

Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750
Cantatas Vol 6: Köthen/Frankfurt

CD 1 54:53 For the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele BWV 69a
Geist und Seele wird verwirret BWV 35
Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren BWV 137
Katharine Fuge *soprano*, Robin Tyson *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Peter Harvey *bass*

CD 2 57:03 For the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben BWV 77
Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet BWV 164
Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ BWV 33

Gillian Keith *soprano*, Nathalie Stutzmann *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Jonathan Brown *bass*

The Monteverdi Choir
The English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner

Live recordings from the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage
Jakobskirche, Köthen, 10 September 2000
Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt, 17 September 2000

Soit Deo Gloria

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SDG 134

Bach Cantatas Gardiner

6

Bach Cantatas
Gardiner



The Bach Cantata Pilgrimage

On Christmas Day 1999 a unique celebration of the new Millennium began in the Herderkirche in Weimar, Germany: the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists under the direction of Sir John Eliot Gardiner set out to perform all Johann Sebastian Bach's surviving church cantatas in the course of the year 2000, the 250th anniversary of Bach's death.

The cantatas were performed on the liturgical feasts for which they were composed, in a year-long musical pilgrimage encompassing some of the most beautiful churches throughout Europe (including many where Bach himself performed) and culminating in three concerts in New York over the Christmas festivities at the end of the millennial year. These recordings were made during the course of the Pilgrimage.

CD 1 54:53 For the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

1-6	17:18	Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele BWV 69a
7-13	24:32	Geist und Seele wird verwirret BWV 35
14-18	12:49	Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren BWV 137

Katharine Fuge *soprano*, Robin Tyson *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Peter Harvey *bass*

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The Monteverdi Choir

Sopranos

Suzanne Flowers
Lucinda Houghton
Gillian Keith
Emma Preston-Dunlop
Belinda Yates
Katharine Fuge

Altos

Lucy Ballard
Elinor Carter
Angus Davidson
Robin Tyson

Tenors

Simon Davies
Rory O'Connor
Paul Tindall
Andrew Busher

Basses

Christopher Foster
Charles Pott
Geoffrey Davidson
Lawrence Wallington

The English

Baroque Soloists

First Violins

Kati Debretzeni
Nicolette Moonen
Foskien Kooistra
Penelope Spencer
Sarah Bealby-Wright

Second Violins

Anne Schumann
Oliver Webber
Desmond Heath
Hildburg Williams

Violas

Annette Isserlis
Lisa Cochrane
Colin Kitching

Cellos

Daniel Yeadon
Lynden Cranham

Double Bass

Valerie Botwright

Flute

Rachel Beckett

Oboes

Marcel Ponseeele
Mark Baigent
Cherry Forbes

Bassoon

Philip Turbett

Trumpets

Niklas Eklund
Marc Ulrich
Frøde Jakobsen

Timpani

David Corkhill

Harpsichord

Silas John Standage

Organ

Ian Watson

Bach Cantatas
Gardiner



Johann Sebastian Bach 1685-1750
Cantatas Vol 6: Köthen/Frankfurt

CD 1 54:53 For the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

17:18 Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele BWV 69a

- 1 (4:57) 1. *Coro* Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele
- 2 (0:49) 2. *Recitativo: Sopran* Ach, dass ich tausend Zungen hätte!
- 3 (5:53) 3. *Aria: Tenor* Meine Seele, auf, erzähle
- 4 (1:23) 4. *Recitativo: Alt* Gedenk ich nur zurück
- 5 (3:20) 5. *Aria: Bass* Mein Erlöser und Erhalter
- 6 (0:56) 6. *Choral* Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan

24:32 Geist und Seele wird verwirret BWV 35

Part I

- 7 (5:15) 1. *Sinfonia*
- 8 (7:49) 2. *Aria: Alt* Geist und Seele wird verwirret
- 9 (1:21) 3. *Recitativo: Alt* Ich wundre mich
- 10 (2:51) 4. *Aria: Alt* Gott hat alles wohlgemacht

Part II

- 11 (3:25) 5. *Sinfonia*
- 12 (1:02) 6. *Recitativo: Alt* Ach, starker Gott
- 13 (2:48) 7. *Aria: Alt* Ich wünsche nur bei Gott zu leben

12:49 Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren BWV 137

- 14 (2:57) 1. *Versus I: Coro* Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren
- 15 (3:15) 2. *Versus II: Alt* Lobe den Herren, der alles so herrlich regieret
- 16 (3:07) 3. *Versus III: Sopran, Bass* Lobe den Herren, der künstlich und fein dich bereitet
- 17 (2:35) 4. *Versus IV: Tenor* Lobe den Herren, der deinen Stand sichtbar gesegnet
- 18 (0:54) 5. *Versus V: Choral* Lobe den Herren, was in mir ist, lobe den Namen!

CD 2 57:03 For the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

17:47 Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben BWV 77

- 1 (5:49) 1. *Coro con Choral* Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben
- 2 (0:37) 2. *Recitativo: Bass* So muss es sein!
- 3 (4:01) 3. *Aria: Sopran* Mein Gott, ich liebe dich von Herzen
- 4 (0:56) 4. *Recitativo: Tenor* Gib mir dabei, mein Gott! ein Samariterherz
- 5 (4:09) 5. *Aria: Alt* Ach, es bleibt in meiner Liebe
- 6 (2:13) 6. *Choral* Ach Herr, ich wollte ja dein Recht

16:16 Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet BWV 164

- 7 (4:11) 1. *Aria: Tenor* Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet
- 8 (1:45) 2. *Recitativo: Bass* Wir hören zwar, was selbst die Liebe spricht
- 9 (4:43) 3. *Aria: Alt* Nur durch Lieb und durch Erbarmen
- 10 (1:21) 4. *Recitativo: Tenor* Ach, schmelze doch durch deinen Liebesstrahl
- 11 (3:21) 5. *Aria (Duetto): Sopran, Bass* Händen, die sich nicht verschließen
- 12 (0:54) 6. *Choral* Ertöt uns durch dein' Güte

22:42 Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ BWV 33

- 13 (4:30) 1. *Coro (Choral)* Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ
- 14 (1:01) 2. *Recitativo: Bass* Mein Gott und Richter
- 15 (10:43) 3. *Aria: Alt* Wie furchtsam wankten meine Schritte
- 16 (1:01) 4. *Recitativo: Tenor* Mein Gott, verwirf mich nicht
- 17 (3:59) 5. *Aria (Duetto): Tenor, Bass* Gott, der du die Liebe heißt
- 18 (1:27) 6. *Choral* Ehr sei Gott in dem höchsten Thron



Introduction
John Eliot Gardiner

When we embarked on the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage in Weimar on Christmas Day 1999 we had no real sense of how the project would turn out. There were no precedents, no earlier attempts to perform all Bach's surviving church cantatas on the appointed feast day and all within a single year, for us to draw on or to guide us. Just as in planning to scale a mountain or cross an ocean, you can make meticulous provision, calculate your route and get all the equipment in order, in the end you have to deal with whatever the elements – both human and physical – throw at you at any given moment.

With weekly preparations leading to the performance of these extraordinary works, a working rhythm we sustained throughout a whole year, our approach was influenced by several factors: time (never enough), geography (the initial retracing of Bach's footsteps in Thuringia and Saxony), architecture (the churches both great and small where we performed), the impact of one week's music on the next and on the different permutations of players and singers joining and rejoining the pilgrimage, and, inevitably, the hazards of weather, travel and fatigue. Compromises were sometimes needed to accommodate the quirks of the liturgical year (Easter falling exceptionally late in 2000 meant that we ran out of liturgical slots for the late Trinity season cantatas, so that they needed to be redistributed among other programmes). Then to fit into a single evening cantatas for the same day composed by Bach over a forty-year

span meant deciding on a single pitch (A = 415) for each programme, so that the early Weimar cantatas written at high organ pitch needed to be performed in the transposed version Bach adopted for their revival, real or putative, in Leipzig. Although we had commissioned a new edition of the cantatas by Reinhold Kubik, incorporating the latest source findings, we were still left with many practical decisions to make over instrumentation, pitch, bass figuration, voice types, underlay and so on. Nor did we have the luxury of repeated performances in which to try out various solutions: at the end of each feast-day we had to put the outgoing trio or quartet of cantatas to the back of our minds and move on to the next clutch – which came at us thick and fast at peak periods such as Whitsun, Christmas and Easter.

The recordings which make up this series were a corollary of the concerts, not their *raison d'être*. They are a faithful document of the pilgrimage, though never intended to be a definitive stylistic or musicological statement. Each of the concerts which we recorded was preceded by a 'take' of the final rehearsal in the empty church as a safety net against outside noise, loud coughs, accidents or meteorological disturbance during the performance. But the music on these recordings is very much 'live' in the sense that it is a true reflection of what happened on the night, of how the performers reacted to the music (often brand new to them), and of how the church locations and the audiences affected our response. This series is a tribute to the astonishing musicality and talent of all the performers who took part, as well as, of course, to the genius of J.S.Bach.



Jakobskirche, Köthen

When Bach arrived in Köthen in 1717 to join young Prince Leopold's musical establishment as 'Kapellmeister and director of our chamber music', he would have understood where his main priorities were expected to lie, and that nothing would be expected of him in terms of providing new church music. Prince Leopold, like his father before him, was of a strictly 'Reformed' persuasion and the Calvinist liturgy practised in the *Jakobskirche*, the main church of the town next to the market square, allowed no place for figural music – except on very special occasions. As we entered the splendid late Gothic church to rehearse I tried to envisage how it must have looked in March 1729, 'beautifully illuminated though draped in black throughout', for the late-night

state interment of the Prince's body in the royal vault. Did Bach feel uncomfortable, or perhaps even a tiny bit vindicated, performing in this church for a change, with Anna Magdalena and his eldest son Friedemann at his side, paying his final respects to his beloved former patron? During his five and a half years' posting in Köthen, he and his family had been obliged, as was Leopold's dowager mother, to worship in the Lutheran *Agnuskirche*, and just as he had experienced in Mühlhausen in his early twenties there was open hostility between the pastors of the two churches. About six years after his departure for Leipzig Bach was now returning with an extended work parodied from arias and choruses in the *Trauerode* BWV 198 and the *St Matthew Passion*. To the assembled mourners and to the participating musicians recruited from Leipzig, Halle and several neighbouring towns, experiencing this music in a new funerary context must have been intensely moving.

We, on the other hand, had come to Köthen with a rarity – one of the most cheerful programmes of the whole Trinity season. After so many consecutive weeks of fire and brimstone and dire warnings against devilish temptations, forked tongues, false prophets and the like, it came as a huge relief to encounter three genial, celebratory pieces, one with an organ obbligato and two featuring Bach's talismanic trumpets and drums. Fears that these C or D major trumpets-and-drums opening choruses might become slightly formulaic and repetitious are misplaced: in fact they are subtly differentiated in mood, texture and *Affekt*. The opening chorus of BWV 69a **Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele**, later revived for the Town Council elections, is freely

composed and on the grandest scale. Bach is exultant, profiting from the colour contrasts available from the three groupings of his orchestra (brass, woodwind and strings) and the internal subdivisions within each grouping. The hallmark of this fantasia is the way two innocent-sounding bars of rising trill-like figures give way to a jubilant thigh-slapping motif with two short, repeated notes to the second beat of consecutive 3/4 bars – euphoric, bucolic, yet entirely apposite to the text from Psalm 103: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul'. This type of chorus makes one aware of how fine is the membrane (if indeed it exists at all) between Bach's sacred celebratory music and his music for secular festivities: the birthday odes, or even the *quodlibets* sung by his family at their annual get-togethers. The main choral *fugato* begins with a whirligig variant of the trill-like opening, which then irons itself out in a lyrical conclusion. The second clause is more lyrical, in longer note-values with suspensions, hinting at pathos for 'Vergiss nicht' ('Forget not'). But predictably the best is yet to come: Bach combines the two fugues and the music suddenly fires on all cylinders. The principal trumpet blares out the first fugal theme, almost a trial run for that preposterous lick that occurs in the last seven bars of the 'Cum sancto Spirito' from the *B minor Mass*, superimposed over fanfare interjections for lower brass and a soaring theme for sopranos and tenors and guaranteed, as only Bach can, to press all one's emotional buttons and by its sheer zest and rhythmical élan to lift one's spirits. No parsing of the component elements of this fugal development, all of them traceable to motifs first heard in the orchestral prelude and their apportionment between

the various groupings (chorus and tri-partite orchestra), can begin to define, let alone encapsulate, Bach's invention, his way of constantly springing surprises on the listener and yet weaving all his component elements seamlessly together.

Whoever provided Bach with the text for this cantata based it, with slight changes, on one for this Sunday printed three years earlier in Gotha by Johann Knauer. It takes St Mark's account of Jesus healing a deaf and dumb man as a metaphor for God's caring surveillance and as a pretext for the psalmist's injunction to praise God. There are plentiful references to the miracle: 'Ah, that I had a thousand tongues... to praise God' in the opening soprano recitative, mention of the very word 'Ephphatha' (Aramaic for 'be opened') Jesus used to heal the deaf man in the alto recitative (No.4), and a link between the miracle and the psalm text, 'My mouth shall sing with gladness', in the bass aria (No.5). This, like the earlier tenor aria, is in triple time, the former impressive in its interlacing of three distinctive woodwind instruments (recorder, oboe da caccia and bassoon), the latter remarkable for the naturalness of its word setting. Just try pronouncing the first lines of its text, 'Mein Erlöser und Erhalter, nimm mich stets in Hut und Wacht', and you immediately grasp why Bach chose a lilting 3/4 or 9/8 rhythmical pattern, fitted to a sarabande with its French dotted rhythms: tripletised melismas over a slow chromatic descent in the continuo for the prayer to 'stand by me in affliction and suffering', florid exuberance for the promise 'my mouth shall sing with gladness'. To these contrasts of rhythmical declamation and mood Bach adds, most unusually and in great detail, elaborate dynamic markings

assigned to the solo oboe d'amore and accompanying strings from *forte* and *poco forte* to *piano* and *pianissimo*, all designed to clarify the textures and to pinpoint the expressive gestures of this superb aria. The closing chorale stems from the Weimar cantata BWV 12 *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, but curiously shorn of its expressive descent.

Two years later in 1725 Bach came up with another winner, BWV 137 **Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren**, this time in C major and still for three trumpets and drums, though unusually for only two oboes. It is a comparative rarity, his first cantata to have been constructed as a series of chorale variations in over twenty years, since BWV 4 *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, in fact. It is based entirely on the five stanzas of Joachim Neander's thanksgiving hymn of 1680 and its associated melody. This means that there are no recitatives, no biblical quotes, no poetic commentary; but on the other hand, this being one of the most glorious of all hymn tunes, familiar to English congregations as 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation', there are immense and satisfying musical delights. The opening fantasia is jazzy, shot through with syncopation for the majority of its bars, Italianate in sonority and irrepressible in its rhythmic vitality. The opening fugal theme – vocally awkward – begins with the altos and needs very careful and accomplished negotiation so as not to emerge as though from a disturbed poultry house. It becomes less perilous at the second of its three appearances, where the words call for a more lyrical approach ('Meine geliebete Seele'). Bach is wise to the potential swagger of the tune, so that instead of writing long note values for its

first statement in the sopranos he assigns it to them in sturdy crotchets. After repeating the first phrase this has the effect of pulling the other voices into a chordal declamation, 'Kommet zuhauf, Psalter und Harfen, wacht auf!' ('Come in multitudes, psalteries and harps, awake!'). The festive exuberance of the writing makes this movement, indeed the whole cantata, suitable outside the Sunday liturgy, perhaps for the inauguration of the new Town Council in Leipzig which occurred a few days later, or for some other day of rejoicing. On both occasions Gottfried Reiche, the star trumpeter of his day and *capo* of the Leipzig *Stadtpfeiffer*, would have figured prominently. But whether the fanfare fragment he is holding in the portrait Haussmann painted of him two years later is of his own invention or a quotation of bars 27-28 of this particular cantata of Bach's (as Eric Lewis Altschuler has suggested) is impossible to say.

Whittaker appears to make a good point when he claims that Bach, in this example of a *per omnes versus* cantata, is beginning to learn 'how to outwit the unyielding character of such a hymn'. But didn't he always? Surely *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, written when Bach was twenty-two, is the supreme example, compared, say, to Pachelbel's setting, of how to uncover expressive variety and achieve narrative thrust and drive in all seven verses of Luther's Easter hymn, without ever varying the tonality. Eighteen years on, Bach is alert to the possibility of extrapolating all the motivic features of the new glorious tune and now has the experience to arrange its five verses not only symmetrically in outline: chorus – aria – duet – aria – chorale, but also to give it a satisfying modulatory shape: C – G – e – a – C.

There is exuberance on a more intimate scale in the second strophe (really a trio sonata) where the chorale, now lightly ornamented, is assigned to an alto solo over a sweeping 9/8 continuo line with violin obbligato. The metaphor of being held safely aloft on 'eagle's wings' guides Bach in his choice of lively string crossings for the violin and detailed patterns of slurred and staccato notes, though it is the chorale tune itself which dictates the melodic shape. It does so again in the writing for paired oboes in verse 3, which, like the soprano and bass, enter in canon. But, as in mixed doubles, each person in the couple takes it in turn to 'serve': bass first, then soprano; oboe 1, then oboe 2. Up to this point all has been conducted in full sunlight, but with the lines 'How often in your distress has merciful God not spread His wings over you!' a cloud passes over the music. The believer's distress ('Not') can be read in the grinding chromatic descent, the movement of God's protective wings by lively chains of dactyls. The last three phrases of the hymn tune are repeated, tilting the overall balance towards its expressive, darker side for the only time in this cantata.

A battle for harmonic supremacy plays itself out in verse 4: not between the tenor and continuo, the latter full of slurred scales, acrobatic leaps and strong rhythmic gestures, but between the two of them complicit in A minor set against the trumpet's delivery of the unadorned chorale tune as a brass-plated C major orison. The tenor/continuo partnership brushes aside the final notes and cadence of the trumpet; yet the last word belongs to him and to his three colleagues in the uncontested victory of C major: a majestic seven-voiced harmonisation of the chorale (verse 5). Nobody

could do a more festive *Danklied* than Bach when so minded. He knew exactly how best to use the resources of the ceremonial trumpet-led orchestra and choir of his day to convey unbridled joy and majesty – more than a match for the most imposing organ voluntary.

If, when resources allowed, he could outgun even the 'instrument of instruments' itself, what exactly was Bach's purpose in turning to the organ as an obbligato solo instrument in his final cantata for this Sunday, BWV 35 **Geist und Seele wird verwirret**, first performed in 1726 as part of his third annual Leipzig cycle? It certainly wasn't to vie with the trumpet-led ensemble for which the two previous cantatas were written: the use of the solo organ is far too systematic to be a last-minute substitute, as was sometimes the case. The text by Georg Christian Lehms sticks closely to the Sunday Gospel account of the healing of the deaf man and Bach seems deliberately to be setting himself new compositional challenges. This is not necessarily from disillusionment with the formulae, so richly varied, of the pieces freshly composed for his first and second Leipzig cycles, but conceivably out of a certain weariness, of having to put up with makeshift performances week in, week out. Likely enough there were gaps either in the quantity or quality of the musicians available to him, a situation so deeply exasperating that it came to a head in 1730 with his Draft Memorandum to the Council, and a noticeable tailing off in his subsequent production of new works for the liturgy.

A temporary way to circumvent these inadequacies was to foster individual performers

at the expense of the overall ensemble, and that is exactly what Bach seemed to be doing in composing a sequence (BWV 170, 35 and 169) for a conspicuously gifted alto in the summer and autumn of 1726, strategically spaced at two-month intervals to allow for, and adjust to, the development of the particular *Thomaner* talent he was nurturing. This may also have been a contributing factor in his choice of organ as an obbligato instrument in BWV 35, as it was two months earlier with BWV 170 *Vergnügte Ruh*; in both cases it would have made coaching easier, while ensuring that two of the most important components were rehearsed ahead of time (not the case for us, where Robin Tyson stepped forward as a last-minute deputy for Sara Mingardo). And in all probability it was Bach himself and not Friedemann, who at fifteen was away studying violin in Merseburg with Graun, nor Emmanuel, who at eleven was probably too young, who played the organ obbligato. But can this really be the full explanation for why he wrote in this particular style, one which in its sub-Vivaldian manner seems to ape other instruments rather than exploit the true palette and sonic characteristics of this *organum organorum*? The occasional danger of swamping the alto soloist was one reason why we decided that our organist, Ian Watson, should play our portable cabinet organ rather than a colossal instrument like the Trost organ we used in Altenburg for BWV 146 *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal* (Vol.24/SDG107)

An extreme example of this idiosyncrasy comes in the fourth movement, in which just a single line for the organ is notated in the autograph score. Whereas those for voice and bass are in *Kammerton*, the middle line appears in *Chorton*, clear proof that Bach

intended the organ to play just this line and not the continuo. Yet the writing displays features of a typical cello piccolo obbligato in terms both of tessitura and characteristic string-crossing patterns. On the other hand, the sinfonias that introduce each half of the cantata are genuinely solistic and seem to derive from the outer movements of a lost concerto for violin, oboe or harpsichord, for which a nine-bar fragment for harpsichord has survived (BWV 1059). The writing for solo organ is no match for its majestic dominance in *Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal*, where Bach converts two movements of what began as a violin concerto but has come down to us as the celebrated D minor harpsichord concerto BWV 1052. Comparing the solo functions of the organ in these two cantatas reinforces Laurence Dreyfus's distinction in Bach's usage between the 'organ as sacred icon' and the 'organ as *galant* conversationalist'. Dreyfus provides an illuminating analysis of Bach's assimilation of the secular solo concerto into his church cantatas and his adjustment of the normal concerto principle, that of soloist-versus-orchestra, through subtle shifts in role playing, the instrument now posing as a soloist, now retreating into the background. As one might expect, there is a theological and metaphorical dimension lurking behind all this, particularly in a cantata which stresses God's transcendence over everything in creation and His ability to affect miraculous cures to damaged or ill-functioning human faculties, not only hearing and speech, but eyesight and reasoning. The organ may have been the technological marvel of its age, that 'wondrous machine' celebrated in verse by John Dryden and in music by Henry Purcell, but Bach, its greatest living exponent, is intent here

on stressing the modesty of its man-made prowess in comparison with God's miracles.

As we left Köthen it struck me that the joyousness of Bach's music for this Sunday was, a little like his sojourn here, something of an exception, a furlough or sunny interlude before a return to the grim doctrinal preoccupations of the Trinity season. A return, in fact, to the Lutheran war zone.

Cantatas for the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity



Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt

Sure enough, after the breezy pleasures of last week's celebratory pieces – a brief reprieve – came the cold shower of our man's resumption of the earnest process of musical exegesis. Bach saw the exposition of scripture as the main meditative goal of his church music, in particular the need to forge audible links in the listener's mind between the 'historical' ('what [is] written in the book of the law') and spiritual attributes of the texts to be set. Here, on the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity, he is faced with a Gospel (Luke 10:23-37) centred on the parable of the Good Samaritan which stresses man's slipperiness in evading his responsibilities to his neighbour, and an Epistle (Galatians 3:15-22) in which Paul probes the distinction between faith and the law. This was

adopted by Luther in his twelve-verse hymn paraphrasing the Ten Commandments, 'Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot', insisting that their purpose, and the first step in the believer's understanding of them, was the 'recognition of sin' and 'how one should rightly live before God', a theme that had preoccupied Bach from the outset of his first Leipzig cycle.

Although it was a deliberate choice during this year to group the cantatas by feast day, slicing through the years of their composition so as to compare Bach's differing responses to the same text, yet with each previous week's offerings still ringing in our ears we were always conscious of the connective tissue that binds cantatas week to week within a given annual cycle. Bach announced himself to his twin congregations in Leipzig with two monumental, fourteen-movement cantatas (BWV 75 and 76) in which he set out his compositional stall. His underlying purpose seems to have been to connect the dualism of love of God and brotherly love with a vision of eternity as man's eschatological goal. All the signs are there that he intended to stretch these thematic links over at least the first four weeks of the Trinity season, first in BWV 75 and 76, and then by reviving two Weimar-composed works, BWV 21 and 185. Now, for the past six weeks, from the Eighth to the Thirteenth Sundays after Trinity, we have been encountering a sequence of works, all newly composed in Leipzig to theologially interrelated texts, based on the principle of reinterpreting an Old Testament *dictum* in terms of the New Testament Gospel of the day, and then applying it to the contemporary worshipper. All this

was in a poetic style suggesting that the texts may have been the work of a single librettist.

With BWV 77 **Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren lieben** as the climax of what seems to be a series-within-a-cycle came an opportunity (Bach would perhaps have seen it as an obligation) to give resounding, conclusive expression to the core doctrines of faith already adumbrated in the first four Sundays of the Trinity season. Once again Bach does not disappoint. Here is one of those breathtaking, monumental opening choruses that defy rational explanation: how an over-worked, jobbing church musician, locked into numbing routines, could have come up with anything so prodigious and not, as we have seen, in an isolated work, but as part of a coherent *cycle* of weekly works. Bach aims to demonstrate by means of every musical device available to him the centrality of the two 'great' commandments of the New Testament and how 'on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets'. So he constructs a huge chorale fantasia in which the chorus, preceded by the upper three string lines in imitation, spell out the New Testament statement, their utterances encased in a wordless chorale tune that would have been associated in the minds of all his listeners with Luther's Ten Commandments hymn. This appears in canon, a potent symbol of the law, between the *tromba da tirarsi* at the top of the ensemble and the continuo at its base, a graphic device to demonstrate that the Old Testament serves as the bedrock of the New, or, expressed differently, that the entire Law is understood to frame, and be inseparable from, Jesus' commandments to love God and one's neighbour.

But that is only just the start. Bach extrapolates the vocal lines from the chorale theme, so that they emerge audibly as a retrograde inversion of the chorale tune in diminution. Imagine it as a giant Caucasian *killim*, with the geometric design and decorative patterning all of a piece. Your eye is drawn first to the elegant weave of the choral lines, but you then begin to discern a broader outline: the same basic design, but on a far bigger scale, one twice the size of the other, and bordering the whole. That is the canon in augmentation, the bass line proceeding at the lower fifth at half speed (in minims), symbol of the fundamental law. Bach's construct allows the trumpet (in crotchets) to deliver nine individual phrases of the chorale and symbolically, in a tenth, to repeat the entire tune for good measure so that at the climax of the movement the 'old' and the 'new' are unambiguously fused in the listener's mind. The tune itself, at least thirteenth-century in origin, began as a pilgrimage hymn to the words 'In Gottes Namen fahren wir', selected by Luther, or those close to him, as an appeal to God for protection – particularly at the start of a sea voyage in which Christ was the chosen captain or pilot. Other than *Ein feste Burg* (BWV 80), no other canonic treatment of a *cantus firmus* we've met so far has quite the same air of monumentality or hieratic authority as this.

The strange thing is that whenever the chorale tune stops, and even before it first gets going, the music reveals a searching, almost fragile quality. Soon you notice that Bach has left out the normal 8' continuo from the opening ritornello (instead the violas have a figured *bassettchen* bass line) and a huge chasm in pitch, structure and dynamics opens

up between the gentle interweaving of the imitative contrapuntal lines (presumably for strings only, though in the absence of the original parts we cannot be sure of this as none of the instruments is specified in the autograph score other than the *tromba* part) and the full, impressive weight of the double canon. The choral voices thunder out 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God' like so many evangelising sculptors chiselling the words into the musical rock face. One now realises that this emphasis on height and depth is being presented as a spatial metaphor for the divine and human spheres: distant, yet interconnected. Bach builds up colossal tension as a result of this dramatic textural alternation, the voices presumably dropping to *piano* whenever the trumpet/bass dialogue pauses for breath. Rightly or wrongly, I took it that the three oboes, whose presence elsewhere in the cantata makes it unlikely that they would have been excluded from the first movement, should double the voice lines only when the trumpet/bass themes are present.

The whole edifice lends itself to allegorical interpretation beyond the obvious meshing of Old and New Testament commandments, the former strict in its canonic treatment, the latter freer and more human in its choral working out, and the symbolic separation of God's control of the spheres of 'above' and 'below' (five statements of each, making ten in all). As Martin Petzoldt has shown, their moments of intersection point to the 'concord' or 'Übereinstimmung' willed by God for community with humankind and his promise of mercy to those who keep his commandments. To this, Eric Chafe (who devotes two whole chapters to this work) points to the anomalous flattened

pitches in the mixolydian version of the chorale tune which 'inspired Bach to emphasise the sub-dominant minor' at the climax of the movement (bar 58), 'the point at which the trumpet reaches its highest tone and the rhythmic activity of the chorus is at its greatest. Its role in the allegorical design for the movement is to create a sub-dominant/minor region from which the restoration of G emerges at the last possible moment in conjunction with the insight that love of God and love of one's neighbour as oneself are inseparable.' If this analysis seems a little dry – and it is certainly accurate – the music at this point is stupendous, the voices first in downward then in upward pursuit under the canopy of the trumpet's final blast of the chorale and cadencing over the solid G pedal of the bass. Chafe makes great play with the alternation of F natural and F sharp in the trumpet part four and five bars before the end (apparently there were different versions of the tune current in his time that Bach may have been quoting). The symbolic uncertainty they represent when associated with the injunction to 'love thy neighbour as thyself' suggests that without God's help we are doomed to failure. The end result is a potent mixture of modal and diatonic harmonies, one which leaves an unforgettable impression in the mind's ear, and in context propels one forward to the world of Brahms' *German Requiem* and beyond, to Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*.

Wisely Bach does not attempt in the remaining movements to replicate the mood or dimensions of this immense hermeneutic edifice which inevitably dwarfs all else. His concern is now to delineate the dependence of the believer in his human, imperfect,

condition on the agency of the Holy Spirit to recognise and carry out God's commandment of love. Johann Knauer provided the models for the texts of both last week's (BWV 69a) and the present cantata, and in both cases these required short but significant revisions. So, for example, in the B section of the aria for soprano (No.3), by changing Knauer's rather neutral 'Lass mich doch *dieses Glück* erkennen' to 'Lass mich doch *dein Gebot* (thy commandment) erkennen' and by avoiding the anticipated *da capo*, Bach shifts the emphasis onto the believer's hope that by grasping Jesus' commandment she will be 'so kindled by love' that she will love God for ever. In a second (accompanied) recitative (No.4), by the simple addition of a single word 'zugleich' ('at the same time') to Knauer's text, Bach welds the two New Testament commandments together so that they are held simultaneously and inseparably in the believer's mind.

The alto aria with trumpet obbligato (No.5), a meditation on the believer's ineffectual will to obey God's commandments and a foretaste of eternal life, is deceptive in its apparent simplicity and intimacy. Couched in the form of a sarabande, its weak phrase-beginnings and feminine cadences hold a mirror to man's proneness to fall short. The decision to recall the principal trumpet, so certain and majestic in the opening chorus but now single and supported by continuo alone, is Bach's most explicit way of conveying human imperfection ('Unvollkommenheit'). If he had set out to write an obbligato melody for the natural (valveless) trumpet he could hardly have devised more awkward intervals and more wildly unstable notes: recurrent C sharps and B flats, and occasional G sharps and E flats, which either do not

exist on the instrument or emerge painfully out of tune. Bach is putting on display the frailty and shortcomings of humankind for all to hear and perhaps even to wince at. But how do you explain that to an audience except through a special pleading type of programme note? To be the vehicle for illustrating the distinction between God (perfect) and man (flawed and fallible) is a tough assignment for any musician (and our Swedish trumpeter Niklaus Eklund came through this ordeal with huge credit and amazing skill), unless you are a sad, white-faced clown, accustomed to playing your trumpet (badly) at the circus. But before we jump to the conclusion that Bach is being sadistic here, we should look beyond the surface of the music. I believe it is going too far to suggest, as Richard Taruskin does, that on occasion Bach 'aimed to torture the ear' or that he 'seems deliberately to engineer a bad-sounding performance by putting the apparent demands of the music beyond the reach of his performers and their equipment'. For that to be true, it would allow no remedial action by the trumpeter to 'bend' or 'lip down' (or 'up') the non-harmonic tones so as to make them acceptable. It is the *effort* Bach is concerned to illustrate, and then in blatant contrast, the ease when, in the B section of the aria, he suddenly assigns the trumpet a ten-bar solo of ineffable beauty made up entirely of the diatonic tones of the instrument without a single accidental. Suddenly we are permitted a glorious glimpse of God's realm, an augury of eternal life, in poignant juxtaposition to the believer's sense of difficulty, incapacity, even, in executing God's commandment unaided. Sadistic? No. Pedantic? Perhaps.

This acknowledgement of human weakness – mankind's inability to carry out the second commandment unaided – is given a third illustration in the closing chorale, which Bach ends with a final inconclusive cadence – tenor and bass rising, soprano and alto falling, leaving the listener up in the air. Petzoldt and Chafe have made a convincing case, which we followed, for using the final two strophes of the 12-verse anonymous chorale *Herr, deine Recht und dein Gebot*, based on the Ten Commandments, since Bach assigns no words to this closing chorale and its remarkable unsettling harmonisation.

Bach seems not to have been daunted by the immensity of his previous year's offering when in September 1724 he sat down to compose BWV 33 **Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ**. It is a worthy sequel, albeit a shy at a different target, beginning with a chorale fantasia fashioned rather like an antique ring. The fineness of the gemstone, the choral delivery of Konrad Hubert's nine-lined hymn, is in constant danger of being eclipsed by the ornate beauty of its orchestral setting, energetic in its forward propulsion, motivic invention and proto-symphonic development, through its nine instrumental ritornellos, ranging from five to twenty-four bars. Later there are two penitential recitatives with far-flung harmonic excursions, and a movement for paired oboes and voices (No.5) which contains the only detectable reference to the Gospel text and New Testament Commandment and suggests an affinity of diatonic euphony and scoring to the soprano aria in BWV 77. Also included is arguably one of the most beautiful of all Bach's alto arias (No.3), scored for muted first violins and accompanying pizzicato strings, bearing a striking

kinship in mood, subject-matter (the frightening burden of sin) and even melodic outline to the soprano aria 'Wie zittern und wanken' from BWV 105 for the Ninth Sunday after Trinity of the previous year. Bach is unlikely to have known John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), but this aria is a perfect portrayal in sound of Christian's faltering steps as he enters the Valley of the Shadow of Death. But perhaps this cantata's most inherently satisfying movement is its last: a fluid, diaphanous harmonisation of Hubert's closing stanza, in which Bach creates an admirable melismatic interweaving of all four vocal lines at cadential points.

The surviving autograph score of BWV 164 *Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet* dates from August 1725 and was performed in Leipzig as part of Bach's third annual cycle. How much of its music, composed to a text by Salomo Franck, can be traced back to one of Bach's lost Weimar cantatas is far from certain, though the scoring for strings and a pair of flutes, to which two oboes are added as unison reinforcement in the last two movements, would accord with the chamber-like proportions Bach adopted for the other Franck cantata texts he set in 1715.

With no opening chorus, some commentators are disturbed by the apparent discrepancy, in the tenor aria with strings (No. 1), between words which fulminate against un-Samaritan-like indifference to one's neighbour's plight and the easy pastoral 9/8 flow of the canonic melody. But isn't that precisely Bach's point here: to contrast true mercy – God's mercy – with its human counterfeit, in another expression of the perfect/imperfect dualism featured in his other cantatas for this Sunday? The essence of

true compassion is evoked in the alto aria with two transverse flutes (No. 3), and followed by the tenor's prayer that those steely hearts that he referred to in the opening number shall now be melted and become 'rich in love, gentle and mild'. One can even discern an emblem of this contrast between human and divine mercy in the way the final duet opens as an inverse canon for the unison melody instruments and continuo, and then with each fresh entry of the voice lines develops fresh canons, now at the octave, now at the fourth or fifth, before burgeoning into free polyphony.

As we made our way out of Frankfurt's rather forbidding and gloomy nineteenth-century *Dreikönigskirche*, it occurred to me that these three cantatas best exemplify Thomas Browne's wonderful definition of music as 'an Hieroglyphicall and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and Creatures of God, such a melody to the eare, as the whole world well understood, would afford the understanding. In briefe, it is a sensible fit with that Harmony, which intellectually sounds in the eares of God.' (*Religio Medici*, 1642)

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From a journal written in the course of the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage

For the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

CD 1

Epistle 2 Corinthians 3:4-11

Gospel Mark 7:31-37

BWV 69a

Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele (1723)

1 1. Coro

Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele, und vergiss nicht,
was er dir Gutes getan hat!

2 2. Recitativo: Sopran

Ach, dass ich tausend Zungen hätte!
Ach, wäre doch mein Mund
von eitlen Worten leer!
Ach, dass ich gar nichts red'te,
als was zu Gottes Lob gerichtet wär!
So machte ich des Höchsten Güte kund;
denn er hat lebenslang so viel an mir getan,
dass ich in Ewigkeit ihm nicht verdanken kann.

BWV 69a

Bless the Lord, O my soul

1. Chorus

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not
all His benefits!

2. Recitative

Ah, that I had a thousand tongues,
ah, that my mouth
were devoid of vain words,
ah, that I said nothing at all,
except that which was meant to praise God,
then would I proclaim the Highest's goodness;
for all my life He has done so much for me
that I cannot thank Him in eternity.

3 3. Aria: Tenor

Meine Seele,
auf, erzähle,
was dir Gott erwiesen hat!
Rühmet seine Wundertat,
lasst ein gottgefällig Singen
durch die frohen Lippen dringen!

4 4. Recitativo: Alt

Gedenk ich nur zurück,
was du, mein Gott, von zarter Jugend an
bis diesen Augenblick
an mir getan,
so kann ich deine Wunder, Herr,
so wenig als die Sterne zählen.
Vor deine Huld, die du an meiner Seelen
noch alle Stunden tust,
indem du nie von deiner Liebe ruhst,
vermag ich nicht vollkommenen Dank zu weih'n.
Mein Mund ist schwach, die Zunge stumm
zu deinem Preis und Ruhm.
Ach! sei mir nah
und sprich dein kräftig Hephata,
so wird mein Mund voll Dankens sein.

5 5. Aria: Bass

Mein Erlöser und Erhalter,
nimm mich stets in Hut und Wacht!
Steh mir bei in Kreuz und Leiden,
alsdenn singt mein Mund mit Freuden:
Gott hat alles wohlgemacht!

3. Aria

O my soul,
rise and tell
what God has shown to you!
Praise His wondrous work,
and to please the Most High,
let a happy song of thanks ring out!

4. Recitative

If I now think back,
my God, on what Thou, from my earliest years,
has done for me
till now,
then I cannot, O Lord, count Thy wonders,
any more than I can count the stars.
For Thy favour, which Thou dost still bestow
hourly on my soul
by never ceasing to love,
I am not able to thank Thee sufficiently.
My voice is weak, my tongue silent
in lauding and praising Thee.
Ah, be near to me
and utter Thy resounding Ephphatha,
and my mouth shall be full of gratitude.

5. Aria

My Redeemer and Preserver,
protect and watch over me forever!
Stand by me in affliction and suffering,
and my mouth shall sing with gladness:
God has done all things well!

6. Choral

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan,
darbei will ich verbleiben.
Es mag mich auf die raue Bahn
Not, Tod und Elend treiben:
So wird Gott mich
ganz väterlich
in seinen Armen halten.
Drum lass ich ihn nur walten.

Text: Psalm 103:2 (1); Samuel Rodigast (6); anon. (2-5)

BWV 35

Geist und Seele wird verwirret (1726)

I Teil

7. 1. Sinfonia**8. 2. Aria: Alt**

Geist und Seele wird verwirret,
wenn sie dich, mein Gott, betracht'.
Denn die Wunder, so sie kennet
und das Volk mit Jauchzen nennet,
hat sie taub und stumm gemacht.

9. 3. Recitativo: Alt

Ich wundre mich;
denn alles, was man sieht,
muss uns Verwund'ung geben.
Betracht ich dich,
du teurer Gottessohn,
so flieht

6. Chorus

What God doth, is well done,
to this I shall be constant.
Though I be cast onto the rough road
by affliction, death and misery,
God shall hold me
just like a father
in His arms.
That is why I let Him prevail.

BWV 35

Spirit and soul become confused

Part I

1. Sinfonia**2. Aria**

Spirit and soul become confused,
when they gaze on Thee, my God.
For the miracles they know,
and which the people tell with joy,
have made them deaf and dumb.

3. Recitative

I marvel;
for everything that one sees
must fill us with amazement.
If I look on Thee,
Thou precious Son of God,
both

Vernunft und auch Verstand davon.
Du machst es eben,
dass sonst ein Wunderwerk vor dir was Schlechtes ist.
Du bist
dem Namen, Tun und Amte nach erst wunderbar,
dir ist kein Wunderding auf dieser Erde gleich.
Den Tauben gibst du das Gehör,
den Stummen ihre Sprache wieder,
ja, was noch mehr,
du öffnest auf ein Wort die blinden Augenlider.
Dies, dies sind Wunderwerke,
und ihre Stärke
ist auch der Engel Chor nicht mächtig, auszusprechen.

10. 4. Aria: Alt

Gott hat alles wohlgemacht.
Seine Liebe, seine Treu
wird uns alle Tage neu.
Wenn uns Angst und Kummer drücket,
hat er reichen Trost geschicket,
weil er täglich für uns wacht.
Gott hat alles wohlgemacht.

II Teil

11. 5. Sinfonia**12. 6. Recitativo: Alt**

Ach, starker Gott, lass mich
doch dieses stets bedenken,
so kann ich dich
vergnügt in meine Seele senken.
Lass mir dein süßes Hephatha
das ganz verstockte Herz erweichen;

reason and sense take flight.
For Thou art the cause
that even a miracle seems wretched next to Thee.
Thou art
in name, deed and office wonderful;
no wonder on earth resembles Thee.
To the deaf Thou givest hearing,
to the dumb the gift of speech again,
yea, more than this,
Thou dost open, at a word, the eyelids of the blind.
These, these are works of wonder,
and their power
cannot be expressed even by the choir of angels.

4. Aria

God has done all things well.
His love, his faith
are new every morning.
When fear and sorrow oppress us,
He hath always sent us ample comfort,
for He watches over us each day.
God has done all things well.

Part II

5. Sinfonia**6. Recitative**

Ah, mighty God, let me
always remember this,
and then I can
happily immerse Thee in my soul.
Let Thy sweet Ephphatha
soften my so stubborn heart;

ach! lege nur den Gnadenfinger in die Ohren,
sonst bin ich gleich verloren.
Rühr auch das Zungenband
mit deiner starken Hand,
damit ich diese Wunderzeichen
in heil'ger Andacht preise
und mich als Kind und Erb erweise.

13 7. Aria: Alt

Ich wünsche nur bei Gott zu leben,
ach! wäre doch die Zeit schon da,
ein fröhliches Halleluja
mit allen Engeln anzuheben.
Mein liebster Jesu, löse doch
das jammerreiche Schmerzensjoch
und lass mich bald in deinen Händen
mein martervolles Leben enden.

Text: Georg Christian Lehms

BWV 137

**Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren
(1725)**

14 1. Versus I: Coro

Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König der Ehren,
meine geliebete Seele, das ist mein Begehren.
Kommet zuhauf,
Psalter und Harfen, wacht auf!
Lasset die Musicam hören.

ah, lay but Thy gracious finger on my ear,
or else I shall quickly perish.
Touch too my tongue
with Thy mighty hand,
that I may praise these signs of wonder
in sacred worship
and show myself to be Thy child and heir.

7. Aria

I only wish to live with God,
ah! would the time were already there
to raise a happy alleluia
with all the angels.
My dearest Jesus, free me
from this sorrow-laden yoke of pain
and let me soon in Thine arms
end my life so full of torment.

BWV 137

Praise the Lord, the mighty King of honour

1. Verse I

Praise the Lord, the mighty King of honour,
my cherished soul, that is my fervent desire.
Come in multitudes;
psalteries and harps, awake!
Let your music resound.

15 2. Versus II: Alt

Lobe den Herren, der alles so herrlich regieret,
der dich auf Adellers Fittichen sicher geführt,
der dich erhält,
wie es dir selber gefällt;
hast du nicht dieses verspüret?

16 3. Versus III: Sopran, Bass

Lobe den Herren, der künstlich und fein dich bereitet,
der dir Gesundheit verliehen, dich freundlich geleitet;
in wie viel Not
hat nicht der gnädige Gott
über dir Flügel gebreitet!

17 4. Versus IV: Tenor

Lobe den Herren, der deinen Stand sichtbar gesegnet,
der aus dem Himmel mit Strömen der Liebe geregnet;
denke dran,
was der Allmächtige kann,
der dir mit Liebe begegnet.

18 5. Versus V: Choral

Lobe den Herren, was in mir ist, lobe den Namen!
Alles, was Odem hat, lobe mit Abrahams Samen!
Er ist dein Licht,
Seele, vergiss es ja nicht;
lobende, schließe mit Amen!

Text: Joachim Neander

2. Verse II

Praise the Lord, who governs all things so gloriously,
who leads you so safely on His eagle's wings,
who keeps you
as you would keep yourself;
have you not perceived these things?

3. Verse III

Praise the Lord, who has adorned you so exquisitely,
who has given you health, and guides you kindly;
how often in your distress
has merciful God
not spread His wings over you!

4. Verse IV

Praise the Lord, who has clearly blessed your state,
who has rained down love from heaven;
consider
what the Almighty can do,
who treats you with love.

5. Verse V

Praise the Lord, whatever is in me, praise His name!
Everything that has breath, praise with Abraham's seed!
He is your light,
O soul, forget it not;
ye who praise, end with Amen!

For the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

CD 2

Epistle Galatians 3:15-22

Gospel Luke 10:23-37

BWV 77

Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben (1723)

1. Coro con Choral

Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben von ganzem Herzen, von ganzer Seele, von allen Kräften und von ganzem Gemüte und deinen Nächsten als dich selbst.

2. Recitativo: Bass

So muss es sein!
Gott will das Herz vor sich alleine haben.
Man muss den Herrn von ganzer Seelen zu seiner Lust erwählen
und sich nicht mehr erfreun,
als wenn er das Gemüte
durch seinen Geist entzünd't,
weil wir nur seiner Huld und Güte
alsdann erst recht versichert sind.

BWV 77

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

1. Chorus with instrumental chorale

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

2. Recitativo

So must it be!
God would possess our hearts for Himself.
We must elect the Lord with all our spirit,
as He requires,
and never be content,
except when He kindles our soul
through His spirit,
for only then are we truly sure
of His grace and kindness.

3. Aria: Sopran

Mein Gott, ich liebe dich von Herzen,
mein ganzes Leben hangt dir an.
Lass mich doch dein Gebot erkennen
und in Liebe so entbrennen,
dass ich dich ewig lieben kann.

4. Recitativo: Tenor

Gib mir dabei, mein Gott! ein Samariterherz,
dass ich zugleich den Nächsten liebe
und mich bei seinem Schmerz
auch über ihn betrübe,
damit ich nicht bei ihm vorübergeh
und ihn in seiner Not nicht lasse.
Gib, dass ich Eigenliebe hasse,
so wirst du mir dereinst das Freudenleben
nach meinem Wunsch, jedoch aus Gnaden geben.

5. Aria: Alt

Ach, es bleibt in meiner Liebe
lauter Unvollkommenheit!
Hab ich oftmals gleich den Willen,
was Gott saget, zu erfüllen,
fehlt mir's doch an Möglichkeit.

6. Choral

Ach Herr, ich wollte ja dein Recht
und deinen heil'gen Willen,
wie mir gebührt, als deinem Knecht,
ohn' Mangel gern erfüllen;
so fühl ich doch, was mir gebricht,
und wie ich das Geringste nicht
vermag aus eignen Kräften.

3. Aria

My God, I love Thee with all my heart,
all my life clings to Thee.
Let me but know Thy law
and be so kindled with love
that I can love Thee forever.

4. Recitative

And give me too, my God, a Samaritan's heart,
that I may love my neighbour at the same time
and be troubled for him
in his anguish,
that I may not pass him by
and abandon him in his extremity.
Grant that I may loathe self-love,
then shalt Thou one day grant me out of mercy
the life of joy that I desire.

5. Aria

Ah, there abides in my love
naught but imperfection!
Though I often have the will
to accomplish God's commandments
it is yet not possible.

6. Chorale

Ah Lord, I would fain
abide by Thy laws
and do Thy sacred bidding without blemish,
as behoves me, Thy servant;
yet I feel what I lack,
and how I can achieve nothing
by myself.

Drum gib du mir von deinem Thron,
Gott Vater, Gnad and Stärke;
verleih, o Jesu, Gottes Sohn,
dass ich tu rechte Werke;
o heil'ger Geist, hilf, dass ich dich
von ganzem Herzen, und als mich,
ohn' Falsch den Nächsten liebe!

Text: Luke 10:27 (1); anon. (2-6)

BWV 164

Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet (c.1725)

7 1. Aria: Tenor

Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet,
wo bleibt die Barmherzigkeit,
daran man Christi Glieder kennet?
Sie ist von euch, ach, allzu weit.
Die Herzen sollten liebeich sein,
so sind sie härter als ein Stein.

8 2. Recitativo: Bass

Wir hören zwar, was selbst die Liebe spricht:
Die mit Barmherzigkeit den Nächsten hier umfängen,
die sollen vor Gericht
Barmherzigkeit erlangen.
Jedoch, wir achten solches nicht!
Wir hören noch des Nächsten Seufzer an!
Er klopft an unser Herz; doch wird's nicht aufgetan!
Wir sehen zwar sein Händeringen,
sein Auge, das von Tränen fließt;
doch lässt das Herz sich nicht zur Liebe zwingen.

Therefore send me, O God the Father,
grace and strength from Thy throne;
grant, O Jesus, Son of God,
that I may do good works;
o Holy Ghost, help me to love Thee
wholeheartedly, and love my neighbour
without guile, as I love myself!

BWV 164

Ye who bear the name of Christ

1. Aria

Ye who bear the name of Christ,
where is your sense of mercy
through which one recognises members of Christ?
Mercy, alas, is all too far from you.
Your hearts should be affectionate,
and yet they are harder than stone.

2. Recitative

We hear, indeed, what love itself says:
Those who are merciful towards their neighbour
shall before the Judgment seat
themselves receive mercy.
Yet we give no heed to this!
We still listen to our neighbour's sighs!
He knocks at our heart; but the heart is not opened!
We see him wring his hands,
we see his eyes overflow with tears,
yet our heart is not moved to love.

Der Priester und Levit,
der hier zur Seite tritt,
sind ja ein Bild liebloser Christen;
sie tun, als wenn sie nichts von fremdem
Elend wüssten,
sie gießen weder Öl noch Wein
ins Nächsten Wunden ein.

9 3. Aria: Alt

Nur durch Lieb und durch Erbarmen
werden wir Gott selber gleich.
Samaritergleiche Herzen
lassen fremden Schmerz sich schmerzen
und sind an Erbarmung reich.

10 4. Recitativo: Tenor

Ach, schmelze doch durch deinen Liebesstrahl
des kalten Herzens Stahl,
dass ich die wahre Christenliebe,
mein Heiland, täglich übe,
dass meines Nächsten Wehe,
er sei auch, wer er ist,
Freund oder Feind, Heid oder Christ,
mir als mein eignes Leid zu Herzen allzeit gehe!
Mein Herz sei liebeich, sanft und mild,
so wird in mir verklärt dein Ebenbild.

The priest and the Levite,
who pass by on the other side,
are the very image of loveless Christians;
they act as though they were ignorant of
others' suffering,
they pour neither oil nor wine
into their neighbour's wounds.

3. Aria

Only through love and compassion
shall we become like God himself.
Samaritan-like hearts
feel the pain of others' pain
and are rich in compassion.

4. Recitative

Ah! melt through Thy radiant love
the cold heart of steel,
that I may daily practise,
my Saviour, true Christian love;
that my neighbour's misery,
whoever he may be,
friend or foe, heathen or Christian,
may affect my heart as much as my own suffering!
May my heart be rich in love, gentle and mild,
then in me shall Thy likeness be revealed.

11 5. Aria (Duetto): Sopran, Bass

Händen, die sich nicht verschließen,
wird der Himmel aufgetan.
Augen, die mitleidend fließen,
sieht der Heiland gnädig an.
Herzen, die nach Liebe streben,
will Gott selbst sein Herze geben.

12 6. Choral

Ertöt uns durch dein' Güte,
erweck uns durch dein' Gnad!
Den alten Menschen kränke,
dass der neu' leben mag
wohl hier auf dieser Erden,
den Sinn und all Begehrden
und G'danken hab'n zu dir.

Text: Salomo Franck (1-5); Elisabeth Kreuziger (6)

BWV 33

Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ (1724)

13 1. Coro (Choral)

Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ,
mein Hoffnung steht auf Erden;
ich weiß, dass du mein Tröster bist,
kein Trost mag mir sonst werden.
Von Anbeginn ist nichts erkorn,
auf Erden war kein Mensch geboren,
der mir aus Nöten helfen kann.
Ich ruf dich an,
zu dem ich mein Vertrauen hab.

5. Aria (Duet)

To hands that do not close
will the gates of heaven be opened wide.
Eyes that flow with pity's tears
find favour in the Saviour's eyes.
Hearts that strive for love
shall be given by God His very heart.

6. Chorale

Mortify us through Thy goodness,
awaken us through Thy grace;
chasten in us the old man,
that the new may live
here upon this earth,
turning his mind and desires
and his thoughts to Thee.

BWV 33

In Thee alone, Lord Jesus Christ

1. Chorus (Chorale)

In Thee alone, Lord Jesus Christ,
dwells my hope on earth;
I know Thou art my Comforter,
I have no other comfort.
Since time began, there has been nothing ordained,
and no man born on earth,
to help me in distress.
I call to Thee,
in whom I place my trust.

14 2. Recitativo: Bass

Mein Gott und Richter,
wilst du mich aus dem Gesetze fragen,
so kann ich nicht,
weil mein Gewissen widerspricht,
auf tausend eines sagen.
An Seelenkräften arm und an der Liebe bloß,
und meine Sünd ist schwer und übergroß;
doch weil sie mich von Herzen reuen,
wirst du, mein Gott und Hort,
durch ein Vergebungswort
mich wiederum erfreuen.

15 3. Aria: Alt

Wie furchtsam wankten meine Schritte,
doch Jesus hört auf meine Bitte
und zeigt mich seinem Vater an.
Mich drückten Sündenlasten nieder,
doch hilft mir Jesu Trostwort wieder,
dass er für mich genug getan.

16 4. Recitativo: Tenor

Mein Gott, verwirf mich nicht,
wiewohl ich dein Gebot noch täglich übertrete,
von deinem Angesicht!
Das Kleinste ist mir schon zu halten viel zu schwer;
doch, wenn ich um nichts mehr
als Jesu Beistand bete,
so wird mich kein Gewissensstreit
der Zuversicht berauben;
gib mir nur aus Barmherzigkeit
den wahren Christenglauben!
So stellt er sich mit guten Früchten ein
und wird durch Liebe tätig sein.

2. Recitative

My God and Judge,
if Thou shouldst question me upon the law,
I would be unable,
because of my conscience,
to answer one in a thousand questions.
I am weak in spirit and devoid of love
and my sins are grave and vast;
but since my heart truly repents them,
Thou, my God and Refuge,
shalt through one forgiving word
cause me to be glad again.

3. Aria

How fearfully my steps faltered,
but Jesus hears my supplication
and proclaims me to His Father.
The burden of sin weighed me down,
but Jesus helps me anew with words of comfort:
He has done enough for me.

4. Recitative

My God, though I still trespass daily
against Thy law, do not banish me
from this Thy countenance!
To obey even the smallest law is much too hard,
yet if I ask for nothing more
than Jesus' aid,
no war of conscience
will rob me of my sure faith;
simply give me, out of mercy,
the true Christian faith!
It will then bear good fruit
and manifest itself through love.

17 5. Aria (Duetto): Tenor, Bass

Gott, der du die Liebe heißt,
ach, entzünde meinen Geist,
lass zu dir vor allen Dingen
meine Liebe kräftig dringen!
Gib, dass ich aus reinem Triebe
als mich selbst den Nächsten liebe;
stören Feinde meine Ruh,
sende du mir Hülfe zu!

18 6. Choral

Ehr sei Gott in dem höchsten Thron,
dem Vater aller Güte,
und Jesu Christ, sein'm liebsten Sohn,
der uns allzeit behüte,
und Gott dem Heiligen Geiste,
der uns sein Hülf allzeit leiste,
damit wir ihm gefällig sein,
hier in dieser Zeit
und folgend in der Ewigkeit.

Text: Konrad Hubert (1, 6); anon. (2-5)

5. Aria (Duet)

God, Thou who art called Love,
ah, kindle my spirit,
let, before all other things,
my love soar up to you.
Grant that I, from pure impulse,
may love my neighbour as myself;
and should the foe disturb my peace,
come to my assistance!

6. Chorale

Glory be to God on the highest throne,
to the Father of all goodness,
and to Jesus Christ, His only Son,
who protects us at all times,
and to God, the Holy Ghost,
who gives us His help at all times,
that we may please Him
here on this earth
and then in all eternity.

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Valerie Botwright double bass

I first came into contact with Bach's cantatas as a student, when I was asked to play in a series of concerts in one of the City of London churches. I had not long been playing the double bass and had very little experience of playing continuo lines, so I was initially apprehensive when I saw the intricacy of the music. As my confidence grew I came to appreciate the inventiveness and inspirational quality of Bach's writing. Gradually I realised that playing continuo was perhaps the ideal role for a bass player. With the possible exception of a jazz rhythm section, I still feel it's what the bass does best: being part of a continuo team and laying the foundation of such invariably glorious music has to be the most rewarding and satisfying work a bass player can do. So I count my involvement in the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage as one of the most fulfilling jobs of my career. It was both a joy and a privilege.

Having the opportunity to play and hear so many familiar and unfamiliar cantatas was astounding. As the weeks went by our method of working settled into a pattern. I began by attempting to fathom the bass lines and determine their direction (often a surprisingly easy task, due to the quality of the writing). Then followed a rehearsal period where the overlay of upper parts often left me astonished that music so complex could yet reveal such clarity of meaning and emotion. Unveiling the essence of each cantata was our goal. The text was always of prime importance and I sense that if my bass could speak it would be in German. There were occasional frustrations when the spirit of the piece was evasive but how uplifting it was when things clicked. I often had a sense of

everyone playing and singing beyond themselves in an almost inevitable response to such sublime music.

Performing in the different venues was fascinating, not only for their diverse interiors but for the influence they had on the concerts. I particularly valued the small churches, and especially the ones Bach had known. Here it seemed the power and spirituality of the works was keenly felt, as was the commitment and dedication of the audiences. These settings, although usually inspiring, often proved challenging: on occasion we battled against limited space, poor lighting, uncomfortable temperatures and difficult acoustics. My memories of Köthen include an extremely cramped stage and my fear of impaling someone with my bow. All such considerations became insignificant in the face of the music. The Bach Cantata Pilgrimage was an enriching and rewarding experience due in no small measure to the inspired direction of John Eliot and the commitment, dedication and talent of my fellow pilgrims.

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Belinda Yates

Altos

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Lucy Ballard
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Paul Tindall

Basses

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Geoffrey Davidson
Charles Pott
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CD 2 57:03 **For the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity**

- 1-6 17:47 Du sollt Gott, deinen Herren, lieben BWV 77
7-12 16:16 Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet BWV 164
13-18 22:42 Allein zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ BWV 33

Gillian Keith *soprano*, Nathalie Stutzmann *alto*
Christoph Genz *tenor*, Jonathan Brown *bass*

The Monteverdi Choir
The English Baroque Soloists
John Eliot Gardiner

Live recording from the Bach Cantata Pilgrimage
Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt, 17 September 2000

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The harpsichord used for the project, made by Andrew Wooderson, and the organ, made by Robin Jennings, were bought and generously made available to the Monteverdi by Sir David and Lady Walker (harpsichord) and Lord and Lady Burns (organ).

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The Recordings

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Soli Deo Gloria

Bach Cantatas Gardiner

CD 1 54:53 Vol 6: Jakobskirche, Köthen
For the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity
BWV 69a / 35 / 137

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Soli Deo Gloria

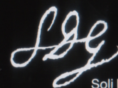
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Bach Cantatas Gardiner

CD 2 57:03 Vol 6: Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt
For the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity
BWV 77 / 164 / 33

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