

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 95

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NBA I/23; BC A136

16. S. after Trinity (BWV 161, 95, 8, 27)

*Eph. 3:13–21 (Paul's prayer for the Ephesians; that they be spiritually strengthened)

*Lk. 7:11–17 (Resurrection of boy at Nain)

Librettist: Unknown

FP: 12 September 1723 (St. Thomas)

Form: Chorus/T Recit/Chorus - Recit (S) + Chorale (S) - Arioso/Recit (T) + Aria (T) - Recit (B) - Chorale

In the cantata for the previous Sunday (BWV 138), Bach integrated the genres of chorale, chorus, and aria (using a single chorale). Here, in Cantata 95, he integrates chorale and recitative in the first movement and joins chorales with arias in two other movement pairs. He uses a different chorale in each of the 4 instances. Since chorales represent the voice of the church, death is faced here with the support of the Christian community. Martin Petzoldt notes that all 4 chorales were well-known funeral hymns and thus served a catechismal function. See "Bach Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 464.

J.S. Bach Cantata No. 95 Christus, der ist mein Leben

It is unusual to have 2 different chorales represented in the same movement. For other usages of these 2 chorales, see 106/3b, 125/1.

95/1. (Chorus) • Yearning for death: Christ is my life, death is gain (95/1).

(Andante $\text{♩} = 80$)

(Cantus firmus in Soprano)

Strings echo oboes d'amores in alternate measures and Vln I adds rising 16th note scales. Triple meter and syncopated rhythm give the material a light-hearted mood. The opening motive seems to be derived from the beginning of the chorale tune.

Instrumentation:

Corno

Oboe d'amore I, II

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo

Horn doubling soprano

(chorale tune) in 95/1 & 95/7

G major

E minor

C major

G major

13. Soprano (Mel.: „Christus, der ist mein Leben“)

Horn doubles chorale tune.

Chri-stus. der ist mein Le - - - ben,

For Christ my Sav - iour live I,

This chorale is normally in 4/4 meter. Bach's change produces a lilting effect.

Alto

Chri-stus, der ist mein Le - - - ben,

For Christ my Sav - iour live I,

Tenor

Chri-stus, der ist mein Le - - - ben,

For Christ my Sav - iour live I,

Bass

Chri-stus, der ist mein Le - - - ben,

For Christ my Sav - iour live I,

The 2 chorales in this movement are set homophonically. The choir begins with a simple 4-part statement of the first chorale phrase, while instruments continue the lilting, syncopated, material.

CHORUS

G major

G major

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18.

Text painting: The second phrase of the chorale is treated with successive voice entries in descending order (S-A-T-B) and strong dissonances, while instruments continue lilting rhythm. Slowing down this phrase of the hymn (quoting Philipians 1:21) was apparently a Leipzig tradition. See Dürr/Jones, 549, Petzoldt, "Bach Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 465-66.

p Ster - dy -

p Ster - dy -

E minor A minor

23.

Dramatic pause, then Instruments (except horn doubling S) drop out for 1 measure.

ben ist mein Ge - winn;
ing, glo - ry I gain;

ben ist mein Ge - winn;
ing, glo - ry I gain;

p Ster - dy - ben ist mein Ge - winn;
ing, glo - ry I gain;

p Ster - dy - ben ist mein Ge - winn;
ing, glo - ry I gain;

Lilting ritornello with alternating oboes d'amore and strings continues.

Instruments (except horn) drop out for 1 measure.

E minor D# dim. 7

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29.

E minor A minor

34.

E minor cresc.

37.

E minor

40.

Third phrase of chorale set simply in 4 vocal parts, while instruments continue liting material.

A

dem thu' ich mich er - ge - - ben.
my all to Je - sus give I

dem thu' ich mich er - ge - - ben,
my all to Je - sus give I

dem thu' ich mich er - ge - - ben,
my all to Je - sus give I

A

mf

E minor G major D major

45.



B minor

49.

Fourth phrase of
chorale set similarly
with lilting material
continued in instruments.



E minor

G major

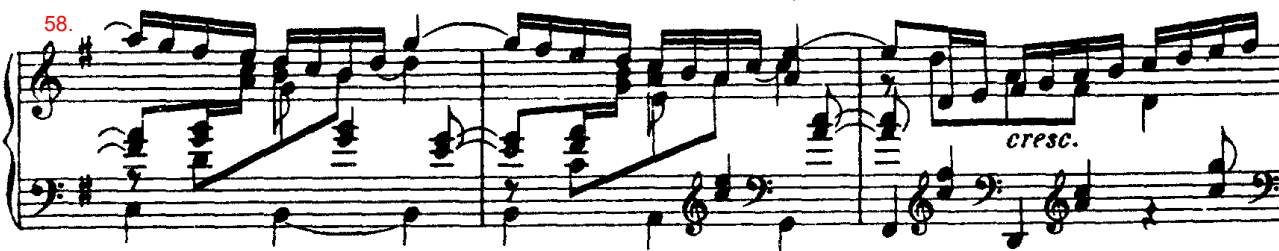
53.



E minor

C major

58.



61.



G major

64. *Arioso*

B Tenor

Mit Freu - - - - - den, ja, ja! mit Herzens.
With joy, - - - - - yea, with joy-ful, hap-py-

Instruments continue with lilting material, to continue the mood of light-hearted joy.

G major

68.

lust will ich von hinnen, von hin-nen schei - - - - -
heart, will I be go-ing, will I be go - - - - -

A minor

72.

Secco Recitative

(Recitative)

(a tempo)

- den.
- ing.

Und hiess'es heu-te noch: „Du musst!“

And if to-day I hear Thy call,

Alternation of single bars of recitative with instrumental interjections to depict the vacillation between fear and joy in the face of physical death. Modulatory sequence suggests apprehension.

D major

D minor

E minor

76.

(Recit.)

(a tempo)

(Recit.)

so bin ich wil-lig und be - reit,
I glad-ly then will bring to Thee

den ar-menLeib, die
the fee-ble frame, the

G major

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79. (a tempo) (Recit.) (a tempo)

abgezehrten Glieder, das Kleid der Sterblich - keit,
pu-ny wast-ed bod-y which cloaks mor-tal - i - ty,

A minor F7

Eric Chafe writes, "A pronounced catabasis (both tonal and melodic) from G major to C minor marks the turn from the perfect triad and meter associated with the perfect (Christ) to the imperfect (mortality)." See "Tonal Allegory," 172.

82. (Recit.) (a tempo)

der Er - de wieder in ih - ren Schoss zu bringen.
and back to earth in Thy bos - om will re - turn it.

B-flat major B dim. 7 C minor

85. (Recit.) (a tempo)

Mein Sterbelied ist schon gemacht: ach, dürft'ich's, ach, dürft'ich's heute sin - gen:!
Hear Thou the song that I would sing; ah, might I, ah, might I this day sing it!

C minor G minor C minor D major D7

Horn (with accompanying regular oboes) foreshadows each chorale phrase.

89. (Allegro $\text{♩} = 80$)

G major G minor B-flat major G minor A major 6

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This is the second chorale in this movement. Voices sing the hymn in simple 4-part, chordal setting with independent Vln I, continuo playing continuous 8ths, while other instruments double voices. Certain words receive emphasis, however.

94.

(Mel: „Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' dahin:“)

C

Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' da - hin
In peace and joy I pass a - way

Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' da - hin
In peace and joy I pass a - way

Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' da - hin
In peace and joy I pass a - way

Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr' da - hin
In peace and joy I pass a - way

This chorale is Luther's paraphrase of the Nunc dimittis: Luke 2:29 ("Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace...").

Horn prefigures the next chorale phrase.

C

G minor D minor

99.

nach Got - tes Wil -
in God con - fid -

nach Got - tes Wil -
in God con - fid -

nach Got - tes Wil -
in God con - fid -

nach Got - tes Wil -
in God con - fid -

"Will" (i.e., God's will) receives emphasis.

D minor

105.

D

len,
ing, ge -
His

- - len, ge -
- - ing, His

- - len, ge -
- - ing, His

len, ge -
ing, His

Horn prefigures the next chorale phrase.

110.

trost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn.
will with heart and soul o - bey,

trost — ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,
will — with heart and soul o - bey,

trost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,
will — with heart and soul o - bey,

trost ist mir mein Herz und Sinn,
will with heart and soul o - bey,

"Heart" receives emphasis.

Horn prefigures the next chorale phrase.

F major

G minor

G minor

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115.

B-flat major

Dynamic markings are editorial additions.

119.

sanft und stil - - - le.
safe a - bid - - - ing.

"Still" receives emphasis.

sanft und stil - - - le.
safe a - bid - - - ing.

sanft und stil - - - le.
safe a - bid - - - ing.

sanft und stil - - - le.
safe a - bid - - - ing.

Horn prefigures the next chorale phrase.

B-flat major G minor B-flat major B-flat major

123.

G minor C minor

127.

E

Wie Gott mir ver - hei - ssen hat:
Here on earth I've naught_ to fear;

Wie Gott mir ver - hei - ssen hat:
Here on earth I've naught_ to fear;

Wie Gott mir ver - hei - ssen hat:
Here on earth I've naught_ to fear;

Wie Gott mir ver - hei - ssen hat:
Here on earth I've naught_ to fear;

Horn prefigures the next chorale phrase.

G minor B-flat major

132.

Der Tod ist
e - ter - nal

Der Tod ist
e - ter - nal

Der Tod ist
e - ter - nal

Der Tod ist
e - ter - nal

G minor

137.

mein Schlaf wor - den.
life a - waits me.

mein Schlaf wor - den.
life a - waits me.

mein Schlaf wor - den, der Tod ist mein Schlaf wor - den.
life a - waits me, e - ter - nal life a - waits me.

mein Schlaf wor - den, der Tod ist mein Schlaf wor - den.
life a - waits me, e - ter - nal life a - waits me.

G major

Secco recitative.

95/2. Recitative and Choral • Worldly pleasures deceitful; rejected for heaven (95/2).

1. Soprano

G

B-flat

A

C#

D

E

Chromatic completion
in the voice part in
9 mm.

Nun, fal - sche Welt, nun hab'ich wei - ter nichts mit dir zu
Hear, faith - less world, for me thy emp - ty joys have no more

A7

3. F

B

thun! Mein Haus ist schon be - stellt, ich kann weit sanfter ruh'n, als da ich sonst bei
zest, my home is all pre - pared, where I may safe - ly rest; no long - er here on

D minor

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6. G-sharp C

dir, an deines Babels Flüs-sen, das Wol-lust-Salz verschlucken müs-sen,
earth in Ba-bel's flood to wal-low, and pleas-ure's brine dis-gust-ed swal-low,

The Babylon reference (Luther: Babel;) alludes to biblical passages such as Ps. 137:1 ("By the waters of Babylon...") and Rev. 18:2 ("Fallen is Babylon the great:").

A minor F# D#

wenn ich an deinem Lust-Re-vier nur So-dom's Äp-fel konn-te brechen.
like them who from the tree of life, for-bid-den fruit have wrong-ly bro-ken.

Sodom's destruction is mentioned in Genesis 19:24-26, 2 Peter 2:6, 9, Jude 1:7. Sodom's apples is referenced by the Jewish historian Josephus. See Josephus, translated Thackeray IV: 483-485. See also 179/3. It appears also in other, later sources. See Petzoldt, "Bach Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 463.

11. A minor

Nein, nein!- nun kann ich mit ge-lass'nerm Mu-the spre-chen:
Ah, no! I can-not rest un-til this word is spo-ken:

"Gelassenheit" (composure/resignation) is identified by Johann Arndt (the author of "Wahres Christentum," a highly influential book that Bach also owned) as an essential requirement for the Christian believer. See Petzoldt, "Bach Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 468.

E minor B minor

95/3. Third chorale in this cantata, set as a tranquil, aria-like solo.
Chorale (Mel.: „Valet will ich dir geben.“) • World rejected & given farewell; heaven anticipated (95/3).
(Lento $\text{♩} = 72$) 1.

Va-let will ich dir ge-ben, du ar-ge, fal-sche
To thee, thou world of e-vil, I glad-ly bid "Fare-

Soprano presents cantus firmus against obligato of unison oboes d'amore.
This chorale is normally in 4/4 meter. Bach's change produces a lilting effect, reinforced by the accompaniment.

Continuo alone.

D major Bass has ostinato motive

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7.

**Welt,
well;"**

This keyboard reduction is misleading. In the score, the 2 oboes d'amore play a figure in unison (usually four 16ths and and 8th starting on the fourth 8th note) leading to the down beat (two eighths). This figure is offset with the bass motive (which always leads to the third beat). The resulting juxtaposition may be intended to suggest the contrasting entities of heaven and the world.

Obs.d'amore enter in unison.

11.

dein sünd - - lich bö - - ses
thy harsh and faith - - less

G major

15.

Le - - - - ben durch - aus mir nicht ge -
fash - - - - ions, are but an emp - ty

D major B minor

19.

**fällt.
shell.**

D major

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23.

Abgesang of Chorale.

Im To Him - - - mel
To Heav - - - en,

D major

26.

ist gut woh - - - - - nen, hin -
hap - - - py dwell - - - - - ing, 'tis

F# minor

29.

auf steht mein' Be - gier,
there that I would go,

A major

32.

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36.

da wird Gott e - - - wig
where God has called the

A major D major

39.

loh - - - - - nen dem, der ihm
faith - - - - - ful, who serve Him

E minor F#7 B7 E minor

42.

dient all - - - hier.
here - - - - - be - - - low.

Ritornello (which was missing at the beginning) ends the movement.

A7 D major

45.

D major

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95/4. **Recitative** • Secco recitative • Yearning for death: It will mark the end of all woe (95/4).

1. **Tenor**

Ach! könnte mir doch bald so wohl geschehn, dass ich den Tod, das Ende al-ler
Ah! would that soon it hap- pen now to me, that I may die, from all my trou- bles

B minor

G major

4.

Noth, in mei-nen Gliedern könn - te seh'n; ich woll - te ihn zu
fly, and rest in peace e - ter - nal - ly; I would that I might

C# major

F# minor

F# major

6.

meinem Leibgedin-ge wäh-len und al-le Stunden nach ihm zählen.
in my ea-ger arms en-fold Him; I wait the hour when I be-hold Him.

B minor

A major

95/5. **Aria** • Yearning for death: May the hour soon strike! (95/5).

Da capo aria

(Adagio ma non troppo $\text{♩} = 60$)

1. Obs. d'amore lead.

mf

D major

The parallel sixths and thirds in 8th notes of the oboes d'amore end with an upwardly inflected motive of two 16ths, 8th, quarter, played by Oboe I and echoed (piano marking by Bach) by Oboe II, suggesting the inflected ending of a question or perhaps even a cuckoo clock.

4.

Ob. d'am. I

Ob. d'am. II

E minor

Calm oboe d'amore lines, vigorous voice part, "tension-filled harmonies" (see Dürr/Jones 550).

Strings are pizzicato, suggesting the ticking of a clock (the inexorable passing of time). Oboes d'amore play parallel 6ths in 8th notes.

See also BWV 8/1 where pizzicato strings represent the ticking clock in the face of death and a transverse flute plays rapid repeated notes to suggest the death bell.



7.

G major

10.

13.

G# dim. 7

A major

16. **Tenor** Syllabic declamation gives the aria a light-hearted affect.

Ach, schlage doch bald, ach, schlage doch bald, schlage doch,
 Ah, strike you now soon, ah, strike you now soon, strike you now,

D major

19.

schlage doch, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge - Stun - de,
 strike you now, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed - ho - ur,

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22.

ach, schlage doch bald, ach, schlage doch bald, schlage doch,
 ah, strike you now soon, ah, strike you now soon, strike you now,

p *pp* *p*

E minor

25.

schlage doch, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge - Stun - de,
 strike you now, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed - ho - ur,

pp

28.

ach, schlage doch bald, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge
 ah, strike you now soon, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed

p

A7

31.

Stunde, schlage doch bald den al - ler - letzten Glocken - schlag, schlage doch
 ho - ur, strike you now soon, at last to - death must I a - way, strike you now

pp

D# dim. 7

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34.

bald den al - ler - letzten Glocken - schlag!
soon, at last to death must I a - way.

p *mf*

E major A major

37.

p

40.

mf

B minor

43.

Ach, schlage doch bald. ach, schlage doch bald,
Ah, strike you now soon, ah, strike you now soon,

p *pp*

A7

46.

schlage doch, schlage doch, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge —
strike you now, strike you now, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed —

p

D major

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49.

Stun - de, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge
 ho - ur, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed

G major

52.

Stun - de, ach, schlage doch bald, sel' - ge
 ho - ur, ah, strike you now soon, bless - ed

D major

55.

E minor

Stunde, schlage doch bald den al - ler-letzten Glocken - schlag, schlage doch
 ho - ur, strike you now soon, at last to death must I a - way, strike you now

G major A7 D major G# dim. 7

58.

bald den al - ler-letzten Glockenschlag!
 soon, at last to death must I a - way.

A7 D major

61.

E minor

65.

G major

69.

72.

G# dim. 7

A7

75.

Komm! Come,

komm,komm, ich rei-che dir die
come, come, to thee my hands are

D major

F#7

B minor

B major

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78.

Hän - de, komm, mach meiner Nothein En - de, du längst er -
 reach - ing, for thy re-lief from care be - seech - ing, my long a -

E minor G major E7

82.

Trills perhaps intended to indicate shivering.

seufzter, du längst er - seufz - ter Ster-be-tag, du längst er - seufzter Ster-be -
 wait - ed, my long a - wait - ed part-ing day, my long a - wait - ed part-ing -

A minor D# dim. 7 E minor

86.

tag!
 day.

mf

E minor

89.

Komm, komm, ich rei - che dir die Hän - de, komm.
 Come, come, to thee my hands are reach - ing, for

E7 A major

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92.

ma - che meiner Nothein En - de, du längst er - seufzter, du
thy re - lief from care be - seech - ing, my long a - wait - ed, my

A# dim. 7 B minor

96.

längst er - seufz - ter Ster - be - tag, du längst er - seufz - ter Ster - be -
long a - wait - ed part - ing day, my long a - wait - ed part - ing

C#7 F# minor

99.

tag, du längst er - seufzter Sterbe - tag.
day, my long a - wait - ed part - ing day.

G#7 C# major Da Capo. F# major

95/6.

Recitative

•Death is gateway to God; Christ wakes me from sleep (95/6).

1.

Bass

Secco recitative with arioso ending as is common for Bach.

Denn ich weiss dies, und glaub' es ganz ge - wiss, dass ich aus meinem
For I am sure, and through my faith se - cure, that at my res - ur -
Possible allusion here to Martha's statement of faith after her brother Lazarus had died: "Martha said to [Jesus], "I know that he will
rise again in the resurrection at the last day." (John 11:24).

B minor A major

3.

Gra-be ganz einen sichern Zugang zu dem Vater ha-be. Mein Tod ist nur ein
rec-tion I will en-joy in full al - might-y God's af-fec-tion. My death_ is but a
 Possible allusion to Ephesians 2:18: "Through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."

D major D major

6.

Schlaf, dadurch der Leib, der hier von Sor-gen ab - ge - nommen, zur Ru - he
sleep, where-by my soul will find, when dawns the hap - py mor - row, re - lief from
 Reference to death as sleep may allude to the Gospel reading of the day: Luke 7:11–17, Jesus raising a young boy to life.

B7 E minor

Reference to lost sheep possibly alludes to Ezekiel 34:11–12: "Thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock when some of his sheep have been scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep....'" See also Jesus' parable of the lost sheep, e.g., Matthew 18: 10–14.

8.

kommen. Sucht nur ein Hir-te sein ver-lor'-nes Schaf, wie soll-te Je-sus
sor - row. My faith-ful shep-herd watch-es well His sheep, should I be lost, still
 Possible allusion to Ephesians 5:23: "Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior."

E minor A# dim. 7 B minor

11.

mich nicht wie-der fin-den, da er mein Haupt und ich sein Gliedmass bin?!
He will sure - ly find me. I am of His and He is part of me.

A major C#7 F# minor

13.

(a tempo $\text{♩} = 60$.)

So kann ich nun mit fro-hen Sin-nen mein se-lig Auf-er-
So may I leave all care be-hind me, for I will rise— a-

F# minor D major E minor

Possible allusion to John 11:25-26: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.'"

15.

steh'n auf meinem Hei-land grün-den.
gain to meet my bless-ed Sav-iour.

G major E minor G major

Text painting: rising scales in continuo bass to suggest resurrection.

95/7. Chorale (Mel: „Wenn mein Stündlein vorhanden ist.“)

•Resurrection of Christ assures my ascension (95/7).

This is the fourth chorale in this cantata.

A Vln. I descant high above the voices extends the texture to 5 parts. It becomes increasingly independent, perhaps suggesting release from the bonds of earth (text painting).

Soprano
Weil du vom Tod er-stan-den bist, werd' ich im Grab nicht blei-ben; dein
Like Thee the grave will not hold me for— long in its— sub-jec-tion, from

Alto
Weil du vom Tod er-stan-den bist, werd' ich im Grab nicht blei-ben; dein
Like Thee the grave will not hold me for long—in its sub-jec-tion, from

Tenor
Weil du vom Tod er-stan-den bist, werd' ich im Grab nicht blei-ben; dein
Like Thee the grave will not hold me for long in its— sub-jec-tion, from

Bass
Weil du vom Tod er-stan-den bist, werd' ich im Grab nicht blei-ben; dein
Like Thee the grave will not hold me for long—in its sub-jec-tion, from

G major

Vln I obbligato outlines the opening of the chorale "Was Gott tut das ist wohlgetan."

5.

Abgesang

letztes Wort mein' Auffahrt ist, all' Furcht kannst du ver - trei - ben: denn wo du bist, da_

death Thy words have_ set me free, they are my res-ur - rec - tion; for where Thou art, there_

höchster Trost dein Auf - fahrt ist,"
greatest comfort thy ascension is)

letz - tes Wort mein' Auffahrt ist, all' Furcht kannst du ver - trei - ben: denn wo du bist, da_

death Thy words have_ set me free, they are my res-ur - rec - tion; for where Thou art, there

letztes Wort mein' Auffahrt ist, all' Furcht kannst du ver - trei - ben: denn wo du bist, da_

death Thy words have set me free, they are_ my_ res-ur - rec - tion; for where Thou art, there_

letztes Wort mein' Auffahrt ist, all' Furcht kannst du ver - trei - ben: denn wo du bist, da_

death Thy words have_ set_ me free, they are my res-ur - rec - tion; for_ where Thou art, there_

Harmonic coloring of dispersing the "fear of death."

Vln I obbligato outlines the opening of the chorale "Was Gott tut das ist wohlgetan" in diminution.

10.

E minor

D7 E minor A minor G# dim.7 D7 G major

komm' ich hin, dass ich stets bei dir leb' und bin. Drum fahr' ich hin mit Freu - den!

will I be, to live for - ev - er near to Thee. So forth I go re - joic - ing.

The end of the chorale is set with increasing animation, suggesting the idea of movement to heaven and increasing joy.

komm' ich hin, dass ich stets bei dir leb' und bin. Drum fahr' ich hin mit Freu - den!

will I be, to live for - ev - er near to Thee. So forth I go re - joic - ing.

komm' ich hin, dass ich stets bei dir leb' und bin. Drum fahr' ich hin mit Freu - den!

will I be, to live for - ev - er near to Thee. So forth I go re - joic - ing.

Descending bass line contrasts with the ascending violin descant of the beginning (descent into death equals ascent to heaven).

komm' ich hin, dass ich stets bei dir leb' und bin. Drum fahr' ich hin mit Freu - den!

will I be, to live for - ev - er near to Thee. So forth I go re - joic - ing.

G major

D major

G major

G major