# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 164 Aria (T) - Recit (B) - Aria (A) - Recit (T) - Duet (S/B) - Chorale.

Introduction and updates at melvinunger.com.

NBA I/21; BC A128
13. S. after Trinity (BWV 77, 33, 164)
\*Galatians 3:15–22 (The purpose of the Law)
\*Luke 10:23–37 (The greatest commandment;
parable of the good Samaritan)
Librettist: Salomon Franck (see note).
FP: 26 August 1725 (Leipzig: St. Thomas)

The cantata's symmetrical form centers on no. 3, which identifies the crux of hte matter as expounded in the Gospel reading—that Christians should have a heart like the Good Samaritan's in Jesus' parable. Bach often used chiastic (x-shaped/symmetrical) forms, in which center movements (where the mirror image begins) provide the crux of the matter. There antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text).

J.S. Bach Cantata No. 164

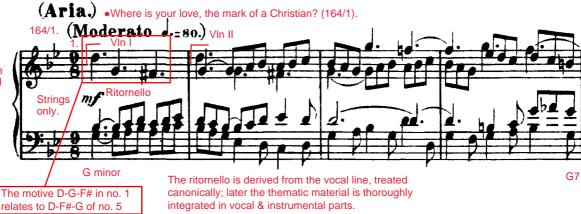
Underlying theme: The Good Samaritan

Instrumentation: Flauto traverso I, II Ob I, II VIn I, II VIa SATB Basso

Continuo, Organo

Note: The opening movement uses strings only. The oboes are used only in the duet (no. 5) and the closing chorale (no. 6). The transverse flutes are used in nos. 3, 5, and 6.

Form (Rhyme: ABABCC) Ritornello (mm. 1-9) Gm Lines 1-3 (9-28) Gm-Dm Rit (28-31) Dm Lines 1-3 (31-42) Dm Rit (42-50) Dm Lines 4-6 (50-72) Dm-B m Rit (71-75) B m-Cm Lines 1-3 (75-86) Cm Rit (86-88) Cm Lines 4-6 (88-101) Cm Ihr, die ihr euch von Christo nennet

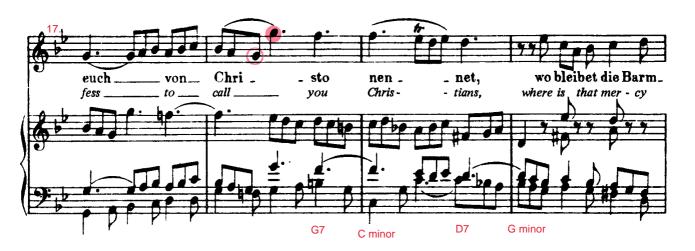




This is a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) or "motto aria." After the ritornello, the singer presents the first phrase of the aria as a kind of motto. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement. Bach treats the motto here as a canon to illustrate the central idea that Christians must imitate Christ in loving one's neighbor, a precept originating in Leviticus 19:18. In the day's Gospel reading, Jesus quotes this Old Testament law. The idea is reminiscent also of Jesus' words, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 15:35). Bach chooses 9/8 meter, its forward propulsion pressing the accusation—or perhaps representing love (see m. 58). While the poem is in iambic meter, Bach places the opening word (unaccented in the poem) on a strong beat and follows it with two more strong beats to emphasize the accusation.

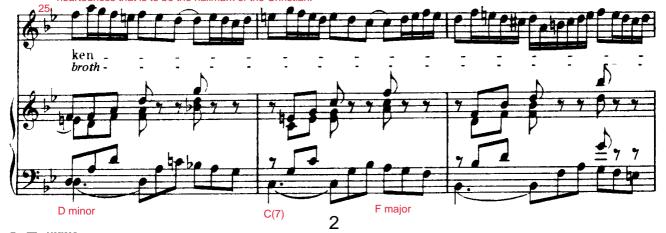






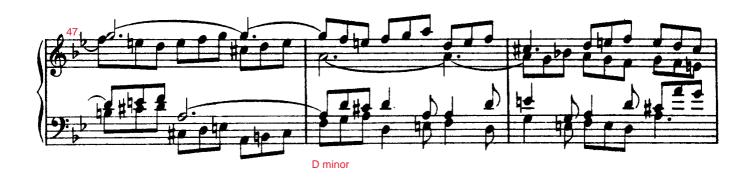


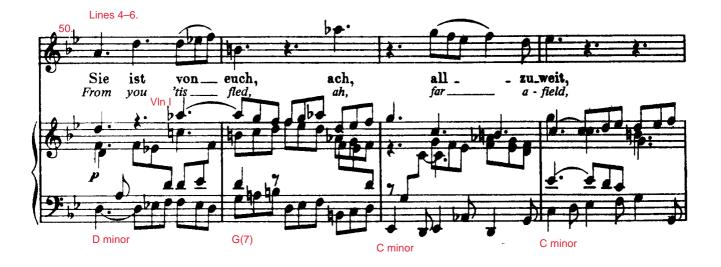
Text painting: A long melisma with supsensions leading to the third beat brings out the lilt of the meter, persumably to represent the kind-heartedness that is to be the hallmark of the Christian.

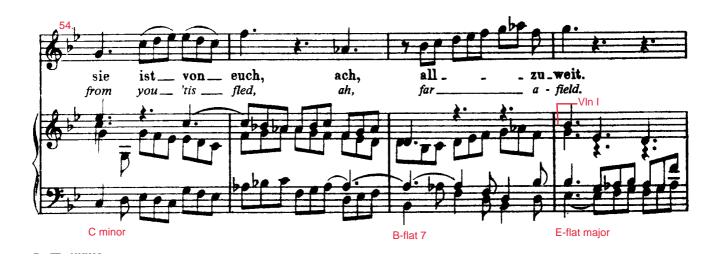


# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 164 Lines 1–3. The fact that Christians often do not demonstrate the compassion of \_ net? Ihr, ihr die Christ shows them to be "poor weak sinners," a description associated - ers? Yewith D minor (see note). who pro -Ritornello D minor (for the significance D minor of D minor, see note). wo bleibet die Barm. euch von \_ Chri \_ sto nen\_ \_ net, \_ call fess . \_ to \_ Chris you - tians, where is\_ that mer - cy D minor her \_ zigkeit, wo blei bet die Barm her zigkeit. wo, da\_ran now\_ re-vealed, where, where is \_\_ that mer - cy now\_ re-vealed by which\_ D7 **C7** G minor (hemiola) net, daran man Chri\_sti Glieder ken \_ net? man Christi Glie der ken we know our Chris - tian broth by which we know our Chris-tian broth ers,





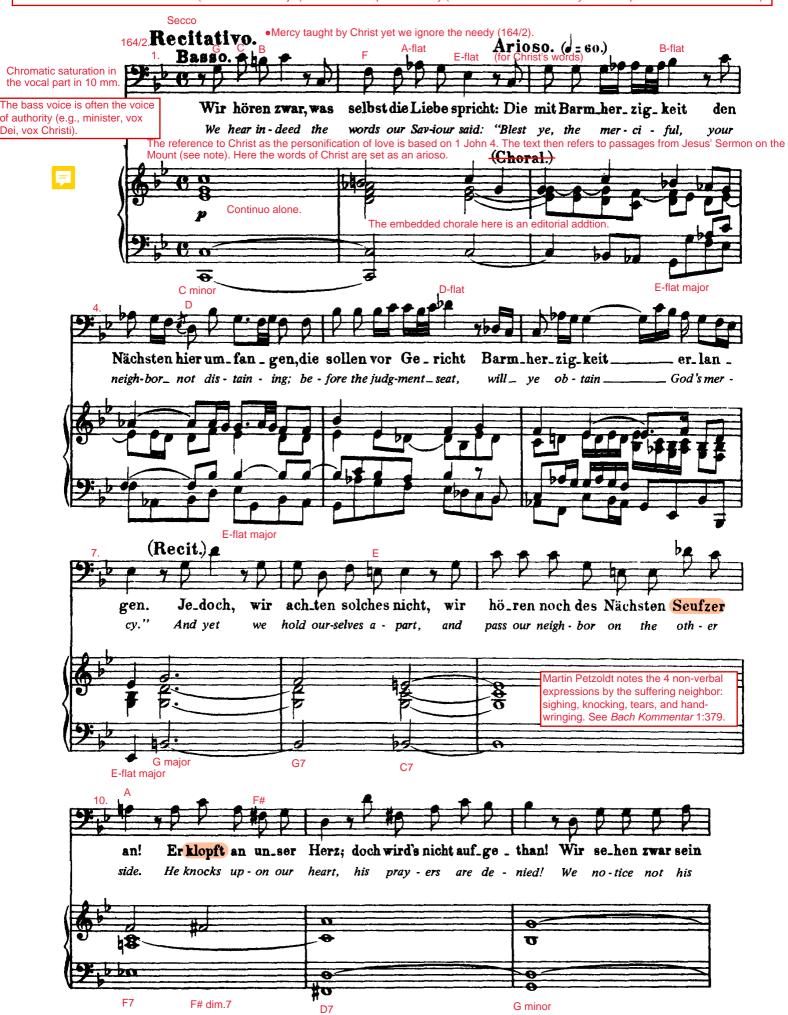


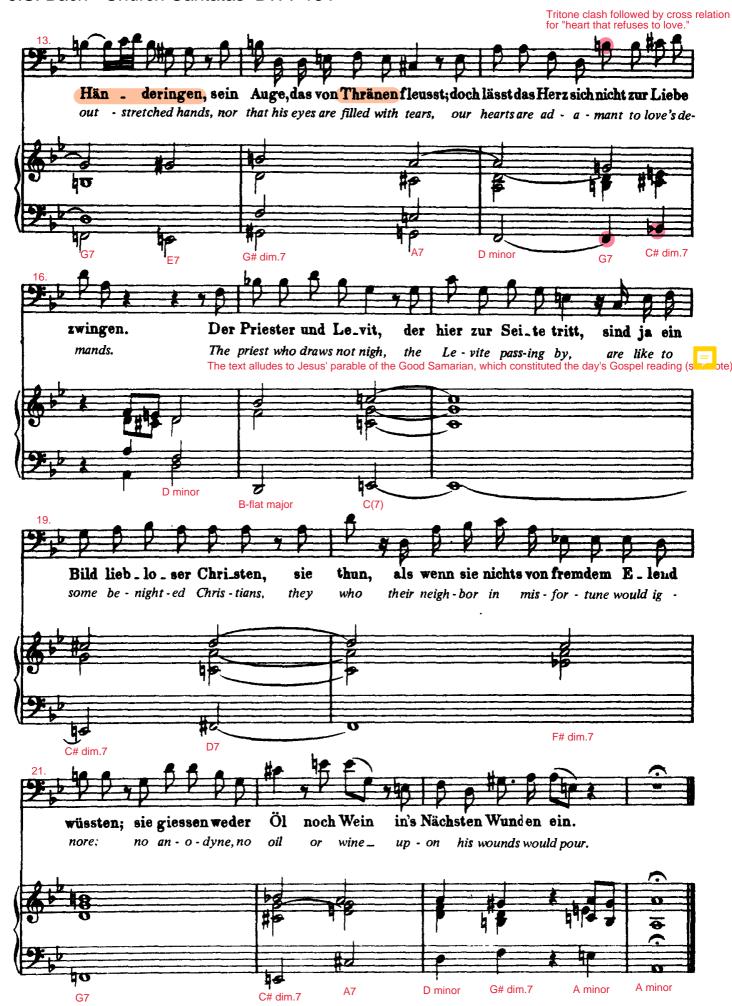












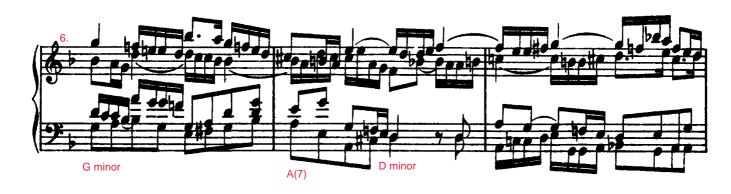
This is the central (pivot) movement in the cantata's quasi-chiastic form, where antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text). Here the crux of the matter is made explicit: Christians should emulate the Good Samaritan by making others' pain their own.

Alto is often the voice of the believing soul or church. See Martin Petzoldt, *Bach Kommentar* 1:176, 541, 592, 694, 2:824, 2:917, 3:101, 143, etc.

Pardoxically, it is the Samaritan—considered a religious outcast—who exemplified the the great commandment to love, cited in the Gospel reading. Bach depicts the quality of love and compassion with two transverse flutes in imitation, perhaps to depict the flowing of tears mentioned in the previous movement.





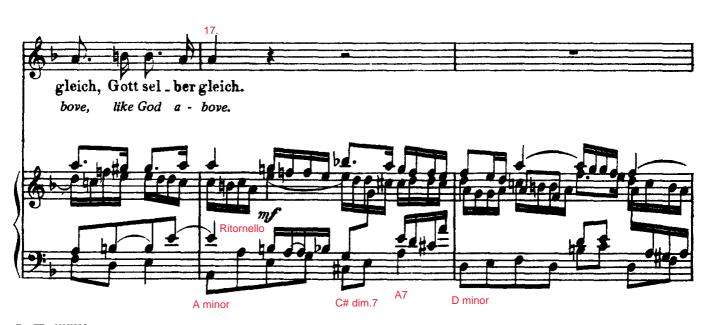




Rhetorical emphasis: Ornate melismas on "Erbarmen" ("showing mercy").

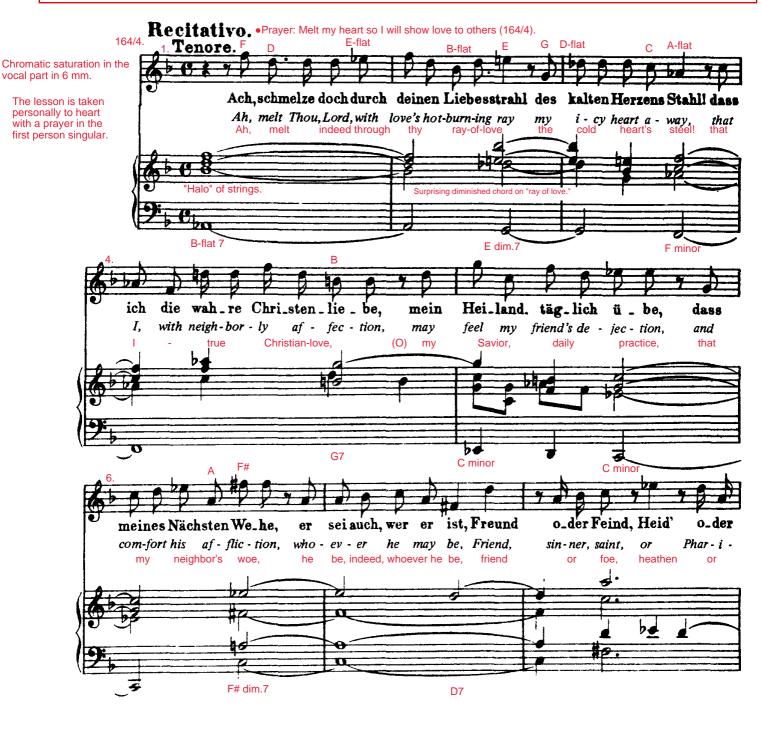


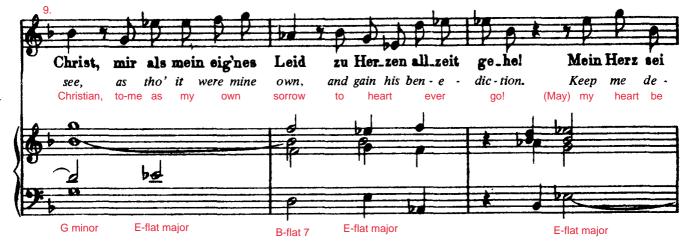


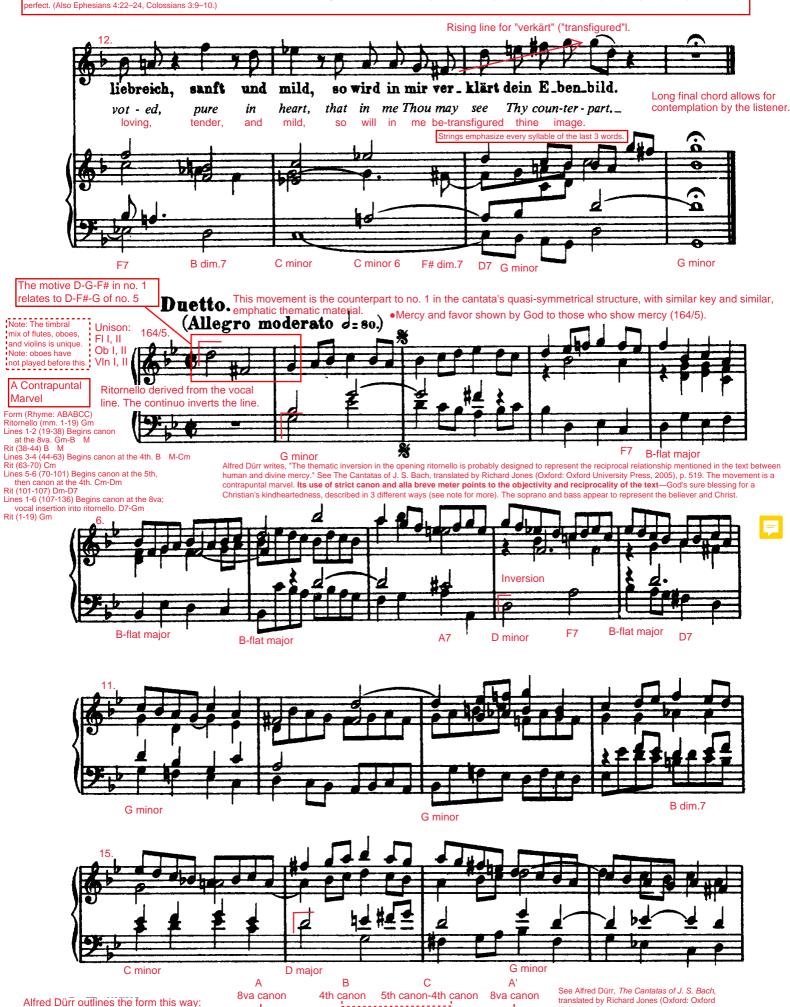












University Press, 2005), p. 519.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 164 Lines 1–2. Theme A: begins with canon at the octave, then free polyphony. Soprano. den, die sich nicht ver \_ schlie Hän Hands in char - i - ty ex - tend Basso. Hän den, die sich nicht ver \_ schlie \_ Hands in char - i ty tend еx G minor ge than, der Him zsen, wird der auf\_ - ed find the heav -- ens\_\_ 0 - pen\_ wide, the heav wird der Him . - ssen, ed find the heav -F major B-flat major \_ mel auf\_ge \_ than. ens o-pen wide; \_ mel auf\_ge \_ than, ens o-pen wide,

G minor

D7

B-flat major







