va, Fag, Bc**	A,T,B	V	V
	22	**V'**	1723/2/7	Leipzig	Quinquagesima	5	1,5	**Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B	V	V
*	**26**		1724/11/19	Leipzig	Trinity 24	6	1,6	Cr, Fl trav, **3 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
	27		1726/10/6	Leipzig	Trinity 16	6	1,6	Cr, **2 Ob, Ob da caccia**, **2 Vl, Va,** Organ obbli**, Bc**	S,A,T,B	V	V
	28		1725/12/30	Leipzig	Christmas 1	6	2,6	Cto, 3Tbn, **2 Ob, Taille**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**33**		1724/9/3	Leipzig	Trinity 13	6	1,6	**2 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B		
	37	**V**	1724/5/18	Leipzig	Asension day	6	1,6	**2 Ob d'am, 2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**38**		1724/10/29	Leipzig	Trinity 21	6	1,6	4 Tbn, **2 Ob, 2 Vl, Va**	S,A,T,B		V
	44	**V**	1724/5/21	Leipzig	Exudi	7	2,7	2 Ob, Fag, **2 Vl, Va**	S,A,T,B	V	
	61	**V'**	1714/12/2	Weimar	Advent 1	6	1,6	**2 Vl, 2 Va**, Fag, **Bc**	S,T,B	V	
*	**62**		1724/12/3	Leipzig	Advent 1	6	1,6	Cr**, 2 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
	73	**V**	1724/1/23	Leipzig	Epiphany 3	5	1,5	**2 Ob, 2 Vl, Va, Bc, Cr or Organ obbli**.	S,T,B		V
*	**78**		1724/9/10	Leipzig	Trinity 14	7	1,7	Cr, Fl trav, **2 Ob, 2 Vl, Va, Vne, Bc, Organ**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**94**		1724/8/6	Leipzig	Trinity 9	8	1,8	**Fl trav, 2 Ob**, Ob d'am, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
	95	**V**	1723/9/12	Leipzig	Trinity 16	7	1,7	**Cr, 2ob d'am, 2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,T,B		
*	**99**		1724/9/17	Leipzig	Trinity 15	6	1,6	Cr, **Fl trav**, **Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
*	**111**		1725/1/21	Leipzig	Epiphany 3	6	1,6	**2 Obs, 2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**112**		1731/4/8	Leipzig	Easter 2	5	1,5	**2 Cr**, 2 Ob d'am, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
*	**113**		1724/8/20	Leipzig	Trinity 11	8	1,8	**Fl trav, 2 Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
*	**114**		1724/10/1	Leipzig	Trinity 17	7	1,7	Cr, **Fl trav, 2 Ob**, **2 Vl, 2 Va,Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**115**		1724/11/5	Leipzig	Trinity 22	6	1,6	Cr, **Fl trav, Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Vc picc, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
*	**122**		1724/12/31	Leipzig	Christmas 1	6	1,6	**3 Fl dolce**, 2 Ob, Taille, **Bc, Organ**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**124**		1725/1/7	Leipzig	Epiphany 1	6	1,6	Cr, **Concertante Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**125**		1725/2/2	Leipzig	Purification	6	1,6	Cr, **Fl trav, Ob** or Ob d'am, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B		V
*	**126**		1725/2/4	Leipzig	Sexagesima	6	1,6	**Tr, 2 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A.T.B		V
*	**133**		1724/12/27	Leipzig	3rd day of Christmas	6	1,6	Cto, **2 Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		
*	**135**		1724/6/25	Leipzig	Trinity 3	6	1,6	Cto, Tbn, **2 Ob**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B	V	V
	138	**V**	1723/9/5	Leipzig	Trinity 15	7	1,3,7	**2 Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T,B		V
*	**139**		1724/11/12	Leipzig	Trinity 23	6	1,6	**2 Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc, Organ**	S,A,T,B		
	144	**V**	1724/2/6	Leipzig	Septuagesima	6	1,3,6	2 Ob**, Ob d'am**, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	S,A,T	V	V
	161		1715/10/6	Weimar	Trinity 16	6	5,6	**2 Fl dolce, 2 Vl, Va, Organ obbli, Bc**	A,T	V	
*	**178**		1724/7/30	Leipzig	Trinity 8	7	1,5,7	Cr, **2 Ob**, 2 Ob d'am, **2 Vl, Va, Bc**	A,T,B		V

*Violin=Vl, Viola=Va, Violone=Vne, Violoncello piccolo= Vc picc, Basso Continuo=Bc, Organ obbligato=Organ obbli
Oboe=Ob, Oboe *d'amore*=Ob d'am, Oboe *da caccia*= Oboe *da caccia*, *Taille=Taille*
Flute *dolce* (recorder)=Fl *dolce*, Flute *traverso*= Fl trav. Fagotto=Fag
Trumpet=Tr, Trumpet *da tirarsi*=Tr da tir, Trombone=Tbn, Cornetto=Cto, Horn=Cr

*L1-Leipzig Cycle I, L2-Leipzig Cycle II
V' in L2 signifies a revision of an earlier work

Albert Schweitzer, physician, theologian, and interpreter of pictorial and symbolic representation in Bach's sacred works, provided a brief list of relatively accessible cantatas in the second volume of his book, *J. S. Bach*. The list includes BWV 9, 37, 38, 61, 64, 122, 131, 135

and 142.[84] He did not specify certain criteria for the list, but he included only works that are effective as a whole, and the quality of the text is satisfactory.[85] All of Schweizer's selected cantatas except BWV 64, 131, 142, are found in the list of performable cantatas in this study.

In order to elucidate general features and facilitate performance by church choirs, the selected cantatas will be discussed under five categories: styles of the accessible cantatas, orchestration, Baroque instruments, modern substitutions of the Baroque instruments, and issues of vocal range. The scope of each discussion will be limited to the boundaries where each category is directly related to the chosen cantatas in the list.

Styles of the Accessible Cantatas

Cantatas marked with an asterisk in the above table indicate chorale cantatas. Most of the accessible cantatas are found from the Leipzig period, and the majority are, interestingly, chorale cantatas.

Among the five annual cycles of the sacred cantatas composed in the Leipzig period, the second cycle is unified as chorale cantata and is the only cycle featuring musical and textual homogeneity.[86] Although, a number of chorale cantatas had already emerged in the seventeenth century, the genre reached its peak in Bach's hand, being cast in the specific form of chorale arrangement.[87] Each cantata focused on a single Lutheran hymn relevant to the season of the

[84] Albert Schweitzer, *J. S. Bach*, trans. Ernest Newman (New York: Dover publication), 2:461.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Jones, *The Creative Development*, 2:145.
[87] Yo Tomita, *Bach* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011), 175.

ecclesiastical year. The structure of the libretto presents a great uniformity:[88] the first and the last stanzas of the hymn are retained unaltered in the opening and final movement respectively, and the rest are paraphrased in various ways to elastically adapt to the poetic structure of recitative and aria.[89]

The musical structure is in close relationship with the libretto. In the typical musical plan of the chorale cantatas, chorus movements are confined to the first and last movements, and middle movements consist of recitative and aria. Most commonly, there are six total movements following one of two forms: chorale chorus-recit-aria-recit-aria-chorale; or chorale chorus-aria-recit-aria-recit-chorale.[90]

The opening movement begins with a large scaled chorale-chorus, which vividly and intensely elaborates the chorale.[91] The concerto-like ritornello form is the most common style of a magnificent chorale-chorus[92] in which the chorus sings vocal interpolations between orchestral ritornelli. Typically, in the vocal interpolations, the soprano part presents the hymn melody with extended note values as a *cantus firmus*, and the lower parts are written in imitation of each other, very often with terraced entrances, or in homophonic harmonization with or without ornamentations. These two styles are commonly alternated in one chorale-chorus. Overall, polyphonic elaboration is more frequently found in the lower voices than homophonic harmonization. A plain four-part harmonization of chorale melody is the prevalent setting for the final movement.[93]

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[88] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 275.
[89] Boyd, *Bach*, 133.
[90] Jones, *The Creative Development of J. S. Bach*, 2:146.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Boyd, *Bach*, 138-9.
[93] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 279.

Among the total of fifty-two surviving chorale cantatas, twenty-four, almost a half of the total number, are found in the list of the accessible cantatas. In the chorale cantatas, each line of the single stanza is separated surrounded by ritornelli or fragments of ritornello.

In some medium-difficult to difficult chorale cantatas, the *cantus firmus* melody in each vocal interpolation is highly elongated with long note values, spanning more than six to seven measures. Or, in one vocal interpolation, the hymn tune is introduced last after all the other parts enter in imitation, making a single vocal interpolation more than ten measures long. Furthermore, the accompanying parts also feature long melismatic lines, intricate and active rhythms or present very long fugue sections. However, in many of the selected chorale cantatas, each vocal interpolation is economical in length, and the lower parts are written with a small degree of polyphonic elaboration or with plain homophony. Therefore, these cantatas are reachable for church choirs.

Utilizing the existing, well-known hymn tune in the chorus movement was a brilliant idea. According to Spitta, hymns were in everyone's heart, mind and memory in those days, guiding their everyday life and supplying consolation and edification.[94] The memorable tunes of Lutheran hymns can also be easily approached by singers in modern church choirs, because some Lutheran hymns are still found in the hymnals of modern churches, and the chorale tunes are generally easily remembered.

While the texts of the Cycle I cantatas are based on the Bible, the three Cycle I cantatas that draw the primary texts from a chorale in their opening movements,[95] BWV 73, 95 and 138, are, interestingly, approachable. Their unique feature is insertion of the trouping recitatives in the

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[94] Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach: His Work and Influence on the Music of Germany,* trans. Clara Bell and J. A. Fuller-Maitland. (New York: Dover Publications, 1951), 3:104.

[95] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:127.

opening chorus movements, and they share some similarities to the structure or the musical design of Cycle II cantatas.[96] According to Terry, these are considered a dialogue chorale that display the nature of a conversation between the chorale and a speaking voice or voices for recitative.[97] In the three cantatas, the chorus portions feature broken phrases in which the soprano part presents a *cantus firmus* and the accompanying parts mostly move in homophonic texture. Therefore, these cantatas are relatively accessible for the typical church choir.

Regardless of the cycles, a small number of cantatas that contain a motet-like chorus movement are relatively achievable. In harmony with historical understanding, Daniel Melamed defines motet-like pieces as "vocal ensemble movements without independent instrumental parts (basso continuo excepted) from concerted sacred works."[98] Overall, motet-like movements present exclusively syllabic vocal parts with the contrapuntal texture, and all vocal parts are doubled by the orchestra with only continuo added, or accompanied only by continuo. Additionally, *alla-breve* time signatures and long note values are prevalent musical features of motet-like movements.[99] Some movements written in the old motet style are still challenging due to passages featuring countless chromatic progressions, frequent leaps and non-harmonic tones in the vocal part. However, the motet-like movements in the selected cantatas have a lesser degree of chromaticism (excepting BWV 2) and feature scalar chorus writing and rhythmic simplicity.

BWV 2/1, 28/2, 38/1 and 144/1 display pure motet-like chorus movements. Among the

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[96] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:127-8.

[97] Charles Sanford Terry, *Johann Sebastian Bach, Bach's Chorals,* vol. 2, *The Hymns and Hymn Melodies of the Cantatas and Motetts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915-1921), https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2056#Terry_1393-02_162.

[98] Daniel R. Melamed, *J. S. Bach and the German Motet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 111.

[99] Melamed, *J. S. Bach and the German Motet*, 114.

four, BWV 2/1, 28/2 and 38/1 are motet-like chorale movements, typically featuring "a *cantus firmus* supported by points of imitation derived from the phrases of the chorale melody."[100] As a Cycle I cantata, BWV 144/1 is written as a fugue, solely accompanied by continuo. The chorus section of BWV 22/1, which follows tenor and bass arioso-like sections, presents a slightly looser motet style than most other motet-like movements: the instruments slightly deviate from their normal role of reinforcing each vocal part, and an eight-measure postlude follows the chorus section.[101]

Orchestration

As no standard for orchestral instrumentation had yet been established in the Baroque period, the combinations of instruments for Bach's orchestras were varied.[102] The typical orchestra began to emerge from Haydn's orchestra during the Classical era, and with expansion of each family, it continued to the present day.[103]

In terms of string scoring, according to Wolff, the older cantatas (up to Easter 1715) are predominantly rooted in the French type of a five-voice string setting with two violas, while the later ones (after Easter 1715) are, with no exception, based on the Italian type of a four-voice string score.[104]

Bach employed a wide variety of wind instruments for his orchestra. Wind instruments

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[100] Melamed, *J. S. Bach and the German Motet*, 117.
[101] Ibid., 122.
[102] Whittaker, *Fugitive Notes*, 25.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Wolff, ed. *The World of Bach Cantatas*, 152.

either simply double the voice or strings or play obbligato lines, adding some colors to the orchestration. In the Leipzig cantatas, cornett, corno (horn) or trumpet often doubled the *cantus firmus* placed in the soprano part in chorale fantasias. In the motet-like movements, four trombones often reinforced each voice part, or three trombones doubled the lower three parts. In addition, Bach began to regularly use the woodwind instruments that had not previously been available, particularly oboe *d'amore*, oboe *da caccia* and transverse flute.[105] This reflects Bach's endless desire to discover new sonorities and combinations for his orchestra.[106] Cantatas written with two obbligato oboes are frequently found in the Leipzig cantatas.

Baroque Instruments

In the list of the selected cantatas, the most unfamiliar instruments are the four Baroque woodwind instruments, oboe *d'amore*, oboe *da caccia*, *taille*, and flute *traverso*. This section will focus on the discussion of Baroque oboe families and flute families.

Until the Baroque period, the term "flute" (also *Flaute, Flöte, Flûte*, and *Fiauto*) generally signified the recorder.[107] The recorder had a very gentle, charming and a sweeter tone than transverse flute. However, due to the difficulty of changing its volume to louder or softer, expressiveness was highly constrained.[108] If a recorder player attempts loud dynamics, the pitch goes sharp, and attempting soft dynamics makes the pitch go flat.[109]

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[105] Wolff, *The Learned Musician*, 273-4.
[106] Ibid.
[107] David Whitwell, *A New History of Wind Music* (Evanston, IL: Instrumentalist Co., 1980), 9.
[108] Kenneth E. Miller, "Instruments of the Baroque Era," *The Choral Journal* 7, No.3 (January-February 1967): 27-28. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23542572.
[109] Jeremy Montagu, *The Flute* (Princes Risborough: Shire, 1990), 6.

Before the end of the Baroque era, the predecessor of the modern flute was defined as a transverse flute (*flauto traverso*, *traversa*, *flute traversiere*, *Traversflöte*, or *Querflöte*).[110] The tone of the transverse flute was easily accommodated to a variety of circumstances through the direct control of a performer's lips.[111] In addition, players more readily produce louder and softer volumes by rolling the embouchure inwards or outwards in order to counteract the pitch changes to sharp or flat when it was blown louder or softer.[112] Therefore, the transverse flute was more capable of satisfying a player's desire to be more greatly expressive and sensitive than the recorder.[113] After mid-century, the recorder all but vanished from the orchestra, and the transverse flute began to be called flute.[114]

According to Paul Carroll, compositions employing transverse flute are more likely to have tessituras that extend below F4, though the descant recorder part can also be written in this tessitura.[115] In addition, transverse flute parts are more likely to be written in sharp keys, whereas recorder parts are generally written in flat keys.[116]

The oboe was a beloved instrument in the Baroque era. It was a new instrument, invented at the end of the seventeenth century.[117] The tone of the Baroque oboe was softer, mellower, warmer and less penetrating than that of the modern oboe.[118] Because the oboe blended well with the string instruments, it was almost immediately adopted as an orchestral instrument, and

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[110] Whitwell, *A New History of Wind Music*, 9.
[111] Miller, "*Instruments of the Baroque Era*," 27.
[112] Montagu, *The Flute*, 6.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Whitwell, *A New History of Wind Music*, 9.
[115] Paul Carroll, *Baroque Woodwind Instruments: A Guide to Their History, Repertoire and Basic Technique* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 46.
[116] Ibid.
[117] Jeremy Montagu, *The World of Baroque and Classical Musical Instruments* (New York: The Overlook Press, 1979), 46.
[118] Ibid., 47.

its use quickly spread over Europe.[119]

The oboe was built in different sizes. The alto oboe and tenor oboe (four types) were larger than the treble oboe. The oboe *d'amore* (the alto oboe) sounds a minor-third below the treble oboe. In Bach's works, the oboe *d'amore* often accompanied treble voices, as its bulb bell produces a hollower and gentler tone than does the treble oboe.[120]

According to Montagu, four forms of the tenor oboe were used in the Baroque era, having varied appearances and bell shapes: oboe *da cacci; taille;* tenor oboe; and *cor anglais*.[121] The *cor anglaise* is the only form surviving in the modern orchestra.[122] Though little is known about the tenor oboe, scholars generally agree on the description of the four types designated in the following table:[123]

Table 3. Four Types of the Baroque Tenor Oboe

Type of the Tenor Oboe	Appearance	Shape of Bell
oboe *da caccia*	curved shape	flared bell of either wood or brass
cor anglaise	curved shape	bulb bell
tenor oboe	straight shape	flared bell
taille	straight shape	bulb bell

In his cantatas, Bach wrote parts for oboe *da caccia* and *taille*, but never indicated a part for *cor anglaise*.[124] Interestingly, Reine Dahlqvist points out that the *taille* was always employed for the third part only in the oboe ensemble, whereas oboe *da caccia* was scored for both solo and third oboe in the oboe ensemble.[125] According to Dahlqvist, "…Bach in his Leipzig scores always meant the '*Hautb. da Caccia* (oboe *da caccia*)' when he wrote *Taille*. The *taille* was only

[119] Montagu, *The World of Baroque and Classical Musical Instruments*, 46.
[120] Ibid., 48.
[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid., 48-49.
[124] Ibid., 49.
[125] Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe da caccia and Corno Inglese," 62.

a part-designation (third part) as 'Principle' was for the trumpets."[126]

Another interesting point is that obligato solo lines designed for two oboes *da caccia* were, in fact, played by the first and second oboists, and not third oboe.[127] Due to the difficulty in finding a third oboist, the first and second parts were left to be played by experts, while the third part was performed by an apprentice whose technical ability was usually insufficient for solo parts.[128]

Substitution of historical instruments

Realizing Baroque instruments for Bach's cantatas has been a continuing issue for modern conductors. It is ideal to find players who have specialized in early music and who own authentic instruments. However, such players are scarce and are often not readily reachable. They may be available in big cities, but for churches located in small cities or rural areas, the cost of bringing in those players can be prohibitive. Some universities possess authentic instruments for scholarly purposes. If the university has a musicologist who specializes in early music, such a person could be a good source of advice and assistance.

In most cases, the historical instruments will have to be replaced by modern instruments. Oboe may serve as a replacement for oboe *d'amore*. English horn may substitute for oboe *da caccia* or *taille*, because english horn is the only ancestor of the tenor oboe that continues to be played in the modern orchestra. Eric Whittaker, Bach authority and Bach conductor, presented

[126] Dahlqvist, "Taille, Oboe da caccia and Corno Inglese," 62.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.

the same issue and suggests replacements for some of historical instruments in the note to the appendices of his book *Fugitive Notes on certain Cantatas and Motets of J. S. Bach.* The table dealing with these replacements is found in the appendix.[129]

The ranges of some historical instruments, particularly oboe *d'amore* and oboe *da caccia*, differ from modern instruments, requiring special attention. Wind instruments were often written *col Violin* and *col Viola* in Bach cantatas, and their parts were copied out from the strings.[130] A few low notes in the oboe *d'amore* or oboe *da caccia* may be played displaced by one octave, or may be left out when played on modern oboe or english horn. Based on the examination of the manuscripts of Bach's cantatas, Dahlqvist states that parts for third oboist, *taille*, were often copied from viola, and a few low notes in the parts were impossible to play with oboe *da caccia*.[131] According to Dahlqvist, "It is generally a single D or E, and these were apparently transposed by the player or left out, or perhaps corrected orally during rehearsal."[132]

The second-best option can be for strings to substitute the woodwind instruments. This does not mean that woodwind instruments and strings are interchangeable. When the orchestra for performance in churches is limited, it may be considered as an option. The writer agrees with Whittaker's argument that "…surely it is better that the public should have an opportunity of hearing works under altered conditions than not at all."[133]

In some of his cantatas, Bach himself also gave woodwind parts to string instruments. For instance, when BWV 8 premiered in 1724, and was revised in the late Leipzig years, the E major version was changed to D major with minor changes, and the obbligato lines played by two

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[129] Whittaker, *Fugitive Notes on Certain Cantatas and Motets of J. S. Bach*, 254.
[130] Dahlqvist, *"*Taille, Oboe da Caccia and Corno Inglese,*"* 61.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Whittaker, *Fugitive Notes,* 3.

oboes *d'amore* in the first movement were assigned to the concertante violins in the revised version.[134] Another example is found in BWV 96, which underwent minor changes for subsequent performances after its premiere in 1724.[135] The *flauto piccolo* part (soprano recorder) in the first movement was replaced by the *violino piccolo* when it was performed in 1734.[136]

In many cantatas, the obbligato woodwind instruments are only required in one or two movements. Though the tone colors of woodwind instruments differ from those of strings, the two blend well as was discussed earlier, and strings are often doubled by woodwinds in Bach cantatas. For these reasons, replacement of woodwinds by strings may be considered.

Issue of Vocal Range

Another consideration that should be made is the vocal range of the soprano and tenor parts in Bach's cantatas. No matter how accessible the chorus parts of the selected cantatas are, the overall ranges and tessituras for soprano and tenor in most of Bach's cantatas are higher than contemporary church anthems. Bach wrote his cantatas for well-trained boy singers at St. Thomas. This can be problematic for singers in church choirs in which vocal ranges for soprano and tenor are mostly confined to high E or F.

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[134] Jonathan D. Green, *A Conductor's Guide to the Choral-Orchestral Works of J. S. Bach* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 23; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Liebster Gott, wenn werd ich sterben, BWV 8*, ed. Helmuth Osthoff, *Neue Bach-Ausgabe Werke*, ser. 1, vol. 23, Kantaten (Kassel, Germany: Bärenreiter, 1982), 107-220.

[135] Massaki Suzuki, *Cantatas from Leipzig 1724*, Article in the Booklet of the Recording by Massaki Suzuki, Bach Collegium Japan, (Japan: BIS recording, 2003), 9; Johann Sebastian Bach, *Herr Christ, der einge Gottessohn, BWV 96*, ed. Matthias Wendt, *Neue Bach-Ausgabe Werke*, ser. 1, vol. 24, Kantaten (Kassel, Germany: Bärenreiter, 1990), 3-58.

[136] Ibid.

In some selected cantatas, high notes beyond the limited range appear just a few times in some passages, and the overall tessitura is accessible. On the other hand, in some selected works, the overall tessitura itself is quite high, including high notes, such as F#, G, G# and A, several times throughout the main chorus movement. In the table 2, if the overall tessitura for either soprano or tenor is accessible and a few high notes are confined to no higher than G, it is left blank. If the overall tessitura is high, standing on the passaggio area (E and F) and frequently presents notes above F, such as F#, G, G# and A, it is marked as V.

The manner in which range and tessitura issues are treated depends on the skilled level of a particular choir. If a church choir has at least one singer whose ability is enough to cover a few high notes in the soprano or tenor part, rehearsal process will go much smoothly.

Some high notes in tenor parts can be covered by alto. If the number of alto singers is enough to be divided into alto 1 and 2, the second alto may be able to double some demanding spots in the tenor part. In addition, employing long-term voice building exercises can be helpful to increase the overall range of the choir.

Accessible Cantatas with Exceptions

Some cantatas that do not meet the criteria established for this research are excluded from the selection, yet they are still relatively approachable among surviving cantatas. These are organized in the following table.

Table 4. Accessible Cantatas with Exceptions

BWV 18: No main chorus movement, chorus is auxiliary in the movement 2 (recit+chorale)
BWV 98: No final chorale
BWV 153: Only three chorales for chorus
BWV 184: Only two chorales for chorus
BWV 8, 107, 117, 123, 127: 4 woodwind instruments required
BWV 100: Big force. Suitable to be performed in mega church
BWV 20: Solo movements take a big portion among the entire movement

CHAPTER 4: ACCESSIBLE CANTATA BWV 133 AS DEMONSTRATION

In this chapter, BWV 133, a highly accessible cantata for church choirs comprised of amateur singers, will be specifically discussed. This little-known Christmas cantata, in six movements, is a typical chorale cantata that takes its place in the second Leipzig cycle. The chorus participates only in the exterior movements, while the interior movements are filled with two pairs of aria and recitative. There are two important reasons why this cantata may be considered one of the most performable cantatas.

First, the chorus writing of this chorale cantata is short and simple, but highly expressive. In the opening movement, eight lines of the chorale are all separated and interpolated into the florid orchestral writing. Significantly, in the exuberant concerto-like opening movement, the individual lines of the chorale are simply set in plain four-part harmony and each vocal interpolation is short, usually two measures long (aside from a few lines that are extended to highlight important keywords), whereas the lively orchestral ritornello is relatively substantial. The final chorale is also a customary four-part setting. When conductors rehearse the chorale-chorus, integrating the chorus interpolations into florid vocal writing may take attention and require some effort, however, the chorus writing itself is simple and highly accessible.

Second, the orchestration is modest in size. It requires a cornett, two oboes *d'amore*, strings and basso continuo. However, with the limited resources available, performing this cantata with only strings and basso continuo may be considered. As the cornett merely reinforces the chorale melody, it may be omitted, and strings may substitute the two oboes *d'amore* that play obbligato lines in the alto aria.

Many Bach scholars attribute the accessible features of this cantata to the circumstances of Bach's post during the Leipzig period. According to Dürr, it was written for the last day (third

day) of the successive feast days in the Christmas season.[137] Therefore, Bach was constrained to present this cantata with reduced and limited forces.[138] Eliot Gardiner states in the same context that, likely due to the hectic schedule of the Christmas season, and considering the cumulative fatigue posed on his vocal ensemble and orchestra, Bach composed a cantata that can be staged with little or even no rehearsal, in which depends more on the instrumentalists than the singers.[139]

Overview and Overall Analysis of BWV 133

BWV 133 "*Ich freue mich in dir* (I rejoice in You)" was composed for the third day of Christmas (the feast of St. John the Evangelist) and was first performed on 27 December 1724 at Leipzig.[140] Unger believes it was revived and performed on at least one subsequent occasion.[141] The cantata is based on Caspar Ziegler's hymn (1697) in four stanzas set to an anonymous melody.[142] The chorale was one of the newest ones, unlike typical chorales of Luther and Gerhart that Bach often used for his chorale-based cantatas.[143] In the libretto, the first and last stanzas of Ziegler's hymn were preserved unaltered in the outer movements, whereas the second and third stanzas were mostly paraphrased in the inner movements to accommodate madrigal verses for

[137] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 127.
[138] Ibid.
[139] John Eliot Gardiner, *Bach Cantatas Vol.15: For the Third day of Christmas*, Article in the Booklet of the Recording by John Eliot Gardiner, Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists (New York: Soli Deo Gloria, 2000), 7.
[140] Melvin P. Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts: An Interlinear Translation with Reference Guide to Biblical Quotations and Allusions* (Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 1996), 228.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Ton Koopman, *J. S. Bach Cantatas: Christmas Cantatas*, Article in the Booklet of the Recording by Ton Koopman, The Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir (Amsterdam: Antoine Marchand, 2000), 10.

recitatives and arias.[144]

The overall structure of BWV 133 is symmetrically designed. Bach arranged the framing movements as choral movements with tutti orchestra, while the inner movements are set as two pairs of solo movements (aria+recit). He achieved an overall balance between the two chorus movements and the two aria-recit complexes. The form, key, meter and orchestration for each movement are organized and presented in the following table.

Table 5. Musical Plan for BWV 133

	Chorus	**Aria + Recit**		**Aria + Recit**		**Chorus**
Movement	1.Chorale-Chorus	2. Alto Aria	3.Tenor Recit	4. Sop Aria	5. Bass Recit	6.Chorale
Form	ritornello	da capo	secco	da capo	secco	4-part setting
Key	D	A	f#-D	b	b-D	D
Meter	2/2	2/2	4/4	2/2-8/12-2/2	4/4	4/4
Orchestration	cnt, 2 oda, str, bc	2 oda, bc	bc	str, bc	bc	cnt, 2 oda, str, bc

Bach's careful planning for the entire musical plan is demonstrated in various ways. The first pair of solo movements is written for inner voices and the second pair for outer voices. The two arias are for female voices, written in the da capo form. In the first aria, the return of the A section (A′) is a compressed version of the original A section with shorter length, and in the second aria, the A section is repeated in its entirety. In the alto aria, the two obbligato oboes *d'amore*, which match the tone color of the alto voice, alternate thematic materials with alto solo. For the soprano aria, Bach gave the first violins a soloistic role to interact with the soprano solo

[144] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 228.

like a duet. The two recitatives are for male solo singers with only continuo for their accompaniments (both *secco* recitatives). Arrangement of meters for the entire cantata is interesting. The two meters assigned for the chorus movements, namely 2/2 and 4/4, are mirrored in each pair of aria and recitative.

Particularly interesting is the setting of the orchestra for the first movement. Unlike the customary manner of doubling first and second violins, the two oboes *d'amore* reinforce second violins and violas. This establishes a solid and rich middle voice, while the first violins shine on the top like a solo instrument. The first violins again dominate in the fourth movement, soprano aria, leading the rest of the orchestra.

The primary key of the cantata is D major. It starts with D major, returns in the middle, and ends the cantata. The key of D major was mostly used for major church festivals or princely celebrations.[145] A notable feature is that from the second movement to the last movement, all movement keys move in the thirds. This construct could be related to trinity, which is addressed in the scripture readings of the cantata:

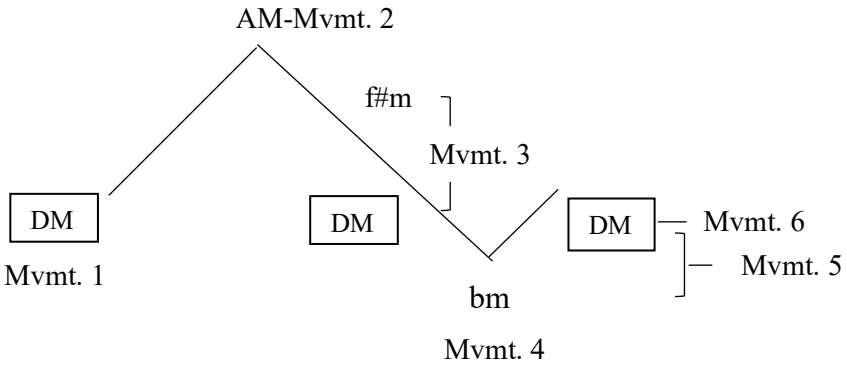
> Jn. 1:1, 14. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**…And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**.

Additionally, the overall tonal plan presents a quasi-symmetrical structure:

Table 6. Tonal Plan for BWV 133

Movement	1.Chorale-Chorus	2. Alto Aria	3.Tenor Recit	4. Sop Aria	5. Bass Recit	6.Chorale
Key	D	A	f#——D	b	b——D	D
		3	3	3	3	

[145] Boyd, *Bach,* 138.



As previously discussed, a Bach cantata was a sung sermon that illuminated the theological message of the given day to achieve a spiritual goal. Therefore, theological understanding of this cantata is an essential part of the analysis. Theological understanding will be discussed in close relationship with important themes and principles of the Lutheran hermeneutic elaborated in Eric Chafe's *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* as numerous Bach cantatas reflect and enunciate the core themes.

Theological Understanding

In the Lutheran hermeneutics, the antithesis of Law and Gospel forms the core theological concept.[146] The Law discloses our sinfulness and declares eternal damnation, death.[147] Conversely, the Gospel offers hope, salvation and eternal life by faith.[148] According to Chafe, "In his (Luther's) hermeneutics the juxtaposition of Law and Gospel represented the pivot of faith, the shift from recognition of one's sinful nature to acceptance of God's forgiveness and love. Luther called this process the analogy of faith."[149] The core theme of Lutheran theology is manifested in many of Bach's cantatas.[150] The spiritual goal of his cantatas was to lead a faith experience of the believer through musical interpretation of the text.[151]

John Leaver elaborated the typical conceptual structure that forms the patterns for numerous Bach cantatas. Cantatas unfold their stories in three distinct stages: judgement under the Law, impasse, and the Gospel answer:

> In the opening chorus the problem is stated, often from biblical words, that we humans are afflicted in some particular way by the dilemma of sin and stand under the condemnation of the Law. Succeeding recitatives and arias explore some of the implications of the impasse. Then a movement, often an aria, presents the Gospel answer to the Law question. Thereafter the mood of both libretto and music take on the optimism of the Gospel, the final chorale being an emphatic endorsement of the Gospel answer.[152]

The underlying idea of the story development in BWV 133 is similar to this tripartite structure but does not precisely follow it. The reason for the pattern in BWV 133 may be related to the particular season in the liturgical year. Christmas signals the changing of the liturgical year by inaugurating a new era in the history of salvation, shifting from darkness to light, and the

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[146] Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 7.
[147] Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid., 5.
[150] Ibid., 8.
[151] Ibid., 4-5.
[152] John Butt ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Bach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 38.

incarnation of Jesus was God's answer to many longings and tribulations encountered throughout the season.[153] In this context, the overall story gives more weight to delivering and expressing the joyful news, rather than presenting ideas of the Law in the beginning of the story. The message of hope (Gospel) is paraphrased and reiterated in various guises throughout the entire movements.

The opening movement is the announcement of the joyful news that Jesus is coming to be our brother. The universal good news is delivered by means of the chorus (the voice of the people) and tutti orchestra. The following alto aria reinterprets and explains the meaning of Christ's coming announced in the first movement. In the aria, the individual believer meets God and the soul is refreshed by seeing God face to face. In the tenor recitative, the antithesis of the Law and the Gospel is directly and concisely narrated and fear within the individual believer gives way to hope. The following soprano aria could indicate an impasse of two opposing inner states of the believer. Or it could indicate an impasse between two different inner states of the speaker and the third person to persuade and lead the congregation to the confession of faith. This aria is overall in b minor, not a bright key. This reflects the inner being of the believer, who met God and accepted his mercy but still has not completely transformed. The last two movements show a complete change of the believer through the decision to follow Jesus. According to Chafe, "one of the ways in which many individual Bach cantatas mirror the pattern of traditional hermeneutics is their ending, like the liturgical year itself, with emphasis on the anticipation of eternity."[154] The bass recitative, fifth movement, affirms that death's pain cannot overcome the believer and anticipates eternal life as a reward of faith. The final chorale universalizes the believer's decision to live only for Jesus.

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[153] Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas*, 14.
[154] Ibid., 42.

Detailed Analysis of Each Movement

As explained in the previous section, the spiritual goal of the cantata was to lead the individual believer in a progression of faith. As the story develops throughout the entire cantata, the individual believer's faith gradually increases. The detailed analysis of each movement will focus on how Bach effectively expressed the text, depicted images from it, and described affections through manifold musical devices to accomplish the spiritual goal. These include change of tonality and harmony, melodic direction, instrumentation, specific intervals and dissonances.

Three English translations were reviewed for careful and in-depth understanding of the text, including those by Melvin P. Unger, Richard D. P. Johns, Charles Sanford Terry. Among the three, translations by Richard D. P. Johns appearing in Alfred Dürr's book *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach: With Their Librettos in German-English Parallel Text* provided the basis for the detailed analysis of each movement. The remaining two will be addressed in the appendix.

Movement 1. Chorale-Chorus

The opening movement of chorale cantatas is written in the form of a great chorale-chorus, which is the "largest and most elaborate movement" of the whole cantata.[155] Spitta highlighted its purpose as "the perfect poetic and musical development of a particular Hymn by means of all the artistic material which Bach had assimilated by a thorough study of the art of his own and former times."[156] Similar to the first movement typical of concertos, the chorale-chorus represents, defines and colors the whole cantata.[157] As previously discussed, Christmas was a turning point from darkness to light and was a long-awaited time for the salvation of humanity.[158] A joyful and exalted feeling is pervasive in the opening movement with exuberant semiquaver figures, coloring and representing the whole cantata.

In the first movement, Gospel is stated: Jesus is coming to be our brother. Bettmann pointed out that "choruses and chorales expressed commonly held beliefs, hopes fears….they represented the voice of the people."[159] The universal good news is delivered by the voice of the people in the first movement. (English translation of the text [BWV 133/1])

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[155] Johns, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach*, 2:146.
[156] Philipp Spitta, *Johann Sebastian Bach*, 3:104.
[157] Charles Sanford Terry, *Johann Sebastian Bach, Bach's Chorals. Vol. 2: The Hymns and Hymn Melodies of the Cantatas and Motetts*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1917), 35.
[158] Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas*, 18.
[159] Bettmann, "Bach the Rhetorician," 116.

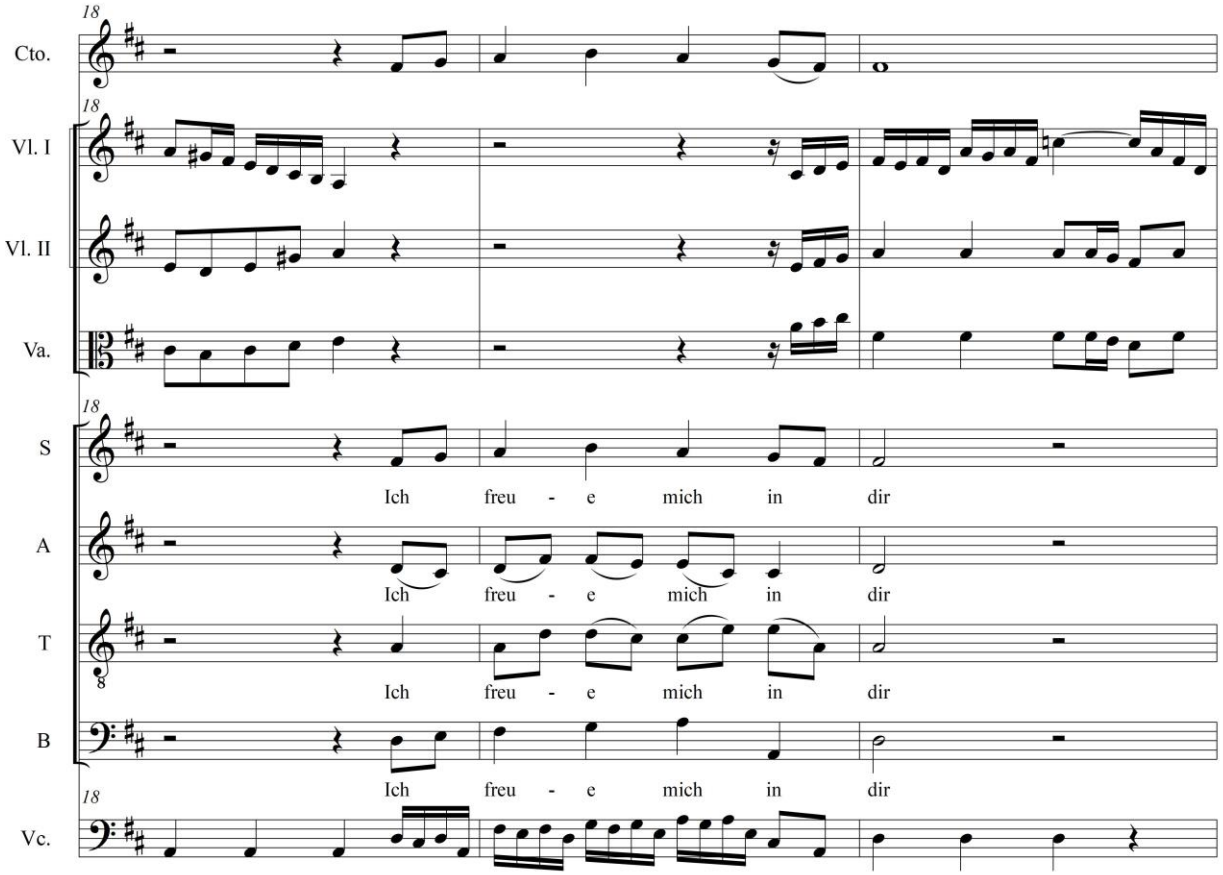
Text) BWV 133/1

Ich freue mich in dir	I rejoice in You
Und heiße dich willkommen,	And bid You welcome
Mein liebes Jesulein!	My dear little Jesus!
Du hast dir vorgenommen,	You have undertaken
Mein Brüderlein zu sein.	To be my little brother.
Ach, wie ein süßer Ton!	Ah, what a sweet sound!
Wie freundlich sieht er aus,	How friendly he looks,
Der große Gottessohn!	The great Son of God![160]

The chorus sings the first strophe of Ziegler's hymn comprised of eight lines, and each line is separated and interpolated between exuberant ritornelli. Six lines of the hymn are presented in plain four-part harmony, usually two measures long, while lines 6 and 8 are extended to highlight important words. The *cantus firmus* is sustained in the soprano line and reinforced by cornett. After a joyfully spirited opening ritornello, the chorus enters and sings "I rejoice in You," which is a theme of this movement. It is accompanied only by bass continuo. The first chorus interpolation is highlighted with an almost a cappella-like effect from the light texture, standing out from the orchestra, and the energetic movement of the cello line also vividly expresses the joyful emotion. (Musical Example 1.1)

[160] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 124-25.

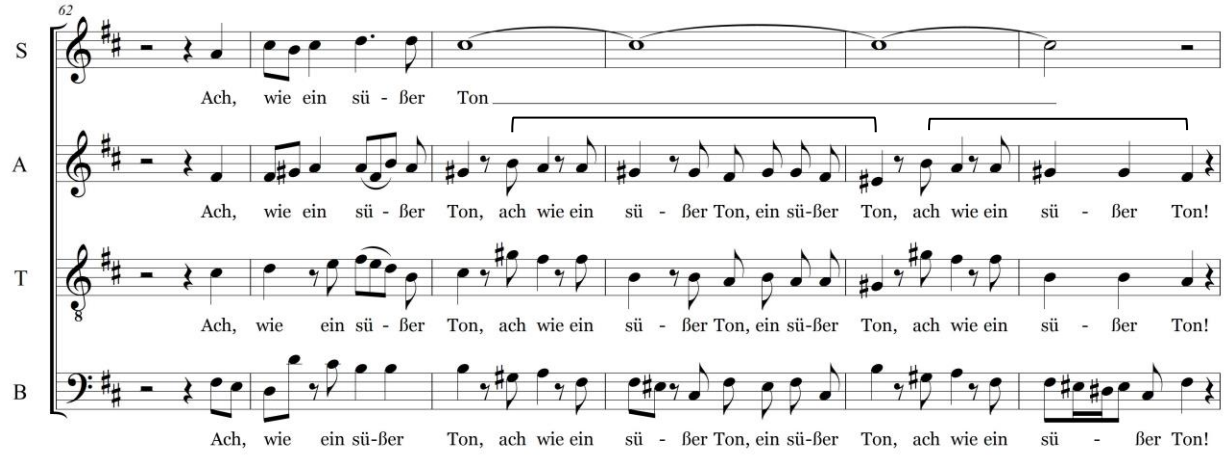
Musical Example 1.1) BWV 133/1: mm. 18-20



The fifth line contains the most important message of the movement: God intended to come down to be our brother. Bach modulates from D major (two-sharp key) to A major (three-sharp key) for the fifth line "*mein Brüderlein zu sein* (to be my little brother)" to bring out the message of hope and salvation. The way Bach emphasizes "*süßer Ton* (sweet sound)" in the sixth line is fascinating. Bach expressed the words with an echo-like character.[161] While the soprano sustains the note on "*Ton* (sound)" for three and a half measures as if the echo spreads, the lower three parts repeat the two-bar phrase with piano dynamic.

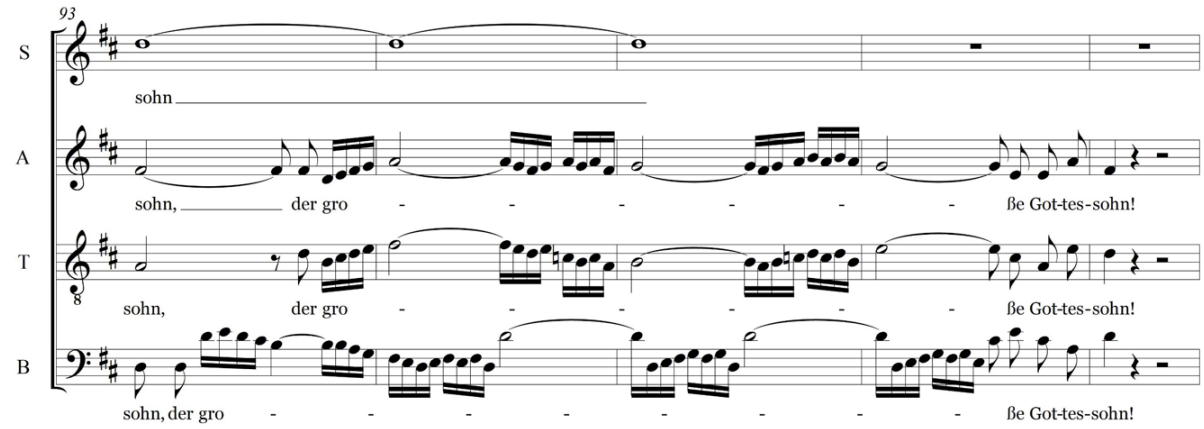
[161] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 127.

Musical Example 1.2) BWV 133/1:mm. 62-67



Bach employed long melismatic figures on "*große* (mighty)" of the eighth line "*der große Gottessohn* (the mighty son of God)" in imitation, to emphasize the mighty nature of the son who humbled himself by taking human form. God's divine nature is expressed in the first and second movements, which are all described and emphasized with melismatic figures.

Musical example 1.3) BWV 133/1: mm. 93-97



Movement 2: Alto Aria

The first and second movements are closely related. The second movement interprets and illuminates the meaning of the birth of Christ that was announced in the first movement and expresses the delight of the individual believer at seeing God face to face. This aria is an important point of the entire cantata, in that the individual believer meets God, and internalizing the meaning of incarnation influences the view of death.

Text) BWV 133/2

Getrost! es fasst ein heilger Leib *Des Höchsten unbegreiflichs Wesen.*	Be of good cheer! A holy body encloses The incomprehensible being of The Most High.
Ich habe Gott - wie wohl ist mir geschehen! *Von Angesicht zu Angesicht gesehen.* *Ach! meine Seele muss genesen.*	I have seen God-How blessed am I! Face to face. Ah! my soul must be preserved.[162]

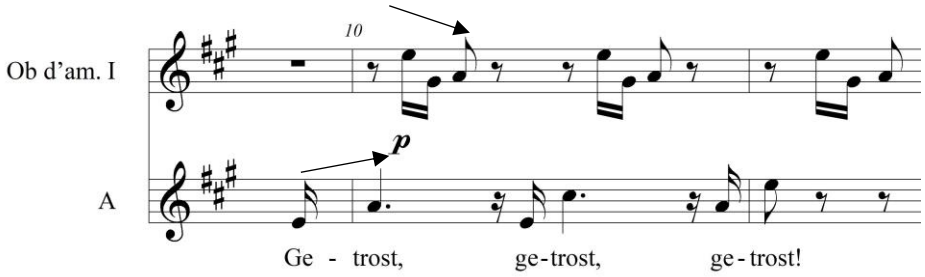
The da capo aria is constructed in ABA′ form. The A section describes the meaning of incarnation and emphasizes the incomprehensible substance of God, dwelling mostly in A major. In contrast, the B section is centered on expressing refreshment of the believer's soul at seeing God. With many modulatory gestures, the middle section is mostly in minor key areas.

The head-motive that clearly reflects the key word "*Getrost* (be of good cheer!)" wakes listeners – first presented by two oboes *d'amore* (m. 1) in the introduction, soon reiterated by the alto voice at her entrance (mm. 10-11).[163] In the Baroque period, oboe *d'amore* often accompanied female voices because of the mellow and soft tone colors it produces.[164] According to Dürr, "virtual equality of voice and instrument is a characteristic of aria style in Bach's day.

[162] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 125.
[163] Ibid., 128.
[164] Montagu, *World of Baroque and Classical Musical Instruments*, 48.

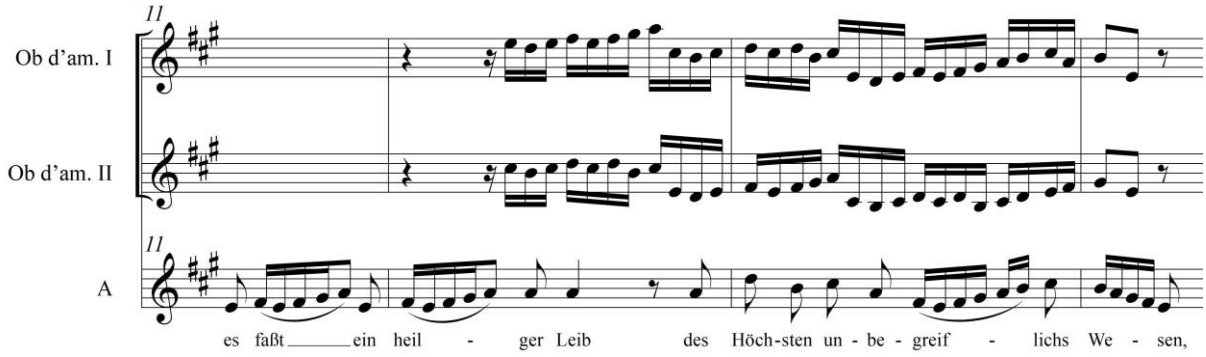
Particularly when using one or more obbligato instruments, this leads to a lively reciprocal exchange between singers and instrumentalists."[165] In this aria, the two oboes *d'amore* interact with the solo voice in various ways to effectively describe the text by sharing thematic material and bringing dynamic effects. In m. 10, the first oboe *d'amore* shares the thematic motif presented in the alto line in inversion as a joyful response to the solo voice.

Musical Example 2.1) BWV 133/2: mm. 10-11



Waves of the sixteenth-note figures at m. 12 chase the alto in imitation as an echo, and finally end the phrase together, strengthening the alto.

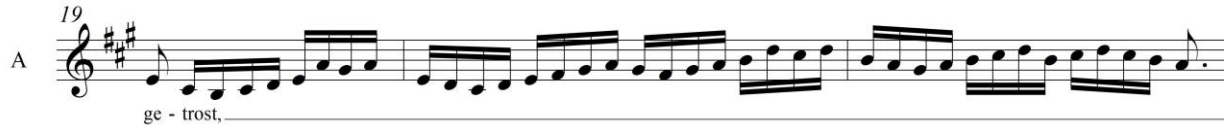
Musical Example 2.2) BWV 133/2: m. 11-14



[165] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 18.

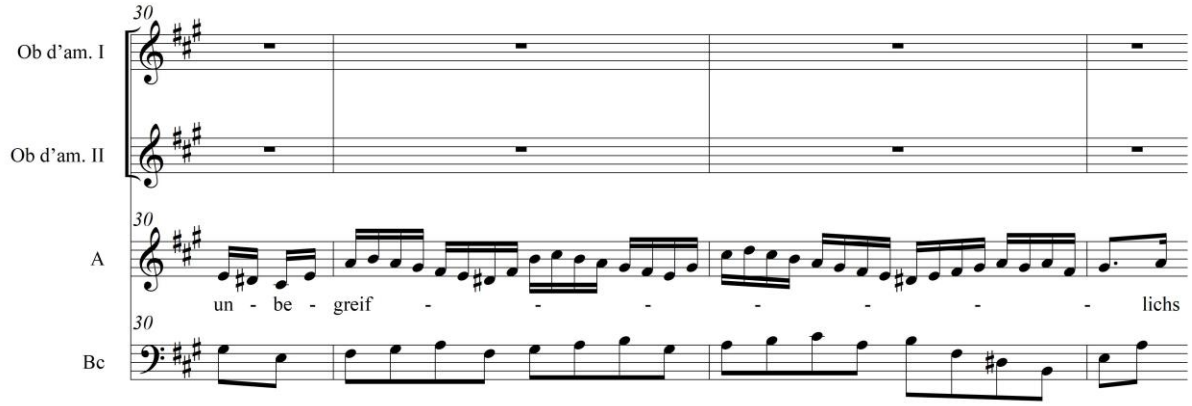
The key word "*Getrost"* described as a wake-up call in the beginning of the movement is again emphasized in another form with the energetic movements of extended melismatic passage in mm. 19-21.

Musical Example 2.3) BWV 133/2: mm. 19-21



The expansive melisma on "*unbegreiflichs* (incomprehensible)" in mm. 30-33 also contributes to the expression of the text. In order to spotlight the word, Bach purposely leaves only the solo voice and the basso continuo, with the obbligato instruments remaining silent.

Musical Example 2.4) BWV 133/2: mm. 30-33

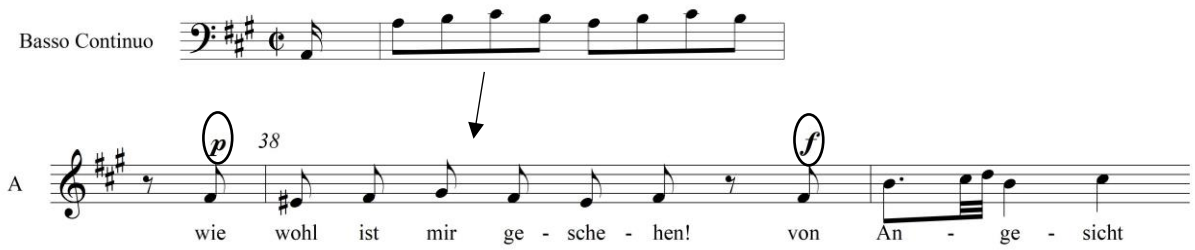


In the middle section (mm. 37-68), excitement at seeing God face to face is portrayed with dynamic contrast, modulatory gestures and repetition of words. In mm. 38-39, the circling eighth-note figure on the words "*wie wohl ist mir geschehen*! (how blessed I am!)" derived from the basso continuo at m.1 is expressed in *piano* dynamic[166], but is soon followed by sudden

[166] Gardiner, *Bach Cantatas: For the Third Day of Christmas*, 7.

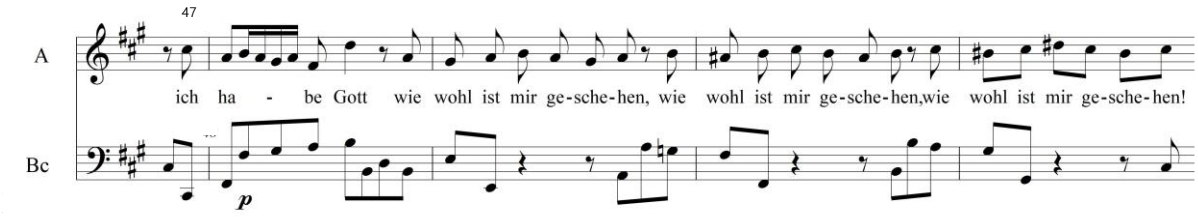
dynamic change on the words "*von Angesicht* (face to face)." This is a vivid expression of the delight at seeing God.

Musical Example 2.5) BWV 133/2: mm. 38-39



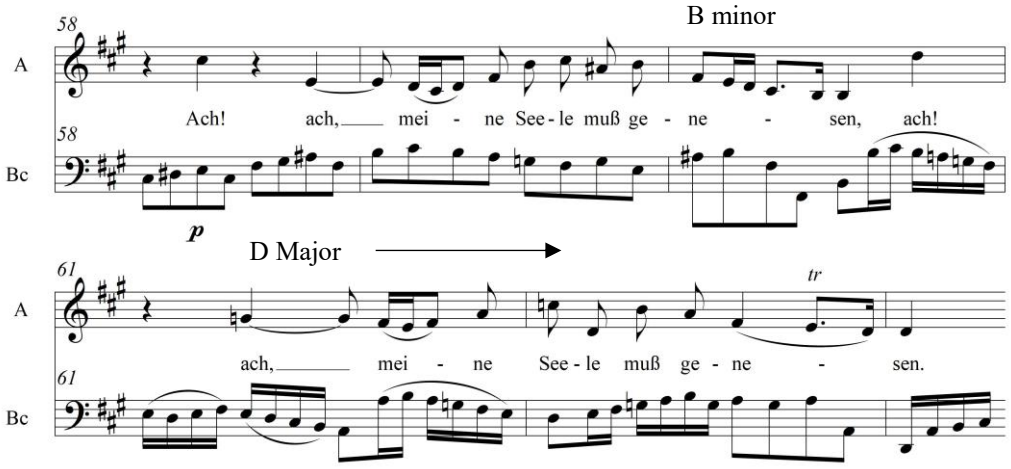
In mm. 47-50, the sequential passage that expresses the words "how blessed I am" three times in rising progression is also a strong reference to extreme joy at seeing God. The modulatory gesture moving from F sharp minor to C sharp minor also contributes to the expression of overflowing emotion.

Musical Example 2.6) BWV 133/2: mm. 47-50



The middle section is dominated by minor keys with modulatory motions in contrast to the primary section, which is in the bright A major. The end of the middle section presents a shift from minor to major (bm-DM) with the repetition of the words "*Ach! meine Seele mus genesen* (my soul must now recover)" in mm. 58-63 that matches to the meaning of the text - recovery of a soul. (Musical Example 2.7)

Musical Example 2.7) BWV 133/2: mm. 58-63



Movement 3. Tenor Recitative

According to Dürr, "the *secco* recitative, no. 3, with its two arioso chorale insertions ('adagio'), is a relative of the trope, though neither text nor melody of chorale is very strictly preserved."[167] In the recitative, the chorale melody is only preserved at the line "*kehrt selber bei uns ein* (Himself lodges with us)," while the other lines are presented in thematic allusions.[168]

Otto Bettmann noted that "in contrast to aria, which were lyrical and contemplative in mood, the recitatives conveyed factual and didactic information. They explained biblical doctrine."[169] In the recitative, the essential Lutheran doctrine - the opposition of Law and Gospel - is presented directly and concisely. Adam's fall before God's wrath represents the Law, whereas God's compassionate disposition stands for the Gospel. When the believer recognizes God's grace, his heart no longer fears.

Text) BWV 133/3

Ein Adam mag sich voller Schrecken	An Adam, full of terror, may hide
Vor Gottes Angesicht	Before God's countenance
Im Paradies verstecken!	Hide himself in paradise!
Der allerhöchste Gott	The Most-High God
kehrt selber bei uns ein:	Himself lodges with us:
Und so entsetzet sich mein Herze nicht;	And so my heart does not take fright;
Es kennet sein erbarmendes Gemüte.	It knows His merciful cast of mind.
Aus unermessner Güte	Out of immeasurable goodness
Wird er ein kleines Kind	He becomes a little child
Und heißt mein Jesulein.	And is called my Jesus.[170]

The antithetical relation of the Law and the Gospel is expressed with dualistic aspects of the music:

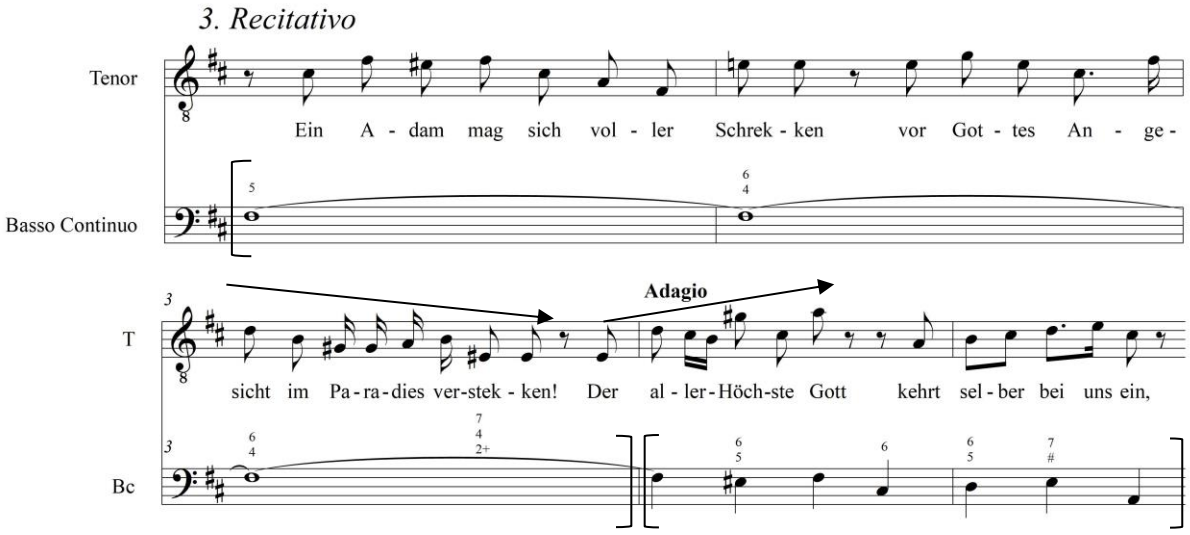
- Strict Style (Recitative) vs Free Style (Adagio. Arioso)

[167] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 128.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Bettmann, "Bach the Rhetorician," 117.
[170] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 125.

- Minor vs Major
- Melodic Descent vs Melodic Ascent

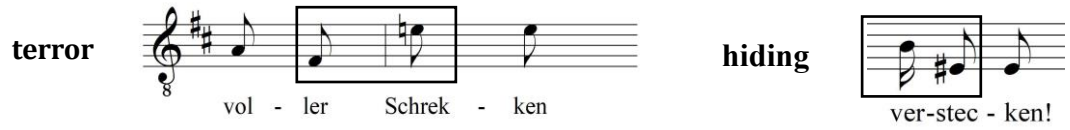
During the depiction of God's angry face and the punishment by death in the beginning (mm.1-3), the bass pedal strictly holds throughout the three measures without any movements, while the bass actively moves like the walking of God in the adagio section in mm. 4-5 when the music illustrates God's dwelling within us. (strict recitative vs arioso) Adam's hiding is portrayed with a descending line, moving down to a low register in m. 3. On the other hand, the most-high God is expressed with a soaring tenor line in m. 4, moving up to a high register (melodic descent vs melodic ascent). F# minor key depicting God's wrath (mm. 1-3), modulates to a bright A major key in mm. 4-5 where God's graceful side is introduced (minor vs major).

Musical Example 3.1) BWV 133/3: mm. 1-5



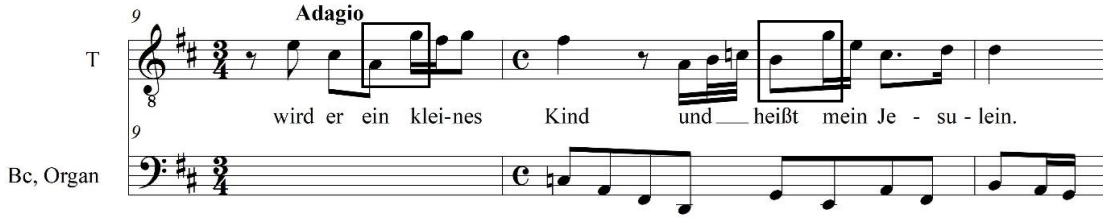
Throughout the recitative, Bach employed substantial leaps to express the meaning of key words. The sudden soaring minor-seventh leap on "*Schrekken* (terror)" in m. 2 is a vivid image of the word "terror," and the falling dissonant tritone leap on "*verstecken* (hiding)" in m. 3 is a dark portrayal of Adam hiding from God.

Musical Example 3.2) BWV 133/3: mm. 2-3



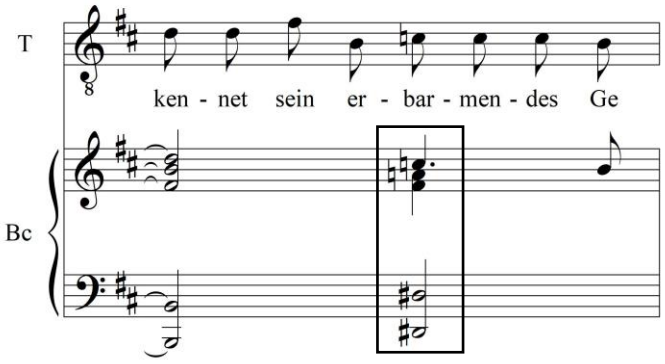
In mm. 9-10, the speaker's affection for little Jesus is also expressed and emphasized with large upward leaps: minor seventh on "*ein* ***kleines*** *Kind* (a little child)," and minor sixth on "***mein*** *Jesulein* (my little Jesus)."

Musical Example 3.3) BWV 133/3: mm. 9-11



The keyword of this movement "*erbarmendes* (compassionate)" represents God's graceful side and is highlighted with a diminished seventh chord in m. 7.

Musical Example 3.4) BWV 133/3: m. 7



With recognition of God's grace and mercy, the recitative concludes with a joyful ending, moving toward the bright, sunny D major.

Movement 4. Soprano Aria

According to Bettmann, "each of Bach's cantatas emphasizes a simple biblical truth, easily comprehended but repeated time and again in various guises."[171] The text of this movement possesses the angels' Christmas message that Jesus is born.[172] The good news (Gospel) announced by the choir in the first movement is now delivered by the soprano voice in a different guise.

Text) BWV 133/4

Wie lieblich klingt es in den Ohren,	How lovely they sound in my ears,
Dies Wort: mein Jesus ist geboren,	The words 'my Jesus is born'
Wie dringt es in das Herz hinein!	How they penetrate my heart!
Wer Jesu Namen nicht versteht	He who does not comprehend Jesus's name
Und wem es nicht durchs Herze geht,	And it does not go to his heart
Der muss ein harter Felsen sein.	Must be as hard as a rock.[173]

Gardiner expressed that "the key idea of the opening movement's 'sweet sound' is now revealed."[174] The believer's deeply moved heart at hearing the good news is first presented in the opening introduction with strings (mm. 1-8), which recurs throughout the movement. In the strings, the first violin displays a graceful singing melody, leading the group, while the inner parts enrich the melody by adding harmonies, and the continuo presents a recurring ostinato motive.[175] The melodic idea stated by the first violin in the introduction is given to the soprano solo and expressed with modest elaborations.[176]

Johns pointed out that "one of the most remarkable features of Bach's arias is the manner in which he creates an arresting musical image of whatever is described in the text, whether it be

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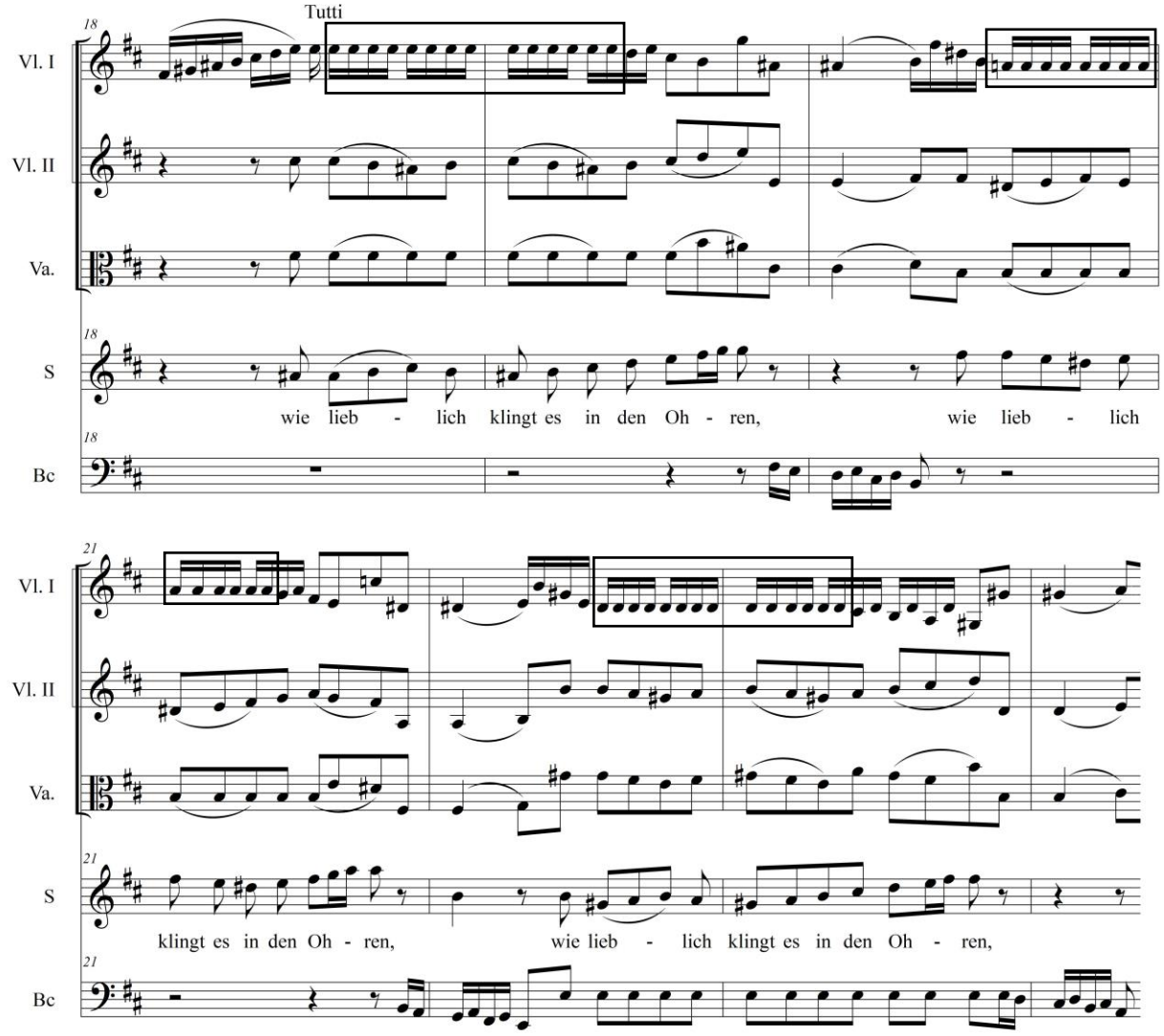
[171] Bettmann, "Bach the Rhetorician," 116.
[172] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 228.
[173] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 125.
[174] Gardiner, *Bach Cantatas: For the Third Day of Christmas*, 8.
[175] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 128.
[176] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 228.

a pictorial scene or a particular state of being."[177] In mm. 18-24, the words "*wie lieblich klingt es in den Ohren* (How lovely rings in my ear) are portrayed as "recurring image of ringing bells,"[178] which demonstrates Bach's brilliant musical acumen. The repeated note figures appear three times in succession, moving downward (e-a-d) in the circle of fifths (F#-B-E-A) as if the sweet sound permeates the believer's heart.

Musical Example 4.1) BWV 133/4: mm. 18-24

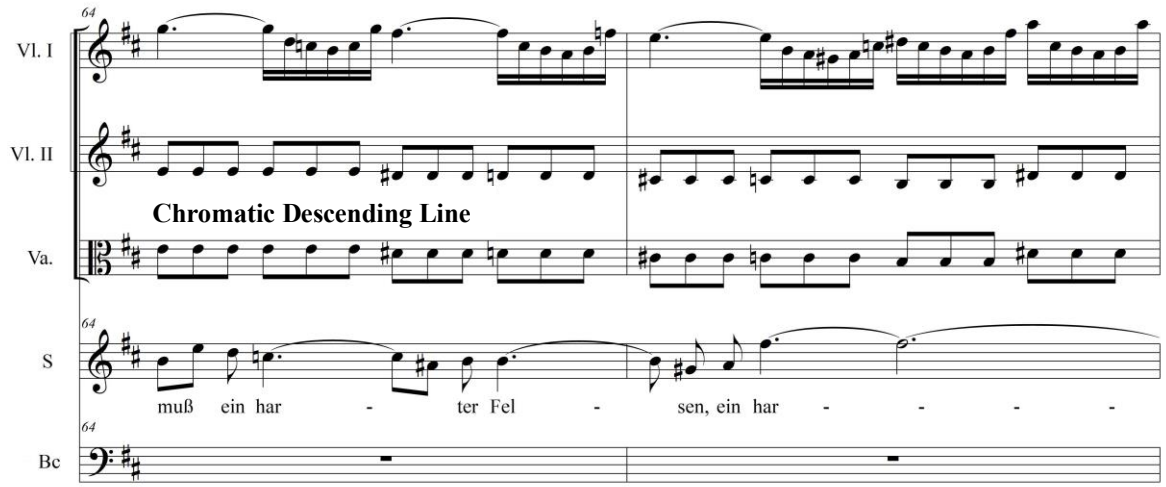


[177] Johns, *The Creative Development of Johann Sebastian Bach,* 2:130.
[178] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 228; Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 128.

In the middle section, the music is strikingly changed from a simple 4/4 to a pastoral 12/8 in Largo. The bass remains silent throughout the section, and the second violin and viola unite, raised by an octave and taking over the bass function. The absence of a strong textural basis stands for "a sinful soul's lack of a firm basis in the divinity."[179]

This section is a meditation on the name of Jesus, in which the music tries to break the stony heart of the human.[180] The soprano and the first violin are lyrical and contemplative, interacting as a duet. Whenever important notes are sustained long in the soprano line, the first violin plays tender sixteenth-note figures against the sustained notes as if appealing to soften a stony heart. The middle voice displays highly chromatic descending and ascending lines throughout the section. According to Gardiner, the chromatic gestures allude to the rock-hard human heart that refuses God's love and message of hope.[181]

Musical Example 4.2) BWV 133/4: mm. 64-65



[179] Johns, *The Creative Development*, 2:130.
[180] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 228.
[181] Gardiner, *Bach Cantatas: For the Third Day of Christmas*, 8.

The middle section indicates an impasse between two opposing inner states of the believer. It may also represent the impasse between the heart of the speaker of this cantata, who accepted God's grace and wants to transform, and the third person in the congregation who refuses to acknowledge the Gospel. Highly chromatic passages and the unsettled key that includes many modulatory gestures represent the impasse. Bach may wish to persuade the congregation to be transformed in faith so that they raise their confession of faith with one united voice at the end of the cantata.

Movement 5. Bass Recitative

The endings of Bach cantatas emphasize the anticipation of eternal life, as eternity represents the goal of faith.[182] In the bass recitative, the inner being of the believer is completely changed with eschatological perception. The meaning of Jesus's incarnation is fulfilled in the believer's inner being. He affirms in faith, that like Jesus resurrected from the dead, he will also elevate us from our death.

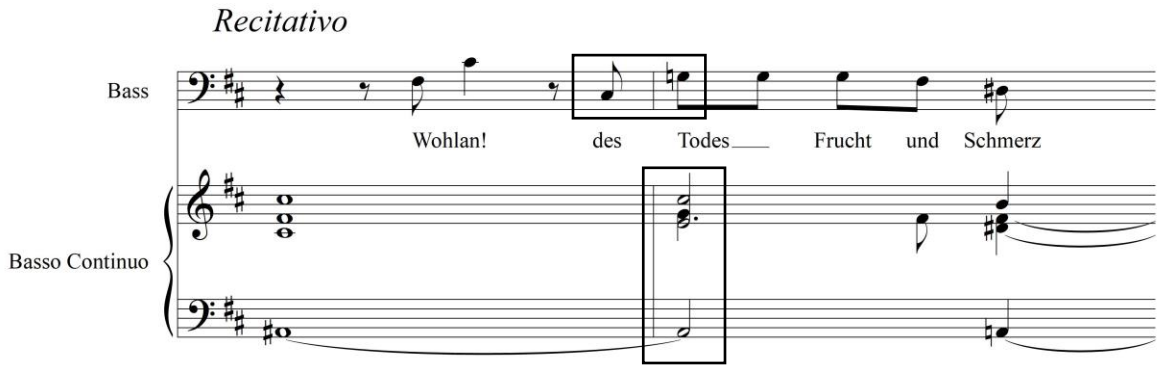
Text) BWV 133/5

Wohlan, des Todes Furcht und Schmerz	Well then, death's fear and pain
Erwägt nicht mein getröstet Herz.	Are not considered by my comforted heart.
Will er vom Himmel sich	If He would make His way
Bis zu der Erde lenken,	From heaven to earth,
So wird er auch an mich	Then He will also remember me
In meiner Gruft gedenken.	In my tomb
Wer Jesum recht erkennt,	He who knows Jesus aright,
Der stirbt nicht, wenn er stirbt,	Does not die when he dies,
Sobald er Jesum nennt.	As soon as he calls "Jesus."[183]

The recitative begins in b minor. As the recitative reflects eschatological perception, "*Todes* (death)" is a crucial word of the movement. Under the Law, death signifies punishment, whereas under the Gospel, it is connected to the eternal life. In m. 2, Bach brought out the word "*Todes* (death)" with a dissonant tritone leap in the desolate diminished chord to convey the dark and hopeless image of death. Without acceptance of the Gospel, death means fear and pain. (Musical Example 5.1)

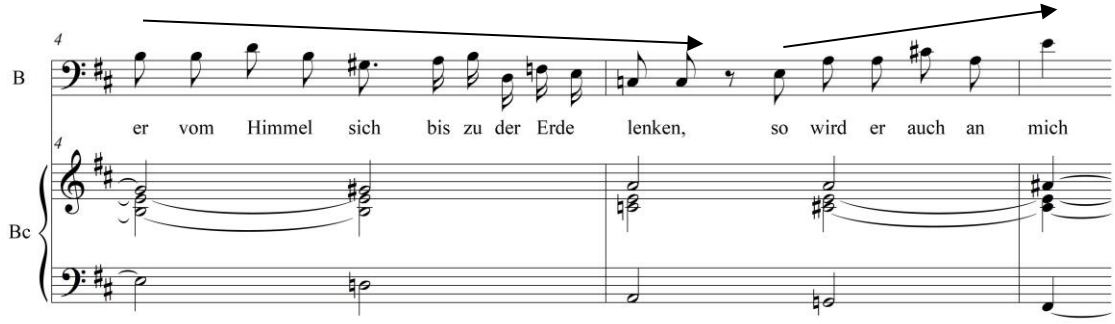
[182] Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas*, 42.
[183] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 125.

Musical Example 5.1) BWV 133/5: mm. 1-2



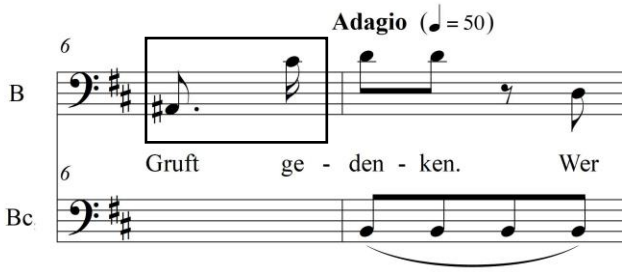
Jesus's journey from heaven to earth (*Will er vom Himmel sich bis zu der Erden lenken*) is described as a pictorial image with a long descending line in m. 4. As if the music knows the meaning and the goal of the journey (death of Jesus) that involves suffering, the text here still dwells in the minor key. However, inspired by the words "*so wird er auch an mich* (Then he will also [remember] me)," the melodic descent is soon followed by a sudden reversal of the musical line in m. 5 and the harmonic language also brightens to the major, which foreshadows the following D major key. This musical passage reflects a complete turn of the perception of death by the individual believer's faith.

Musical Example 5.2) BWV 133/5: mm. 4-5



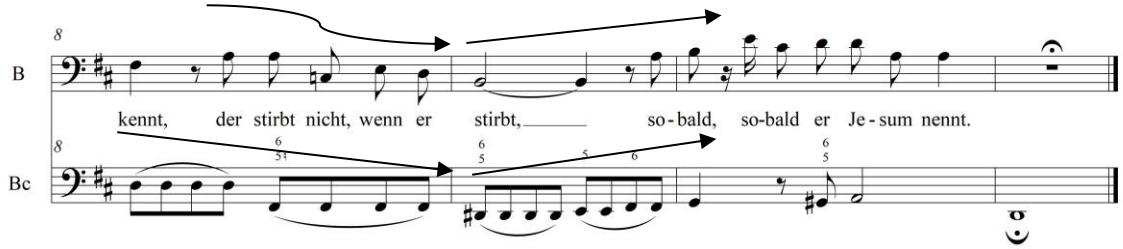
In general, Bach utilized low and high registers for the vivid expression of text. The words related to darkness are conveyed in a low register, whereas the words associated with eternal life or faith are delivered in a high register. The word "*Gruft* (tomb)" is set to the lowest note (A#2) in the piece. However, it soon moves up over one octave (C#4) on the word "*Gedenken* (remember)." The upward leap takes the music to the arioso section, in which music becomes optimistic with the lively bass line dwelling in the D major. This musical gesture reflects the believer's joyful anticipation and hope for eternal life.

Musical Example 5.3) BWV 133/5: mm. 6-7



The hopeful arioso section vividly depicts that like Jesus resurrected from the grave, he will also raise us from the dead. In mm. 8-9, the music becomes very low with descending motion. The bass line, which began at D3, shoots to F#2 and then to the very low D#2, and the melodic line also moves downward from A3 to B2, portraying the death of a human (*wenn er stirbt*). However, this descending motion soon changes direction with a large minor-seventh leap in the melody supported by an ascending bass line. This gesture is a vivid portrayal of the subsequent elevation of the flesh through Jesus. With this musical gesture, the solo concludes the recitative with a firm and confident tone assuring that eternal life will be given to those who call upon Jesus. (Musical Example 5.4)

Musical Example 5.4) BWV 133/5: mm. 8-11



Movement 6. Chorale

The chorale is the last verse of Ziegler's hymn set to an anonymous melody. Bach harmonizes the simple hymn tune with his sensitive and daring harmonies. The fifth line contains the core message of the text ("O Jesus, for thee, only for thee I live"), for which Bach modulates to A major. The overall harmonic progression of the chorale is almost identically applied to the harmonic progression of the four-part setting of the chorus in the opening movement. The following table presents the overall musical plan of the chorale:

Table 7. Musical Plan for BWV 133/6

Measures	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16
Text	*Wohl-an, so will*	*Und sollte gleich*	*O Jesu, dir*	*Auf dir, allein*
Form	a	a	b	a′
Key	DM	B minor Cadence	AM	DM

According to Terry, Bach generally preferred to close his cantatas with a hymn in plain and unpretentious form.[184] Concluding with a familiar tune and verse in plain form could seize congregation's attention, leaving a strong final impression.[185] Thus, it was considered an effective climax.[186]

The cantata that began simply with announcing the good news leads all the congregation to live for Jesus and raises their confession of faith at the end of the cantata. In the chorale, the believer shows his complete decision to follow Jesus and live in Jesus, and the decision is universalized by the voice of the chorus. The believer views death as sleep in Jesus. In the vast majority of Lutheran chorales, attention is brought to death in at least one or two verses, usually

[184] Terry, *Bach's Chorals.* vol. 2, 37.
[185] Whittaker, *The Fugitive Notes*, 28.
[186] Ibid.

at the end of the hymns.[187] In the chorales, the outlook for death is not gloomy.[188] Rather, death is the "climax of the life and departure for better and happier world."[189]

Text) BWV 133/6

Wohlan, so will ich mich	Well then, I would
An dich, o Jesu, halten,	Cling to you, O Jesus,
Und sollte gleich die Welt	Even though the world should
In tausend Stücken spalten.	Split into a thousand pieces.
O Jesu, dir, nur dir,	O Jesus, for You, only for You,
Dir leb ich ganz allein;	Just for you alone do I live;
Auf dich, allein auf dich,	In You, in You alone,
Mein Jesu, schlaf ich ein.	My Jesus, will I fall asleep.[190]

[187] Walter Edwin Buszin, "Lutheran Theology as Reflected in the Life and Works of J. S. Bach," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 12, no.12 (1950): 912.

[188] Ibid.

[189] Ibid., 912-13.

[190] Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, 125-26.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The research process has revealed about thirty-five Bach cantatas that are relatively accessible for church choirs. The selections are discussed under five categories in order to facilitate evaluation of general features and enhance performance by church choirs. Almost half of Bach's chorale cantatas were found to be relatively approachable because of their characteristic features. In addition, a small number of cantatas that contain a motet-like chorus movement were judged relatively achievable. Understanding of Baroque instruments and suggested substitutions with modern instruments will enable conductors to appropriately deal with parts written for period instruments.

In the last chapter, one of the most performable cantatas, BWV 133, is discussed in depth. The cantata was used to demonstrate how Bach constructed a cantata to function as a musical sermon that leads to a faith experience for the congregation.

Many church choirs are unfamiliar with Bach cantatas. However, once they work through the whole rehearsal process and completely master an approachable cantata, they will gain confidence to perform more difficult works in the future. In this way, more of Bach's church cantatas will be heard beyond concert halls, and in the setting for which they were originally intended.

APPENDIX

Substitution of Historical Instruments by Modern Instruments
Suggested by W. G. Whittaker[191]

According to Whittaker, it should be clear that suggestions are made only because many conductors have no other means of performing Bach's cantatas that include unobtainable instruments.[192] "If the original instrumentation is possible, of course, it should be reproduced."[193]

Historical Instrument	**Modern Substitute**	**Notes by Whittaker**
violino piccolo	violin	
violetta	viola	
viola d'amore	viola	"Sometimes the part is effective on a muted violin."[194]
viola da gamba	violincello	
violoncello piccolo	either viola or violoncello	"Sometimes it is necessary to divide the part between the two."[195]
violone	contrabass	
corno da caccia corno da tirarsi	horn	
tromba da tirarsi, Clarino, Principale	trumpet	
cornetto	trumpet	"Sometimes, if the pitch be low, a horn may be substituted."[196]
flute à bec	flute	
flauto traverso	flute	
flauto piccolo	piccolo	

[191] Whittaker, *Fugitive notes on Certain Cantatas*, 254.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.

BWV 133

Ich freue mich in dir

READING OF THE GOSPEL

Event: Cantata for 3rd day of Christmas (St. John's Day)

Readings: Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-14 / Gospel: John 1:1-14

Hebrew 1:1-14 (God spoke through his Son, who is superior to the angels)

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the

same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

[King James Version]

John 1:1-14 (Prologue: In the beginning was the Word..and the Word became flesh)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

[King James Version]

TRANSLATIONS OF THE TEXT FROM TWO SCHOLARS

No.1 [Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts: An Interlinear Translation with Reference Guide to Biblical Quotations and Allusions by **Melvin P. Unger**][197]

1. Chorus (Chorale Vs. 1)

-Christ's birth: A glad welcome to Jesus, my brother

Ich freue mich in dir
I rejoice - in thee
Und heiße dich willkommen,
And bid thee welcome
Mein liebes Jesulein!
My dear little-Jesus!
Du hast dir vorgenommen,
Thou hast – undertaken,
Mein Brüderlein zu sein.
My little-brother to be
(To become my little brother)
Ach, wie ein süßer Ton!
Ah, what a sweet sound!
Wie freundlich sieht er aus,
How friendly - he appears,
Der große Gottessohn!
The great Son-of-God!

2. Alto Aria (Based on Chorale Vs. 2)
-Incarnation: We see God face to face!

Getrost! es faßt ein heilger Leib
Be-of-good-cheer! (now) holds a holy body
(Be of good cheer! Now a holy body holds)
Des Höchsten unbegreiflichs Wesen.
The Most-High's incomprehensible substance.
Ich habe Gott - wie wohl ist mir geschehen!-
I have God – how well (for) me has-happened!
(How blessed I am – I have seen God)
Von Angesicht zu Angesicht gesehen.
face to face seen.
(face to face!)
Ach! meine Seele muß genesen.

[197] Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*, 460-63.

Ah! my soul must (now) recover.

3. Tenor Recit. (Based on Chorale Vs. 2)
-Christmas: God has come; we will not hide like Adam

Ein Adam mag sich voller Schrecken
An Adam may - filled-with terror
Vor Gottes Angesicht
and from God's face
(Hide himself from God's face)
Im Paradies verstecken!
In paradise hide (himself)
Der allerhöchste Gott kehrt selber bei uns ein:
The Most-High God lodges himself with us -:
Und so entsetzet sich mein Herze nicht;
And thus is-alarmed - my heart not;
Es kennet sein erbarmendes Gemüte.
It knows his compassionate disposition.
Aus unermeßner Güte
Out-of unmeasured kindness
Wird er ein kleines Kind
Becomes he a little child.
(He becomes a little child)
Und heißt mein Jesulein.
And is-called my little-Jesus.

4. Soprano Aria (Based on Chorale Vs. 3)
-Christ's birth: How sweet the news is!

Wie lieblich klingt es in den Ohren,
How lovely rings - in my ears,
Dies Wort: mein Jesus ist geboren,
This word : my Jesus is born,
Wie dringt es in das Herz hinein!
How penetrates it into (my) heart - !
Wer Jesu Namen nicht versteht
Whoever Jesus' name (does) not understand
Und wem es nicht durchs Herze geht,
And whomever it (does) not to-the heart go.
(And whoever is not stuck to the heart by this word.)
Der muß ein harter Felsen sein.
He must(indeed) a hard rock be.
(Must be as hard as rock)

5. Bass Recit. (Based on Chorale Vs. 3)
-Christ's coming to earth takes away fear of death

Wohlan, des Todes Furcht und Schmerz
Well-then, death's fear and pain
Erwägt nicht mein getröstet Herz.
Consider not my comforted heart.
(Well then, mu comforted heart gives no thought to death's fear and pain.)
Will er vom Himmel sich
Would he from heaven -
Bis zu der Erde lenken,
To the earth journey,
So wird er auch an mich
Then will he also of me
(Then he will also be mindful of me)
In meiner Gruft gedenken.
In my tomb mindful-be.
Wer Jesum recht erkennt,
Whoever Jesus truly knows,
Wer stirbt nicht, wenn er stirbt,
He dies not when he dies,
(He does not die when he dies,)
Sobald er Jesum nennt.
As-soon-as he Jesus names.
(As soon as he names the name of Jesus.)

6. Chorale (Vs. 4)
-Holding fast to Jesus in life and death

Wohlan, so will ich mich
Well-then! Then would I -
An dich, o Jesu, halten,
To thee o Jesus, cleave,
Und sollte gleich die Welt
And should though the world
(Even if the world should)
In tausend Stücken spalten.
Into (a) thousand pieces split.
(Break into a thousand pieces.)
O Jesu, dir, nur dir,
O Jesus, for-thee, only for-thee,
Dir leb ich ganz allein;
For-thee live I – only;

(Will I live;)
Auf dich, allein auf dich,
In thee, only in thee,
Mein Jesu, schlaf ich ein.
My Jesus, fall-I-asleep.
(My Jesus will I fall asleep.) [einschlafen= to fall asleep]

No. 2 [Johann Sebastian Bach: Cantata texts, sacred and secular, with a reconstruction of the Leipzig liturgy of his period by **Charles Sanford Terry**][198]

1. Chorus

In Thee do I rejoice, and with a welcome greet Thee,
O dearest Jesu mine! Thy promise giv'st Thou truly
My brother e'er to stand. How dear the name doth sound!
And O, th' unmeasured love in God's dear Son is found!

2. Alto Aria
O joy, God veils His majesty
In our poor flesh. Mysterious blessing!
Now He is mine! How rare the lot falls to me!
Yea, evermore and evermore He loves me.
Ah, how my soul doth find refreshing!

3. Tenor Recitative
Old Adam once, with anguish riven, before God's angry
Face from Paradise was driven. But God's Almighty Self
now seeks us sinners out. And so, affright thee not, my
fearful heart, but recognize thy Father's sweet compassion,
Who, as a mortal fashioned, sends down His dearest
Son, the Savior, full of grace!

4. Soprano Aria
How sweetly in mine ear is ringing
The thought that all my heart is singing:
"Jesus is born in Bethlehem!"
Who Jesus' name hath never known,
Nor e'er been moved His love to own,
Must like a rock in hardness seem.
[Bars 14, 39, 40 klingt es = ringing. Bar 35 Mein = How. Bar 40 in dem = sweetly.]

[198] Charles Sanford Terry, *Johann Sebastian Bach: Cantata texts, sacred and secular, with a reconstruction of the Leipzig liturgy of his period* (London: Constable & Company, 1926), 96-97.

5. Bass Recitative
‘Tis well! The smart and sting of death can smite
No more my trusting heart. Now God from heaven’s seat
Hath to this earth descended, I know that I shall be within
My grave befriended. Whom Jesus deigns to love expires
Not in the tomb, but meets his Lord above.

6. Chorale
So, come whate’er betide, on Jesus will I stay me.
Let earth to atoms break, yet shall it not dismay me.
Lord Jesus, ‘tis on Thee alone my heart is set,
And resting on Thy love, earth’s ills can never fret.

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