

Introduction & updates at melvinunger.com.

NBA I/26; BC A160

23. S. after Trinity (BWV 163, 139, 52)

*Philippians 3:17–21 (Our citizenship is in heaven.)

*Matthew 22:15–22 (The Pharisees try to trap Jesus with the question: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?")

Librettist: Plausibly Christoph Birkmann (see note).

FP: 24 November 1726 (St. Nicholas) From Bach's

third annual cycle in Leipzig (see note.)

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 52

Falsche Welt, dir trau ich nicht

1. Sinfonia

(Taken from an earlier work, BWV 1046a, an early version of the Brandenburg Concerto In F that has no violino piccolo.) In the context of the overall libretto, the festive opening movement suggests celebration in face of opposition.

Instrumentation:

Corno I, II

Oboe I, II, III

Fagotto

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo

Violins are used in the first aria, oboes in the second one. The recitatives use continuo alone. The opening sinfonia and closing chorale are for tutti forces.

"The vocal music is throughout for solo soprano only. All the richer by contrast is the instrumentation.... As in several other cantatas of that year, Bach used an instrumental movement from his pre-Leipzig period as introductory sinfonia." (Dürr/Jones, 628).

1. Corno I
Corno II
Corno I: 1 beat of triplets
Corno II
F major
G7 C major
C major
Corno I, II tacet
See side note.
The horns play traditional hunting signals, with triplets. The festive affect suggests all will be well in the end.

4. Obs/Bsn +Strings
Corno I, II tacet
G7

6. Obs/Bsn +Strings
Corno I, II tacet
C major
D7
G minor
A7
D minor

9. Obs/Bsn +Strings
cresc. Corno triplets: See full score,
F major F7
B-flat major

11. Obs/Bsn +Strings
Corno I, II tacet
dim. Corno I & II triplets
C7
D minor deceptive

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

13. *Corno I, II & Obs/Bsn*
mf *Strings* *R.H.* *L.H.*

F major F major C major
Corno I, II tacet +*Corno I & II* *Corno I, II tacet*

16. *C7* *G7* *E minor deceptive*

18. *Strings* *Obs/Bsn* *Corno I & II*
C major *D7* *G minor* *A7* *D minor*

21. *Corno I, II tacet*
C7 *F major* *B-flat major*

23. *Corno I & II* *Oboes I, II, Bsn*
Corno I, II tacet
F7 *B-flat major*

26. *Tutti* *f*
B-flat major *A(7)* *D minor*

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

28. *Corno I & II alternate...*
L. H. *cresc.* *D7*
D minor *D minor*

31. *G minor* *A(7)*

33. *Corno I, II & Oboes* *Corno I, II tacet* *Vlns*
D minor *F major* *D7* *G major* *(G7)* *C major* *C7*

36. *Corno I & II on alternating half notes*
cresc. *F major* *F7* *B-flat major* *F major*

38. *cresc.* *F major* *G7* *E minor deceptive*

40. *climax* *ff* *A minor* *F# dim.7* *D7*

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

42. *dim.* Obs/Bsn Corno I, II tacet

G7 C major C major (D7)

45. cresc. G major G7 E7 A minor A7 D minor

47. Corno I & II Oboes I, II/Bsn

D minor A minor A minor (F major) Corno I, II tacet F major

50. Vlns (See full score for correct octave)

A7 D major (D7) G minor

52. Corno I & II Ob I/Bsn Vln I

G minor G minor C major F major G7

Corno I/Vln I +Corno II +Ob I

C(7) F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

Obs/Bsn

57. Corno I & II

Corno I, II tacet

F major

59. Obs/Bsn & Str

R. H.

Corno I, II tacet

L. H. . . :

F major C major

61. Corno I & II

cresc.

Oboes

L. H. *p* Corno I, II tacet

C major C7 D minor deceptive G7 E minor deceptive G7 C major C7

64. Strings

Corno I, II on alternating half notes

cresc.

F major F7 B-flat (7) E-flat major

66. Corno I & II

f

cresc.

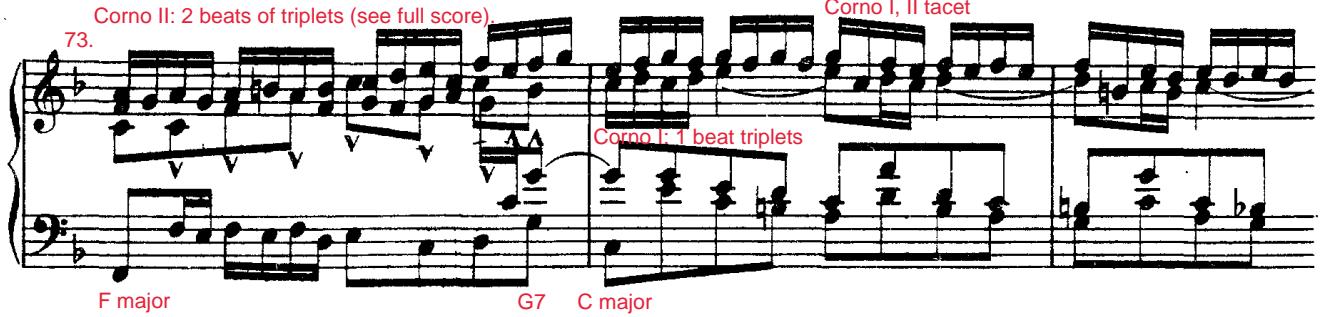
B-flat major B-flat major C(7)

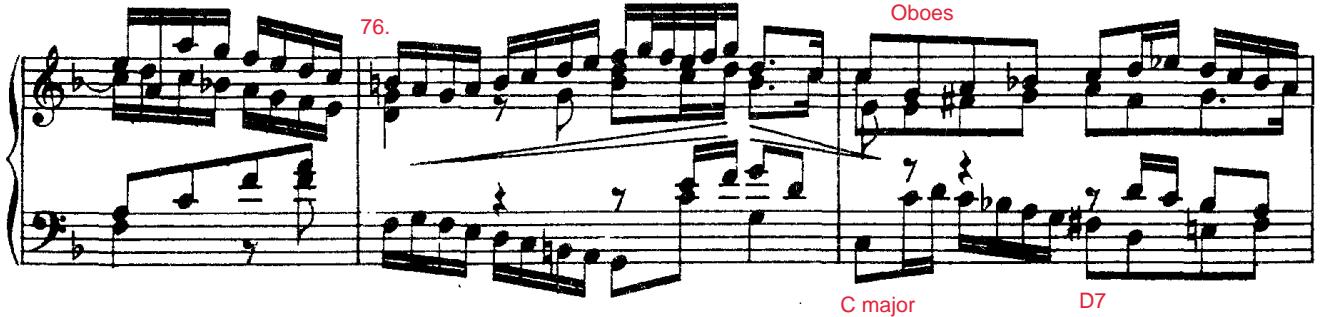
69. D minor deceptive B dim.7 ff G7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

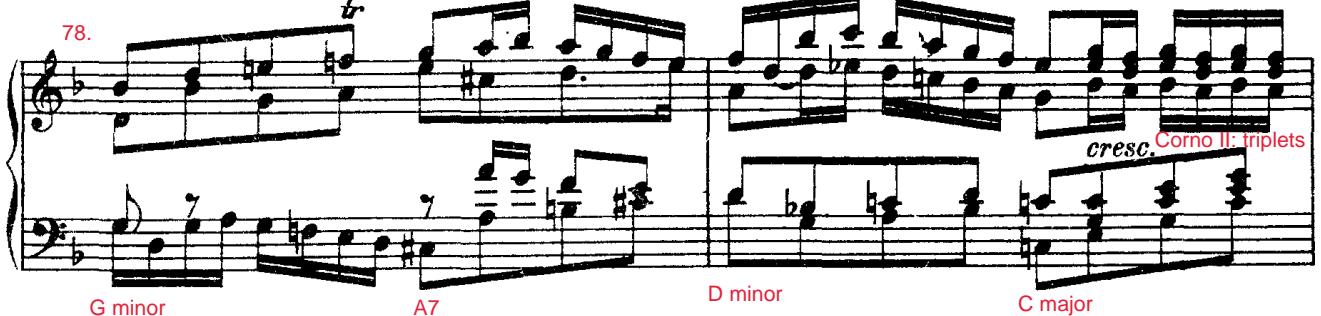
71. 

Corno II: 2 beats of triplets (see full score).

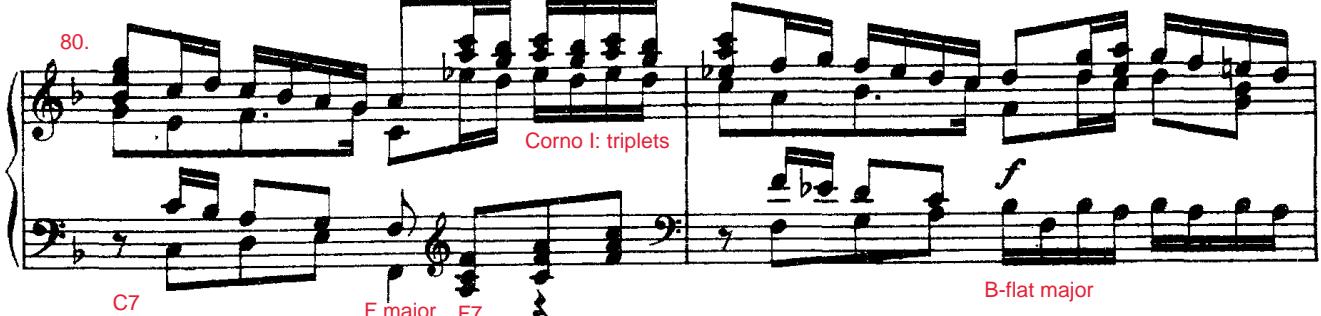
73. 

76. 

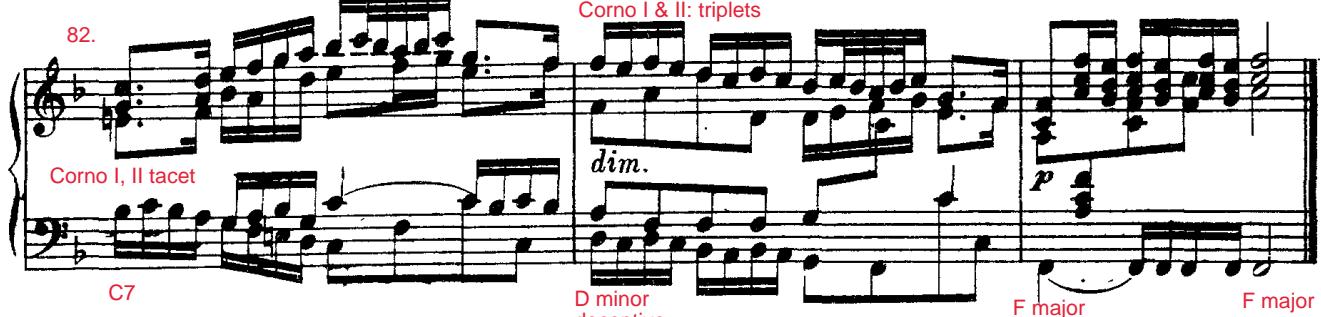
Oboes

78. 

cresc. Corno II: triplets

80. 

B-flat major

82. 

Corno I & II: triplets

The opening text alludes to biblical passages such as Ezekiel 2:6: "And you, son of man, be not afraid of them, nor be afraid of their words, though...you sit upon scorpions (Luther 1545: du wohnst unter den Skorpionen); be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house"; Luke 10:19: "Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you."

2. Recitativo

52/2. 1. Soprano •Hypocrisy and deceit is rampant in the world (52/2). The text reflects the Gospel reading of the day, in which the Pharisees sent representatives to trap Jesus with the question: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?"

For biblical background, see note.



Fag.
Org.
Cont.

Chromaticism and harmonic instability depict the treachery of the world.

For word-for-word translations, see Unger, *Handbook to Bach's Sacred Cantata Texts*.

C# dim.7

D7

F7

3.

on en und un ter fal schen Schlangen wohnen. Dein Angesicht, das noch so freundlich ist, sinnt auf ein

F# dim.7

G minor

B-flat major

B-flat 7

E-flat major

The text mixes two biblical accounts of the the treachery of Joab (commander of King David's army): 2 Samuel 3:27–29 and 20:8–10 (see side note).

A remote key for the unjust death of a poor, righteous man.

E-flat 7

A-flat 7

F major

B-flat minor

9.

aus der Welt verbannt, die Falschheit hat sie fort - getrieben, nun ist die Heuch - lei an

C7

D minor

F# dim.7

12.

ih rer Stelle blieben. Der beste Freund ist un - getreu: o jämmer - licher Stand!

G minor

D minor

F(7)

G# dim.7

E7

A minor

A minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

•Hypocritical world hates me but God is my friend! (52/3).

3. Aria

The opening motive, which permeates the entire movement, is related to the vocal opening. The violins begin in unison, then split, followed by the continuo in response. The "immerhin" motive is a figure of contemptuous dismissal, an expansion of the figura corta (see following text).

52/3. 1. Vlns

Motive of dismissal (A)

Viol. I/II
Fag.
Org.
Continuo

D minor
For the significance of D minor, see side note.

3.

Vln I

3-part imitation of motive A inverted (see full score).

D minor D minor F# dim.7 D(7)

6.

Vln II octave up (see full score).

G minor C# dim.7 A7 D minor G# dim.7 E7 A minor

C# dim.7

Editorial

Figura corta (joy?) = Motive B, in parallel thirds (Vlns).

8.

Repeated figura corta.

A7 D minor D minor D major D7

Motives A & B combined.

11.

cresc.

G minor C# dim.7 A7 A7 D minor

Figura corta (see side note).

For biblical background, see note.

13. Soprano

The figura corta is used here as a motive of dismissal ("immerhin": "whatever; I do not care"), related to the violin opening.

Immerhin,
figura corta

Vlns

immerhin,

D minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52 Patter diction underscores the operatic style.

15.

immer hin, wenn ich gleich ver sto ssen bin, immer hin, immerhin,

D minor

D minor

18.

wenn ich gleich ver sto ssen bin, immerhin, immerhin,

D minor

Word painting: Fast melisma with initial descent to depict being cast off or dispossessed.

20.

immer hin, wenn ich gleich ver sto -

D minor

D minor

22.

ssen bin, immerhin, wenn ich gleich ver sto ssen bin, immer -

G# dim.7 E7 A minor D# dim.7 B7 E major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

24.

hin, immerhin, wenn ich gleich ver.stossen bin, immerhin, immer.hin!

E7 A minor G# dim.7 A minor A7

27.

D minor G# dim.7 E7 A7 A minor

29. B Section (Lines 3–5 presented twice).

Ist die fal.sche Welt mein Feind. o. so bleibt doch Gott mein

Violins in unison continue with the "dismissal" motive (the rest here is editorial continuo realization; see full score).

A minor D7 G7 C7 A7 D minor

cresc.

Chromaticism and harmonic instability used to depict the treacherous world...

31.

Freund, der es redlich mit mir meint, red. lich mit mir meint.

Ritornello

For the significance of F major, see side note.

D minor F7 B-flat major C7 F major B-flat major F7

34.

C7 F major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

36.

Ist die falsche Welt mein Feind, o, so bleibt doch Gott mein

F major A7 D7 B-flat major

Word painting: Sustained notes with melisma to depict God's steadfast, comforting friendship.

39.

Freund, _____ o, so

G minor F7 B-flat major G7

41.

bleibt doch Gott mein Freund, der es redlich mit mir meint.

Ritornello

C minor

43.

D7 D7 G minor

45. Opening text returns in G minor (reprise of A Section modified).

Immer_hin, immer_hin,

G minor D7 G minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

50. Melismas in fast notes for "cast off."

wenn ich gleich ver - sto - - - - ssen bin, immerhin, immer.

D7 G minor

52.

55.

bin, immerhin, wenn ich gleich ver - sto _ ssen bin, immer_hin, immerhin, wenn

D minor G# dim.7 E7 A major D minor

57.

ich gleich ver-sto-sen bin, im-mer-hin, im-mer-hin!

C# dim.7 Secco D minor D minor Dal Segno

Chromatic saturation
in the vocal part in
8 measures.

The bible verse acts
as a "dictum refrain," so
that the rhyme scheme
is:

Dictum
ABAB
Dictum
CDDC
Dictum.

The 3-fold
statement of
the dictum ("God is
faithful") presumably
references the Trinity.

4. Recitativo

52/4.

1. Sop.

E-flat

D

C

B-flat

G

A

•Faithfulness of God preserves me when worlds attacks (52/4).

Compare 52/1, mm. 1-2.

"Dictum 1.

Gott ist ge-treu! / er wird, er kann mich nicht ver-las-sen. / Will mich die

Text painting: Descending line for God
not forsaking the poet

Rhyme A

Fag.

Org.

Cont.

A sentence from 1 Corinthians 10:13 ("[But] God is faithful" (Luther 1545: Aber Gott ist getreu)...) is repeated in (increasingly) arioso-like texture.

B-flat major

For biblical
background,
see note.



3.

Welt in ih-rer Ra-se-rei/in ih-re Schlin-gen fas-sen, / so steht mir sei-ne Hil-fe

NBA: und ihre Rhyme B A

B dim.7 G7 C minor F# dim.7

5.

bei. /

2.

Gott ist ge-treu! / auf seine Freundschaft will ich bauen / und meine Seele, Geist und
Text painting: Ascending line for "building" on God's friendship. C

Allusion to 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

D7

G minor

G minor

C major

C# dim.7

8.

C#

Word painting: Highest note for "all."

Sinn, /

und Al-les, was ich bin, ihm an-vertrauen. /

D

D

C

Gott ist ge-treu,

ge-

Continuo imitates

A7

D minor

D minor

F major

F7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

11.

treu, Gott ist ge - treu, ge - treu, _____ Gott ist ge - treu!

Continuo imitates.

B-flat major C7 F major F major

•Faithfulness to God avowed; world scorned (52/5). The triple meter (with frequent accents on beat 2), chordal texture, oboe instrumentation, and periodic phrase structure suggest a dance-like, comedic gaiety in mocking the world, as referenced in the text.

52/5. 5. Aria

Form:
Ritornello (mm. 1-16) B M
A (lines 1-2: mm. 17-44) B M-FM
B (lines 3-5): mm. 45-80) FM-Dm
A' (lines 1-2: mm. 80-104) B M
Ritornello (dal segno)

Ob. I/II/III
Fag.
Org.
Continuo

Upward-reaching
gestures are followed
by downward falling
gestures.

Oboes 1. Ritornello

Oboes play a quasi-jeering figure.

B-flat major E-flat major B-flat major

C minor C major C7 F# dim. G minor D dim. E-flat major

11.

F7 B-flat major G minor deceptive E-flat major (F7) B-flat major E-flat major

16.

Soprano

For biblical
background,
see note.

A Section. Lines 1-2 presented
3 times with internal repetitions.

Upward-reaching gestures place emphasis on various words. See Petzoldt,
"Bach-Kommentar" 1:648.

Ich halt' es mit dem lieben Gott, die Welt mag nur alleine bleiben,

B-flat major B-flat major B-flat major B-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

21.

This type of aria is called 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 sort instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement.

Word painting: Sustained note for "to side with/to hold."

21.

Ritornello

B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major F(7) B-flat major B-flat major B-flat major

26.

es mit dem lieben Gott, ich halt' es mit dem lieben Gott, die

B-flat major F major

31.

Welt mag nur alleine bleiben, ich halt' es mit dem lieben

(D7) G minor C# dim.

36.

Gott, die Welt mag nur alleine, die Welt mag nur alleine bleiben.

D minor F7 D minor F major B-flat major C(7) F major C7 D minor F major deceptive

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

41.

Patter diction underscores the operatic quality. Here the vocal figure suggests a smug retort to the opposing world.

Gott mit mir, und ich mit Gott

Text painting: Parallel V7-I progressions (with contrary motion) for "God with me" and "I with God."

F major F7 B-flat major C7 F major F major F7

46.

Gott, Gott mit mir, und ich mit Gott, also kann ich sel - ber

cresc.

B-flat major G7 C minor A-flat major C minor B dim.7 C minor B-flat7

50. Word painting: Long, animated, sequentially rising melisma over a static pedal, for "Spott" ([direct my] mockery).

Spott,

mf

G7 C minor (G7) C minor

G pedal...

54.

al - so kann ich selber Spott mit den fal - schen Zungen

Oboes tacet Editorial realization of continuo...

G7 C major C7 F(7) B-flat major D(7)

B Section (lines 3-5) presented twice with internal repetitions. Greater animation to depict directing ridicule at the world.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

57.

trei_ben, mit den fal_schen Zun_gen trei_ben.

Oboes
Ritornello

G minor
G minor

61.

Gott mit mir, und ich mit Gott, Gott mit

p

G minor
D major
D7
G minor

65.

mir, und ich mit Gott, al_so kann ich sel_ber Spott,

B-flat 7
E-flat major
F7
B-flat major
F7

Word painting: Long, animated, sequentially rising melisma over a static pedal, for "Spott" ([direct my] mockery).

69.

al_so

B-flat major
F pedal...

73.

Text painting: Displacement of metrical stress and fast notes to depict ridiculing "deceitful tongues."

76.

kann ich sel. ber Spott mit den fal. schen Zungen trei. ben, mit den fal. schen

cresc.

A(7) (D minor) B-flat major A7

A' Section. Lines 1–2 presented 3 times with internal repetitions.

79.

Zungen trei . . . ben. Ich halt' es mit dem lieben Gott, die

Oboes

p

D minor B-flat major B-flat major

83.

Welt mag nur alleine blei - ben,

mf

Ritornello

B-flat major

B-flat 7

E-flat major

F(7) B-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

88.

Word painting: Sustained note for "halt."

ich halt' es mit dem lieben Gott, ich halt' es

B-flat major B-flat major B-flat major (G7)

93.

mit dem lieben Gott, die Welt mag nur alleine blei...

C minor C major C7 E-flat major (D7) G minor

97.

...ben, ich halt' es mit dem lieben Gott, die Welt mag nur al...

G minor (B-flat 7) E-flat major F7 B-flat major F7 G minor deceptive

101.

...lei...ne, al...lei...ne, die Welt mag nur al...lei...ne...blei...ben.

E-flat major F7 B-flat major B-flat major

Dal Segno

The 2 horns reappear: "A pair of horns—otherwise used only in the introductory sinfonia—are added to the instrumental ensemble. Horn I reinforces the chorale melody in the soprano, while horn II has an independent part due to its restriction to the notes of the natural harmonic series." Dürr/Jones 628.

The chorale functions as a catechismal response.

52/6. 6. Choral Eigene Melodie

Soprano

1.

•Prayer: I trust in thee; let me not be confounded! (52/6). This is the first stanza of a 7-stanza chorale, a paraphrase of Psalm 31: 1–5 (1–6 in German bible), by Adam Reusner (1496–ca. 1575).

+Corno I
Ob, I, II
Vln I

+Ob III
Vln II

+Vla

A keyword, "Spotte" links this chorale stanza to the foregoing aria.

The stanza paraphrases biblical psalm verses such as Psalm 25:2: "O my God, in thee I trust, let me not be put to shame...." See also Psalm 31:1, 31:7, 71:1.

For biblical background, see note.

F major

F major

5.

Schanden wird', noch e - wig - lich zu Spot - - te. Das

Schanden wird', noch e - wig - lich zu Spot - - te. Das

Schanden wird', noch e - wig - lich zu Spot - - te. Das

Schanden wird', noch e - wig - lich zu Spot - - te. Das

G7 C major F major

C major F major

bitt' ich dich, er - hal - te mich in deiner Treu', Herr Got - - te!

bitt' ich dich, er - hal - te mich in deiner Treu', Herr Got - - te!

bitt' ich dich, er - hal - te mich in deiner Treu', Herr Got - - te!

bitt' ich dich, er - hal - te mich in deiner Treu', Herr Got - - te!

(D7) G minor

D minor

F(7)

F major
B-flat major

F major