

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas

Form: Aria (S) - Recit (S) - Aria (S) - Recit (S) - Chorale (SATB). Marked "à Soprano Solo è 3 Ripieni."

Introduction & updates at melvinunger.com.

NBA I/7; BC A43

Septuagesima (BWV 144, 92, 84)

*1 Corinthians 9:24-10:5 (Run the race so as to obtain the prize)

*Matthew 20:1-16 (The parable of the vineyard laborers)

Librettist: Picander (Christian Friedrich Henrici: see note.)

FP: 9 February 1727 (Leipzig: St. Thomas)

This cantata belongs to Bach's third cantata cycle in

Leipzig (see notes below). It was later moved to

the Picander cycle (IV). Concerning Bach's

personal circumstances at the

time, see note.

Instrumentation:

Oboe

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo, Organo



Form (Rhyme: ABCCB)
Ritornello (mm. 1-24) Em
A. Lines 1-2 (3x: 25-53) Em-Bm
Rit (53-67) Bm
B. Lines 3-5 (68-79) Br-Dm
Rit (79-88) DM
B'. Lines 3-5 (88-107) DM-Em
Rit (107-116) Em
A'. Lines 1-2 (3x: 116-144) Em
Rit (144-158) Em

A "cantata" (the term used by Bach in the autograph score) for soprano with closing SATB chorale on the theme of embracing one's lot in life because it is determined by God—a theme derived from Jesus' parable in the Gospel reading. The solo soprano part is technically demanding.

Bach's alterations to Picander's published libretto produces a chiastic form. 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. 84

Bach seldom uses the term "cantata."

Ich bin vergnügt mit meinem Glücke

Alfred Dürr writes, "The first movement, with its broadly

swung oboe coloraturas, creates the impression of the slow movement of an oboe concerto. The triple time, constantly audible in the calmly regular chord strokes of the accompanying parts, and adorned on the oboe with rich embellishments, syncopations, and runs (as it is later in the voice part too), aptly characterizes the equanimity of the person contented with the fate ordained for him or her by God. Formally, the aria is tripartite, with a varied da capo. The subdivision of the middle section into two halves makes it particularly wide-ranging in effect." See Dürr, "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.230.

Aria

84/1. •Contentment with what I have, though it be little (84/1).

1. Oboe

Ritornello *mf* Th

D7 G major A7 (B7)

E minor (For significance, see note.)

The persistent dotted rhythm appears to suggest a carefree demeanor.

B7 C major E minor iv6 V E minor

Phrygian cadence, often used for questions.

D major GM7 iv6 V

B7 E minor A# dim.7

A7 D7 E minor E minor

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The soprano adopts the ritornello's theme but with modified articulation.

Soprano and oboe in duet...

Soprano

25

Ich bin ver - gnügt mit mei - nem Glück - ke, das mirder lie.
I am con - tent to fill the sta - tion that God has por -

p

E minor D major G major D# dim.7 E minor

30

- be Gott, das mirder lie - be Gott be - schert, ich bin ver - gnügt, ver -
tioned out, that God has portioned out - to me, I am con - tent, con -

Ob

E minor iv6 V

Phrygian cadence, B pedal... often used for questions.

34

gnügt, ich bin ver - gnügt, ich bin ver - gnügt,
tent, I am con - tent, I am con - tent,

Vocal insertion ("Vokaleinbau") into ritornello.

38

Relationship between between oboe and soprano.

ich bin vergnügt mit mei - nem Glück - ke, das mir - der
I am con - tent to fill the sta - tion that God has

Ob

E minor D7 G major

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42

Vln I: Ritornello motive...

D# dim.7 E minor iv6
Phrygian cadence, often used
for questions. V E minor

46

A7 D major

50

Ritornello

A# dim.7 F#7 B minor B minor

54

F#7
F# pedal...

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B minor F#7

G major E7 F#7 B minor B minor

Middle section of da capo aria.

Text painting: Melismas for "reiche Fülle" ("rich abundance").

Soll ich nicht rei - che Fül - le ha -
Though I know naught of wealth and fash -

Vocal insertion ("Vokaleinbau") into ritornello material.

C

B minor B minor G# dim.7 E7

ben, soll ich nicht rei - che Fül - le
ion, though I know naught of wealth and

A minor D7 G major D(7) G major

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NBA: vor (each time)

75

ha - ben, so dank' ich ihm
fash - ion I thank - ful take
für klei - ne my hum - ble Ga -
ben, und bin auch nicht dersel - ben
tion which serves my needs tho' scant - it -

A7 D major

79

werth.
be.

Ritornello

D major

D major D major

88 **D**

Soll ich __ nicht rei - - - - - the Fül - le ha - ben.
Though I __ know naught of wealth and fash - ion

Vln I: Ritornello motive
Word painting: Long melisma for "reiche" ("rich").

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

D major

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92

so dank' ich ihm fur klei - ne Ga -
I thank - ful take my hum - ble ra -
Ritornello motives...
Word painting: Long melisma for "Gaben" ("gifts"), even though
the gifts are described as small {"kleine Gaben"}.

B(7) E minor A minor

96

ben, und bin auch nicht dersel - ben - tien which serves my needs tho'scant - it

G7 C major C7 F major G7 C major

100

werth, und bin auch nicht der sel - ben werth, dersel - ben werth,
be, which serves my needs, tho'scant it be, tho'scant it be,
Ritornello material.

C major G# dim.7

105

und bin auch nicht der sel - ben werth.
which serves my needs, tho'scant it be.

Ritornello

D# dim.7 E minor iv6 V
Phrygian cadence, often used
for questions. E minor

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110

D major GM7 C major C aug.6 A# dim.7

114

E

Ich bin ver - gnügt mit mei - nem
I am con - tent to fill the

D7 B7 E minor E minor E minor

119

(tr)

Glück - ke, das _ mir der lie - be Gott, das mir der lie - be Gott be -
sta - tion that _ God has por - tioned out, that God has portioned out - to

Ritornello material.

Ob

G major D# dim.7 B(7) E minor

123

schert, ich bin ver - gönügt, vergnügt, ich bin ver - gönügt,
me, I am con - tent, con-tent, I am con - tent,

B pedal...

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127

ich bin ver - gnügt,
I am con - tent,
ich bin vergnügt mit mei -
I am con-tent to fill

E minor E minor G major

131

nem Glück - ke, das mir der lie - be Gott, das mir der lie - be Gott be -
the sta - tion that God has portioned out, that God has portioned out to -

G major A7 D# dim.7
E minor

E minor

135

schert, ich bin ver - gnügt mit mei - nem Glück - ke,
me, I am con - tent to fill the sta - tion,

E minor D7 GM7
E minor

140

ich bin ver - gnügt mit mei - nem Glücke, das mir der lie - be Gott be -
I am con - tent to fill the sta - tion that God has portioned out to -

D# dim.7 E minor

144 F

schert.
me.

E minor E minor

149

B pedal... E minor

154

C major C aug.6 A# dim.7 A7 B7 E minor E minor

Secco
Recitativo • God owes me nothing; I have but done my duty (84/2).
84/2. Soprano

Chromatic saturation
in the vocal part in
16 mm.

1. F# D C# B G E A#

Gott ist mir ja nichts schuldig, und wenn er mir was giebt, so zeigt er mir, dass er mich
God real - ly owes me noth - ing, and when He gives me aught it is to show His lov - ing

B minor

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4

liebt; ich kann mir nichts bei ihm ver-die-nen; denn was ich thu' ist mei-ne Pflicht.
though; for sure - ly I can - not de-serve it, since all I have to Him I owe.

B minor E(7) A major

7

Ja! wenn mein Thun gleich noch so gut geschienen, so hab' ich doch nichts Rechtes aus-ge-
Yea! What I do that seems to be of mer-it, is scant re-turn for what He doth be-

A major F# major B minor C#7

10

richtt. Doch ist der Mensch so un-ge-dul-dig, dass er sich oft betrübt, wenn ihm der
- stow. Yet man is ev - er so im - pa-tient, that he will oft be-wail if an - y

Allusion to Jesus' parable in the Gospel reading: "When the first [laborers] came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the householder..."

F# minor B7 D# dim.7

13

lie_be Gott nicht ü - ber-flüs-sig giebt. Hat er uns nicht so lan-ge Zeit umsonst er -
lux - u - ry at all the Lord cur - tail. Has God not since our ver - y birth both fed and

B major E minor G major

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16 G#

nähret und ge-kleidt, und will uns einsten se-liglich in sei-ne Herr-lich-keit er-clothed us here on earth? and will He not when we shall die, re-ceive us there in heav-en

18 II NBA: vor

höhn? Es ist genug für mich, dass ich nicht hungrig darf zu Bet-te geh'n.
high? It is e-nough for me to that be from want and mor-tal hun-ger free.

This is the central (pivot) movement in the cantata's chiastic form, where antithetical elements meet or are paradoxically inverted (formal inversion reflects an aspect of reversal or turning in the text). Here the poet accepts his meager lot in life despite what his neighbor might have. Alfred Dürr writes, "The aria... no. 3, with its spirited, song-like melody, illustrates not only the 'joy' of the text but, still more, the words of the middle section, 'a joyful spirit, a grateful heart that glorifies and praises.' Particularly charming is the treatment of the obbligato instruments, oboe and solo violin, which play together in unison at the beginning—with the lively violin figuration simplified in the oboe part—but are then separated, only to come together again later, so that a constant interplay arises between one and two parts." See "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 230–231.

Aria •Contentment with my lot though others have more (84/3).
84/3. (Allegro ♩=60.) First 4 oboe notes = major version of chorale opening.

Dance-like movement with interplay between oboe, violin, and singer.

Form (Rhyme: ABCCA)
Ritornello (mm. 1-24) GM
A. Lines 1-2 (3x: 25-72) GM-DM
Rit (73-96) DM
B. Lines 3-5 (97-116) DM-Em
Rit (117-128) Em
B'. Lines 3-5 (129-160) Em-Bm
Rit (161-184) GM
A'. Lines 1-2 (3x: 185-232) GM
Rit (1-24) GM

G major (For significance, see note.)



6 (238)

12 (244)

G major G7 C major D7

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Bach's libretto is almost entirely newly composed. It adopts only the last line of Picander's published text ("und gönne dem Nächsten") for its second line, creating new poetry for lines 1, 3, 4, 5. With the exception of the adopted line (which is in dactylic meter), Picander's published text is in trochaic meter. Bach's libretto employs dactylic meter throughout. See Petzoldt, *Bach Kommentar* 2:562–563, 56

18 (250)

B minor D7 G major

Apparent allusion to Ecclesiastes 2:24: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil" (see also Ecclesiastes 5:18). For an exegesis by theologian Johann Olearius (1611–1684), whose commentary was in J. S. Bach's personal library, see Martin Petzoldt *Bach Kommentar* 2:567–568.

24 **Soprano**

Ich es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges Brot und gön-ne dem Nächsten von
I glad - ly con - tent me with scan-ti - est fare_ and will - ing - ly share what I

Solo Vln Ob Vln Ob Vln

G major G major G major

31

Her - zen das Sei - ne, ich
have with my neighbor, *I*

Vln Ob *mf* p

G major

37

Vocal insertion ("Vokaleinbau") into ritornello material...

es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges Brot,
glad - ly con - tent me *with scan - ti - est fare,*

Vln I Ob G7 C major C major G major
 Ob D major

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B

44

ich es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges Brot und gön - ne dem Nächsten von
I glad - ly con - tent me with scan - ti - est fare_ and will - ing - ly share what I

G major

51

Herzen das Sei - ne, und gön - - - - ne dem Nächsten von Her - - -
have with my neighbor, and will - - - - - ing - ly share what I _ have

Ob Vln Vln

G major G7

58

- - - - - zen das Sei - ne, ich es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges Brot und
with my neighbor, I glad - ly con - tent me with scan - ti - est fare .. and

Ob

C major E7 A minor D7

65

gön - ne dem Nächsten von Her - zen das Sei - ne, von Her - - - - - zen
will - ing - ly share what I have with my neighbor, I have with

Ob Ob Continuo alone...

G major D major

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71 **C**

das Sei - ne.
my neigh - bor.
Ritornello

A major D major D major

78

Vln

81

D major D7 G major (A7)

90

F# minor A7 D major

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D Middle Section

Word painting: Melismas for "fröhlicher" ("happy/cheerful").

Ein ru - hig Ge - wis - sen, ein fröh-li - cher Geist. ein dank - ba - res
A soul with its Mak - er in hap - py ac - cord, a heart ov - er -

Continuo alone...

D major D major D7 G major B7

NBA: verzuckert (each time).

Her - ze, das lo - bet und preist, ver - mehret den Se - gen, ver - süsset die
- flow - ing with praise for the Lord, will - gain us - con - tent - ment and sweet-en our

E minor E7 A minor E minor

Word painting: Sustained notes and chromatic inflection for "Not" ("need/necessity/deprivation").

Noth, ver - mehret den
care, will gain us - con -

Ob Vln

Continuo alone...

E minor A(7) D major D7 G major G7 C major D# dim.7 B7 E minor

E

Se - gen, ver - süsset die Noth.
- tent - ment and sweet-en our care.

Ob Vln

Ritornello

B7 E minor E minor D7 A minor (D7) G major

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121

G major B7 E minor

127 **F**

Word painting: Sustained note for "ruhig [Gewissen]" ("calm conscience").

Ein ru - - - - hig Ge - wis - sen, ein
A soul with its Mak - er in

Ob
P

E minor E minor E minor A7 (D major)

Vln up 8va.

133

Word painting: Melisma for "fröhlich" ("happy/cheerful").

fröh - li - cher Geist, ein ru - hig Ge - wis - sen, ein
hap - py ac - cord, a soul with its Mak - er in
Oboe doubling voice...

Vln

(A7) F#7 B minor B minor

139

fröh - li - cher Geist, ein dank - ba - res Her - ze, das lo - bet und preist, ver -
hap - py - ac - cord, a heart ov - er - flow-ing with praise for the Lord, will —

B minor B minor B minor D major
A7

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Word painting: Sustained notes and chromatic inflection for "Not" ("need/necessity/deprivation"). The vocal line rises against surprising harmonic progression, which ends with a fermata.

145

meh-ret den Se-gen.ver - süsset die Not^h,
gain us_ con - tent-ment and sweet-en our care,

Sighing motives in oboe and violin for "Not" ("need/necessity")

D major B minor B minor B7 E major C#7 F# major

152

ver - meh-ret den Se-gen.ver -
will gain us_ con - tent-ment and
Continuo alone...

Fermata suggests reflection.

D7 E minor E minor F# major B minor

159

süsset die Not^h.
sweeten our care. Ritornello

B minor G major

165

G major

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171

Piano part (treble clef) and basso continuo part (bass clef). Measure 171 starts in G major, transitions to G7, and ends in C major.

G major G7 C major

177

Piano part (treble clef) and basso continuo part (bass clef). Measure 177 starts in D7, transitions to B minor, then D7, and ends in G major.

(D7) B minor D7 G major

184 **H**

Da capo modified (ending in G major).

Ich es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges Brot und gön - ne dem
I glad - ly con - tent me with scan - ti - est fare and will - ing - ly

Vln Ob Vln Ob

G major G major

190

Näch - sten von Her - zen das Sei - ne.
share what I have with my - neighbor.

Vln Ob Vln

mf

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196 I

Ich es - se mit Freuden
I glad - ly con - tent me

(Imitation)

mein we - ni - ges
with scan - ti - est

p

G major

G7 C major D major

202

Brot, fare, (Imitation) ich es - se mit Freuden mein we - ni - ges
I glad - ly con - tent me with scan - ti - est

Ob

Oboe doubles voice...

G major G major

208

Vocal insertion ("Vokaleinbau") into ritornello material...

Brot und gön - ne dem Nächsten von Her - zen das Sei - ne, und gön -
fare and will - ing - ly share what I have with my neighbor, and will -

Ob continues...

Vln

214

ne dem Nächsten von Her - zen das with my
ing - ly share what I have - - - - with my

Vln Ob

G major G7

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220

Sei-ne, ich es-se mit Freuden mein we-ni-ges Brot und gön-ne dem
neighbor, I glad-ly con-tent me with scan-ti-est fare and will-ing-ly

Ob

C major E7 A minor D7 G major

226

Nächsten von Herzen das Sei-ne, von Her-zen das Sei-ne.
share what I have with my neighbor, I have with my neighbor.

Continuo alone

Ritornello

G major

Dal Segno

The text alludes to Jesus' parable in the Gospel reading but also to God's statement to Adam in the Garden of Eden after the Fall. Genesis 3:19. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return. *Matthew 20:8–10. When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first." And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius (Luther 1545: Groschen).

84/4. **Recitativo** •Contentment now; looking to eternal compensation (84/4).

1. Sop I C A F# D# E B

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 8 mm.

Im Schwei-sse mei-nes An-ge-sichts will ich in-dess mein Brot ge-
In-the sweat of my face I will meanwhile my bread enjoy.
With sweat of toil up-on my face I earn the bread with which to

"Halo" of Strings.

D# dim.7

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The reference to receiving payment at the end of one's "evening of life" reflects Jesus' parable in the Gospel reading. Matthew 20:8–10: When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, "Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.: And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius (Luther 1545: Groschen). Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.

3 G
 nie - ssen, und wenn mein Le - bens - lauf, mein Le - bens - a - bend wird be -
 feed me, and when my end life's race, my life's e - vening will come-to-a close,
 and when I end life's race, and on my course to heav - en

Word painting: Melisma for "Lebenslauf"; descending line for "Lebensabend."

E minor A# dim.7 F#7

5 D
 schliessen, so theilt mir Gott den Gro - schen aus, da steht der Himmel
 speed me, if then apportions to-me God grant (my) me there to go, what more could He be -

B minor (E7) (A7)

7 E# G#
 drauf. O! wenn ich die - se Ga - be zu mei - nem
 - stow? Oh! if I this won - drous gift for for - ev - er -
 O, when this won - drous bless - ing

D major E# dim.7 C#(7)

9
 Gna - den - loh - ne ha - be, so brauch' ich wei - ter nichts.
 - more compensation-of-grace I am poss - es - sing, then need I further nothing.
 - more I am pos - sess - ing, my cup will o - ver - flow.

F# minor iv6 V F# major

84/5. Choral (Mel.: „Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten“)

Soprano 1. •Contentment now since eternal well-being is assured (84/5).

(6)

+Ob Vln I
Compare first 4 oboe notes of no. 3.

+Vln II

+Vla

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

Tenor.

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

Basso.

Ich leb' in-dess in dir ver-gnū-get
mir g'nüget, wie es mein Gott fü-get,
And so I live in qui-et plea-sure,
u-ni-ted with my God, to trea-sure,

und sterb' ohn'al-le Kümmernis,
ich glaub' und bin es ganz gewiss:
and die in peace and free from grief,
this steadfast faith and firm be-lief:

und sterb' ohn'al-le Kümmernis,
ich glaub' und bin es ganz gewiss:
and die in peace and free from grief,
this steadfast faith and firm be-lief:

und sterb' ohn'al-le Kümmernis,
ich glaub' und bin es ganz gewiss:
and die in peace and free from grief,
this steadfast faith and firm be-lief:

und sterb' ohn'al-le Kümmernis,
ich glaub' und bin es ganz gewiss:
and die in peace and free from grief,
this steadfast faith and firm be-lief:

B minor F# major B minor D major B minor

Text painting: The end of the first and third phrases are extended (unlike other settings of this tune) to emphasize the contentment and submission to God's sovereignty referenced in the text. See Petzold 2:570.

11

Durch dei-ne Gnad' und Chri-sti Blut machst du's mit mei-nem En-de gut.
By grace, thru what our Lord en-dured, my soul's sal-va-tion is as-sured.

Durch dei-ne Gnad' und Chri-sti Blut machst du's mit mei-nem En-de gut.
By grace, thru what our Lord en-dured, my soul's sal-va-tion is as-sured.

Durch dei-ne Gnad' und Chri-sti Blut machst du's mit mei-nem En-de gut.
By grace, thru what our Lord en-dured, my soul's sal-va-tion is as-sured.

Durch dei-ne Gnad' und Chri-sti Blut machst du's mit mei-nem En-de gut.
By grace, thru what our Lord en-dured, my soul's sal-va-tion is as-sured.

B minor D major D major B minor B major