

Bach was evidently fond of this hymn for he used in Cantatas 12, 98, 99, 100, and 144.

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NBA I/22; BC A133

15. S. after Trinity (BWV 138, 99, 51)

\*Galatians 5:25-6:10 (Exhortation to walk in the Spirit)

\*Matthew 6:24-34 (Sermon on the Mount: Exhortation not to be anxious but to seek the kingdom of God)

Librettist: Unknown

FP: 17 September 1724 (St. Thomas) Part of Bach's chorale cantata cycle.

The ebullient cast of the opening movement contrasts with the inner movements. Regarding Bach's personal circumstances at the time, see side note.

Instrumentation:

- Cornetto
- Flauto traverso
- Oboe d'amore
- Violin I, II
- Vla
- SATB
- Continuo

Note: Cantata 99 is one of more than a dozen cantatas with demanding flute parts written during this time. See side note.

The cantata is highly virtuosic for the flute.

Form: Chorale/fantasia - Recit (B) - Aria (T) - Recit (A) - Duet (S/A) - Chorale. The underlying 1674 chorale by Samuel Rodigast (1649-1708) appears verbatim in movements 1 & 6, with isolated lines appearing verbatim in the inner movements (which paraphrase these stanzas while dispensing with the title phrase that begins each stanza of the hymn). The chiasmic structure of the cantata mirrors the text's emphasis on "carrying one's cross. The libretto is in the first person throughout, giving it an individualistic character.

- 3. T. Aria (Accepting one's cross)
- 2. B. Recit. (God's gracious promise)
- 1. Chorus (God's sovereign will)
- 4. A. Recit (Faith based on God's covenant)
- 5. S/A Duet (Human resistance)
- 6. Chorale (God sustains in affliction.)

J.S. Bach

# Cantata No. 99

## Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan (I)

Bach often used chiasmic (x-shaped/symmetrical) forms, in which center movements (where the mirror image begins) often 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).

Outer movements in G major contrast with inner ones in B minor and E minor.

99/1. **Vers 1.**  
**(Coro.)**  
**(Tempo giusto ♩ = 88.)** *Figura corta* (see side note)

The opening motive of the string ritornello is derived from the chorale tune's opening. Otherwise, the ritornello is thematically independent.

Bach recycled this movement in BWV 100/1.

For Alfred Dürr's comments on the first movement, see side note.

The string ritornello is followed by a concertino group of flute, oboe d'amore, violin, and continuo, the oboe d'amore and violin I playing the opening theme with the flute supplying a "heavenly" figuration. The chorale is embedded chordally in an instrumental concerto texture, the soprano & horn playing the tune in long notes.

The flute's entrance is unexpected. Its filigree perhaps suggests heavenly concord with the sentiments of the chorale.

Musical score for measures 16-19. The score includes staves for Flute, Oboe d'amore (Ob. da'more), and Violin I (Vln I). The Flute part features a filigree of sixteenth notes, with some notes circled in yellow. The Oboe d'amore and Violin I parts play a melody with notes circled in green. The piano accompaniment is in G major, with the key signature indicated by a single sharp (F#) on the treble clef staff. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'.

Musical score for measures 20-21. This section is for the choir (CORO) and piano. The vocal parts are Soprano, Alto (+Cornetto), Tenore, and Basso. The lyrics are: "Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgethan, Was". The piano accompaniment continues in G major. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'.

Musical score for measures 22-25. This section continues the vocal parts and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ist wohl - - ge - than, Gott thut, das ist wohl - ge - than, Gott thut, das ist wohl - ge - than, Gott thut, das ist wohl - ge - than,". The piano accompaniment features a ritornello in G major. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The key signature is G major.

The disjunct duples of the vocal bass line in mm. 33-35 continue the pattern of the continuo in the previous 2 measures. The line is an embellished version of the simpler line that appears in mm. 68-70, when the music of Stollen 1 is repeated. The line suggests the first phrase of the chorale "Herzlich tut mich verlangen nach einem selgen End" (My heart is filled with longing to have a blessed end). Bach's reason for writing the line in a more embellished form (doubling the accents) so as to hammer home the words in a didactic manner: "his will remains just."

Chorale Line 2. 33.

es bleibt ge -

es bleibt ge -

es bleibt ge -

es bleibt ge - recht sein

recht sein Wil - - - - le;

recht sein Wil - - - - le;

recht sein Wil - - - - le;

Wil - le, es bleibt ge - recht sein Wil - - - - le;

Chord progression: B7, E minor A7, D minor, G7, C major, (D7), G major

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The music for Stollen 1 is repeated for Stollen 2.

37  
= m. 3.  
Music of mm. 3-36 repeats.  
= m. 4.  
G major

= m. 5.  
= m. 6.  
= m. 7.  
G7 C major

= m. 8.  
= m. 9.  
= m. 10.  
D7 G major (B7) E minor (D7) G major

= m. 11.  
= m. 12.  
= m. 13.  
D7 G major

= m. 14.  
= m. 15.  
= m. 16.  
G major G7 C major D(7) G major  
Flute & Oboe d'amore

= m. 17.  
= m. 18.  
= m. 19.  
G major G major

55 **C** Chorale Line 3.

wie er fängt mei - ne  
wie er fängt  
wie er fängt

= m. 20. = m. 21. = m. 22. wie er fängt

G major G major

58

Sa - chen an,  
mei - ne Sa - chen an,  
mei - ne Sa - chen an,  
mei - ne Sa - chen an,

= m. 23. = m. 24. = m. 25.

G major

61

= m. 26. = m. 27. = m. 28.

G major

64

= m. 29. = m. 30. = m. 31.

B7 E minor A7

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57 **D** Chorale Line 4.

will ich ihm hal - - ten

will ich ihm hal - - - - -

will ich ihm hal - - ten

will ich ihm hal - - ten

= m. 32. = m. 33 (vocal bass different). = m. 34 (vocal bass different)

70

stil - - - - - le.

- - - - - ten stil - - - - - le.

stil - - - - - le.

stil - - - - - le.

= m. 35 (vocal bass different). = m. 36.

Ritornello

G major

72

74

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Abgesang of chorale's bar form.

Chorale Line 5.

76 **E**

Er ist mein Gott  
Er ist mein Gott,  
Er ist mein Gott,  
Er ist mein Gott,

Chorale Line 6.

C major

D7

G major

79

der in der Noth  
der in der Noth  
der in der Noth  
der in der Noth

Chorale Line 7.

G major

C major

82

mich wohl weiss zu er - - -  
mich wohl weiss zu er - hal - - -  
mich wohl weiss zu - er - - -  
mich wohl weiss zu - er - hal - - -

G7 C major

G major

A7 D major

D major

85

hal - - - - - ten:  
 hal - - - - - ten:  
 hal - - - - - ten:  
 ten:  
 D major

88

L.H. R.H.  
 D major

91

Bass line continues in lower octave (see full score). F#7  
 B minor E7

94

**F** Chorale Line 8.

drum lass' ich ihn nur  
 drum lass' ich ihn nur wal -  
 drum lass' ich ihn nur wal -  
 drum lass' ich ihn nur wal -

A minor D major G major  
 F major

As in m. 33, the bass line's disjunct duples imitate the pattern of the continuo in the previous 2 measures, suggesting a didactic emphasis on the words: "Therefore I will just allow him to rule."

drum lass' ich ihn nur wal -



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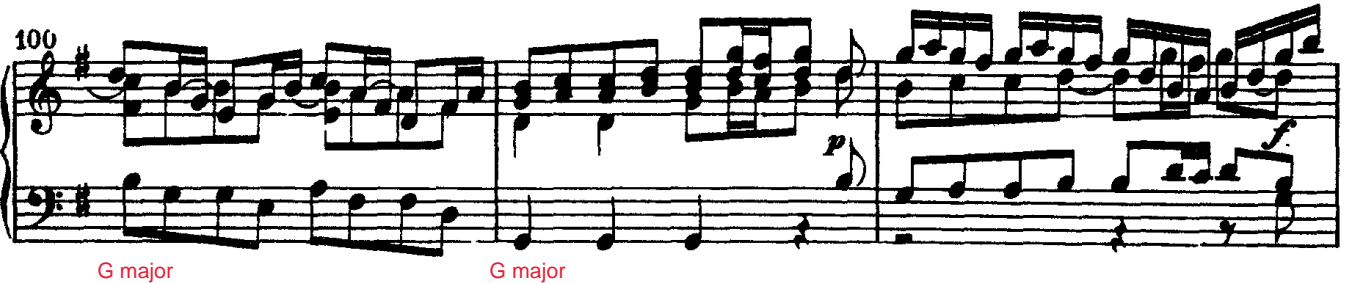
97



wal - - - ten.  
- - - - - ten.  
- - - - - ten.  
- - - - - ten.

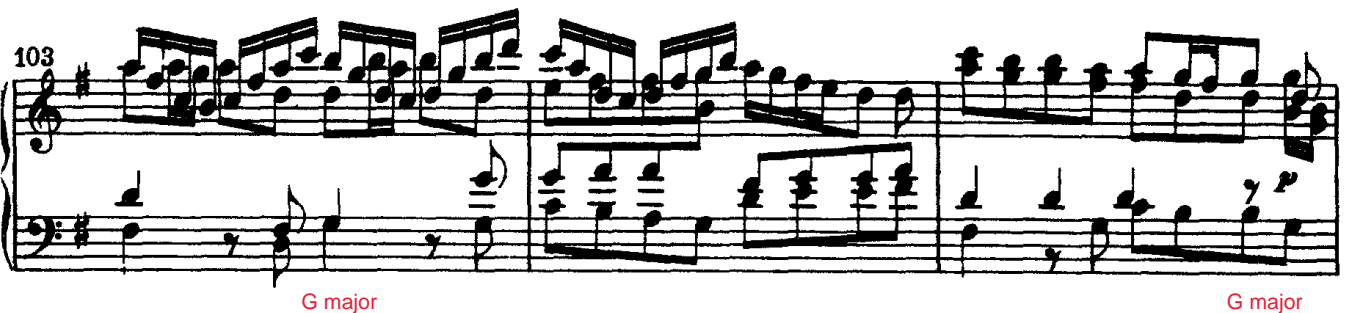
D(7) G7 C major (D7)

100



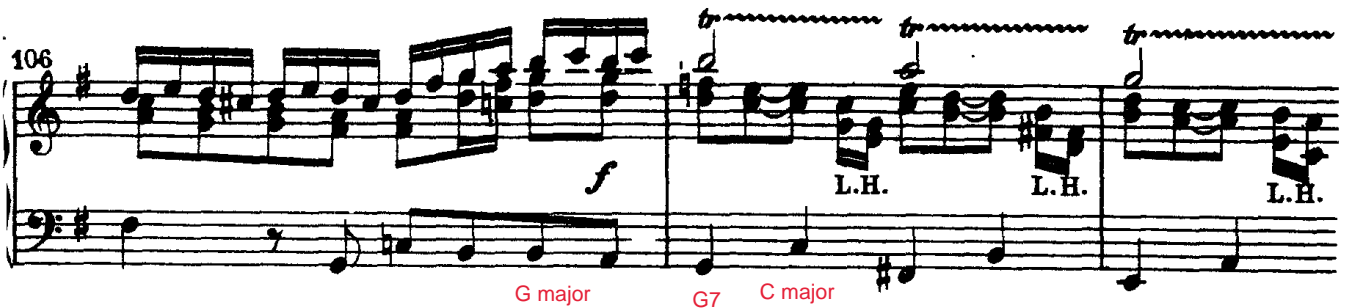
G major G major

103



G major G major

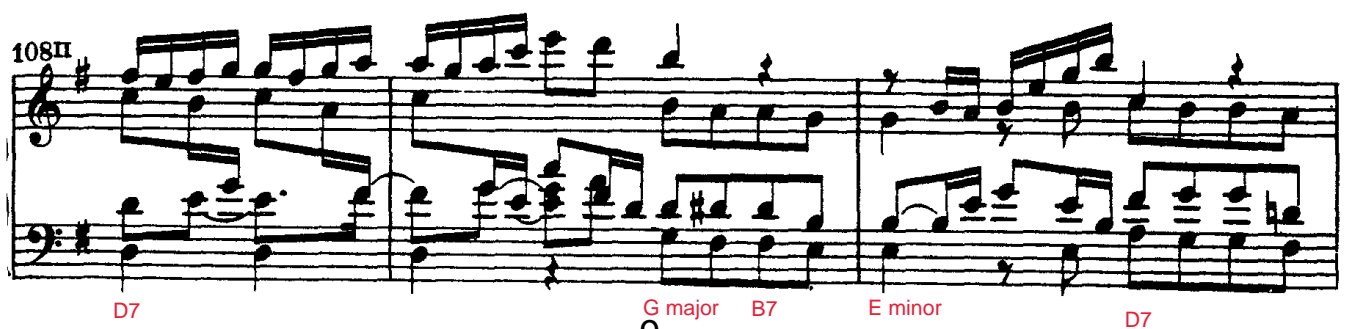
106



G major G7 C major

L.H. L.H. L.H.

108II



D7 G major B7 E minor D7

111

G major G major

114

G major D major D7 G major G major

Secco

99/2. **Recitativo.** (Based on Chorale Verse 2)

• Word of God assures me of his help in misfortune (99/2).

1. **Basso**

F# B A# D G

Sein Wort der Wahrheit ste - het fest und wird mich nicht be -

Text verbatim from the chorale.

Text painting: Sustained B minor to depict the "His Word of truth stands fast."

B minor

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 9 mm.

3 A D# E C

trü - gen, weil es die Gläu - bi - gen nicht fal - len noch verder - ben lässt. Ja,

B7 E minor

5 C#

weil es mich den Weg zum Leben führet, so fasst mein Herze sich und lässt sich be -

(A7) D major

8

gnügen an Gottes Va-ter-treu'und Huld und hat Ge-duld, wenn mich ein Un-fall rühret.

Text verbatim from the chorale.

E7 A major F# minor E dim.7 F# minor

11

Gott kann mit sei-nen Allmachts-hän-den mein Unglück wen

(a tempo) (♩ = 60.)

Arioso

F# minor (B7) E minor

Text painting: Swirling arioso duet of continuo and voice with modulation to B minor for "turn my misfortune around."

13

den

B minor B minor B minor/major?

Form (Rhyme: ABCCB)  
 Rit. (Mm. 1-12) Em  
 A. Lines 1-2 (2x:13-40) Em-BM  
 Rit. (40-44) Bm  
 Lines 1-2 (1x:44-64) E7-Am-Em  
 Rit. (64-76) Em  
 B. Lines 3-4 (2x:77-96) Em-Am  
 Rit. (97-100) Dm-Am  
 Line 5 (3x:101-120) Am-BM  
 A. Da capo (1-76)

99/3. **Aria.** (Based on Chorale Verse 3)  
 •Cup given us may be bitter but is our medicine (99/3).  
 (Andante) ♩ = 106.)

Flute 1. *mf*

Ritornello derived from vocal line.

Chromatic descending tetrachord—traditional symbol of lament.

The flute's "shuddering" figures, foreshadow the singer's opening.

E minor The movement is highly virtuosic for the flute. G# dim.7 E7

The movement is littered with sharps, apparently due to the dual meaning of the word Kreuz. This dual meaning allowed Bach to associate the use of musical sharps with Christ's cross and crossbearing.

Limping continuo bass suggests "cross bearing" to which the text alludes (drinking the cup of bearing the cross). See Jesus' prayer in side note.

6.

A minor F#7 B major B7 D# dim.7 B7

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" (a term coined by Hugo Riemann) after the motto aria. 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.

**10 Tenore.**

Text painting: The motto of the aria reflects the opening phrase: a shuddering figure for "erschütt're dich (shake yourself up), then a pause before the emphatic negation "just not," then a drooping line for "despondent soul."

A. Section. hemiola

Erschütt're dich nur nicht,

E minor C major B7 E minor E minor

The motto opens with a shuddering figure that reflects the word "shudder". Placing the first (weak) syllable on the downbeat reinforces the effect and allows a hemiola to emphasize strong syllables thereafter.

**15**

ver-zag-te See - le,

E minor F#7 B major E minor

Word painting: "Disheartened spirit" is accompanied by a descending chromatic tetrahord, traditional symbol of lament. The repeated motive is counterbalanced by ascending chromatic fourths, perhaps to symbolize that the ultimate benefit of cross-bearing, as referenced in the text.

**20**

er - schütt're dich nur nicht, verzag - te See - - le,

E minor E minor

Constant chromaticism depicts the "bitter chalice" but the ascending contour apparently signifies its ultimately beneficial effects, as referenced in the text.

**25**

wenn dir der Kreuzeskelch so bit - ter schmeckt, er - schütt're dich -

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

While Bach often used the descending chromatic fourth as the traditional symbol of lament (e.g., as the ground bass for the "Crucifixus" in the B-minor Mass), he

also used its inversion to symbolize Christ's rescue. See the B-minor mass, just prior to the "Crucifixus" in the "Et incarnatus est" on the words "et homo est" (see alto, mm. 43-45); BWV 28/2 on "Hat dir dein' Sünd' vergeben" (has forgiven thee thy sins); and BWV 43/10 on "zu helfen seinen Knechten" (to help his servants).

30

nur nicht, ver - zag - te See - le, wenn dir der

B minor B7 E minor F# major B minor B7

34

Kreu - zes - kelch so bit - ter schmeckt, wenn dir

E minor C#7 F# major F#7 A# dim.7 F#(7)

38

Syncopation followed by hemiola.

der Kreuzeskelch so bit - terschmeckt.

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

42

**B**

Erschüttere dich nur nicht!

B minor G major F#7 B minor E7 A minor

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47

Er - schütt're\_ dich nur nicht!

G# dim.7 E7 A minor B7

51

Er - schütt're\_ dich nur nicht,

A# dim.7 F#7 B major B7 E minor

55

ver - zag - te See - le, wenn dir\_ der\_ Kreu - zes - kelch

E minor E minor G# dim.7 E7 A minor

59

so bit - ter schmeckt, wenn dir\_

A# dim.7 B major D# dim.7 B7

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62 Syncopation followed by hemiola. **C**

— der Kreuzeskelch so bit - terschmeckt.

E minor E minor E minor

67

E7 A minor

71

F#7 B major D# dim.7 B7 E minor

Text painting: To depict God's aid as referenced in the text, the opening motive of the B section has a descending contour, reversing the direction of the motive in the A Section. **D** The large downward leaps provide a sense of strong affirmation.

75 **D**

Gott ist\_ dein wei - ser Arzt und Wun - der -

B Section.

E minor E minor B minor D major A7

80

mann, Gott ist\_ dein wei - ser Arzt und Wun - der - mann, so

Text verbatim from the chorale.

D major D7 G major B(7) E minor E7

Word painting: Melisma with descending figures for "pouring s deadly poison [down a person's throat]" (which God, the Good Physician in the text, would never do).

85

dir\_ kein\_ tödt\_ lich\_ Gift\_ ein\_ schen\_

A minor A(7) D minor E7 A7

90

ken\_ kann,

D minor B7 E major E7

93

Syncopation followed by hemiola.

so dir\_ kein\_ tödt\_ lich\_ Gift\_ ein\_ schen\_ ken\_ kann,

G# dim.7 F major G# dim.7 A minor A minor

97

Ritornello

E7 A minor A minor

101

ob\_ gleich\_ die\_ Sü\_ ssig\_ keit\_ ver\_ bor\_ gen\_ steckt,

A minor D major G(7) C major



Word painting: Long, tortuous melisma with cross figures for the word "hidden" (the hidden sweetness of cross-bearing).

105

ob - gleich die Sü - ssig - keit ver - bor

B7 E minor A# dim.7 F#7

109

While the vocal line descends, the flute rises one octave to high E, suggesting the sweetness hidden in cross-bearing, as referenced in the text.

B minor C major

The sudden harmonic move to C seems significance. For the significance of C elsewhere, see side note.

113

gen steckt,

A# dim.7 F#7

117

ob - gleich die Sü - ssig - keit ver - bor - gen steckt.

though the sweetness hidden lies.

hemiola

B minor B major

Da Capo.

**Secco**  
99/4. **Recitativo.** (Based on Chorale Verse 4)  
1. **Alto.** • Faith in affliction; it is based on eternal covenant (99/4).

Nun, der von E - wigkeit geschloss'ne Bund bleibt meines Glaubens

A# dim.7 B minor

Grund. Erspricht mit Zuversicht in Tod und Leben: Gott ist mein Licht, ihm will ich mich er-

B minor B7 E minor G major C major

Text verbatim from the chorale.

geben. Und haben al - le Ta - ge gleich ih - re eig'ne Plage, doch auf das überstand'ne

And even if all days have their own vexation,

Allusion to the end of the day's Gospel reading, Matthew 6:34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day."

G major E7

Leid, wenn man genugge - wei - net, kommt endlich die Errettungs - zeit, da Got - tes treuer -

When one has wept enough, the time of delivery finally comes.

Possible allusion to Psalm 30:5. "Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning."

D# dim.7 B7 E(7) A7 D major

Sinn er - schei - net.

Arioso

D major D major

Text painting: As in no. 2 (this movement's counterpart in a symmetrical structure), a swirling arioso duet of continuo and voice depicts God's faithful intervention.

As in no. 3, the movement is littered with sharps, apparently due to the dual meaning of the word *Kreuz*. This dual meaning allowed Bach to associate the use of musical sharps with Christ's cross and crossbearing.

**Aria. (Duetto.)**

(Based on Chorale Verse 5)

• Cross bitter to flesh; endure it for future reward (99/5).

99/5. (Molto moderato)  $\text{♩} = 76$ .

Hammering/pulsing with concluding sigh.

Ritornello derived from vocal lines.

B minor The bass presumably represents the trudging step of the cross-bearing disciple.

Form (Rhyme: AABBC)  
Rit. (Mm. 1-5) Bm  
A. Lines 1-2 (5-9) Bm  
Rit. (10-13) Bm  
Lines 1-3 (13-23) Bm-DM  
Rit. (23-27) DM  
B. Lines 4-6 (27-47) Am-Bm  
Rit. (47-51) Bm

The structure resembles motet form (lines handled successively) with a repeat of the opening ritornello at the end suggesting the words of the A section like a da capo.

Quintet Texture:  
Soprano  
Alto  
Flute  
Oboe d'amore  
Continuo

The hammering notes of the theme (here with concluding sigh) is reminiscent of BWV 21/2 ("Ich hatte viel Bekümmernis" (I had much grief). It suggests the onslaught of adversity (i.e., "the cross"). The imitative interplay between flute and oboe d'amore / alto and soprano reflects the dualistic clash between "bearing the cross" and the "weakness of the flesh," as referenced in the text.

The text alludes to scriptures such as the gospel reading of the day, Matthew 6:24: "No one can serve two masters"; Matthew 26:41: "The spirit...is willing, but the flesh is weak"; and Galatians 5:17: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit."

B minor B minor C#7 F# minor

B7 (E minor) F#7 B minor

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10

B minor A7 F#7 B7 E major

12II

**B**

wenn des Kreuzes Bit - ter - kei - ten mit des Fleisches Schwachheit

wenn des Kreuzes Bit - ter -

B minor B minor B minor G major B major

15

strei - - - - - ten, wenn des

kei - ten mit des Fleisches Schwachheit streiten, wenn des Kreuzes Bit - ter - kei - ten mit des

E minor A7 D major E7 A major G# dim.7 A major (B7)

The bitterness of bearing the cross is reflected in constant dissonances that resolve on the second half of the beat.

Word painting: Very long melismas in sweet parallel 3rds & 6ths for "streiten" (to fight or clash), followed by further parallel 3rds & 6ths: Though the flesh has resisted the bitterness of bearing the cross, it ultimately submits to God's will, and this submission is ultimately sweet, as referenced in no. 3.

Kreuzes Bit - ter - kei - ten mit des Fleisches Schwachheit strei - - - - -

Fleisches Schwachheit strei - - - - -

E minor F#7 B minor

20

ten, ist es -

ten, ist es -

Ob. d'amore

D7 E minor D# dim.7 B7 E minor

22

den-noch wohl-ge-than,dennoch wohl - ge - than.

Parallel 3rds & 6ths continue for "It (i.e., God's will) is nevertheless well done."

The word "wohlgetan" provides the keyword for the closing stanza of the chorale, no. 6, as indeed, it does for the cantata as a whole.

den-noch wohl-ge-than,dennoch wohl - ge - than.

Ob. d'amore Fl.

E minor D major D major G major

The 3rd line (it is nevertheless well done") is added for the first time. The trudging bass changes to an ascending run and the music modulates to major. Concerning minor vs. major, see side note.

24II

E7 A minor D7 G major D major

27 C

NBA: vor (each time)

Wer das Kreuz durch falschen Wahn sich für un - er - träglich schätzt, für un - er -

Wer das Kreuz durch falschen Wahn sich für un - er - träglich

Ob. d'amore

D major A minor E7 A major B7 E minor F#7

The text's warning that one must endure the cross to gain eternal bliss reflects Jesus' words in passages such as Matthew 16:24-25: If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. With these words the librettist changed the original chorale stanza's positive tone ("I will nevertheless be delighted hereafter") to a negative one.

30. **Fl.**  
 B minor C#7 F# minor G#7 C# minor E7

33. **Fl.** **Ob. N'amore**  
 A minor F#7 B7 E minor F#7 B minor

36. **Text painting: Long melisma in sweet parallel 3rds & 6ths for "delighted."**  
 D D major F# major

38II **Fl.**  
 B minor D major

The flute plays a false reprise, perhaps representative of the text: "will not be delighted hereafter either." A reprise of the ritornello occurs at m. 47.

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41

künftignichter - göt -

künftignichter - göt -

Ob. d'amore Fl. Ob. d'amore Fl.

F#7 B minor

Flute and Oboe d'amore trade "nicht ergötzet" (not delighted) figures.

44

zet, nicht er-göt - zet, - wird auch künf-tig nicht er-göt -

zet, nicht er-göt - zet, wird auch künf-tig nicht er-göt -

Fl. & Ob. d'amore Fl. & Ob. d'amore

B minor B minor

46

zet, nicht er-göt - zet.

zet, nicht er-göt - zet.

Fl. Ob. d'amore

B minor B minor

The opening ritornello repeats, suggesting the words of the A section in a kind of da capo.

49

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

The cantata closes with the 1674 chorale for the 1674 chorale (1649–1708) that underlies the cantata. It acts as a summary for the work. The voice leading is occasionally active, providing extra energy to the generally straightforward statement of affirmation.

99/6. **Vers 6.** (Verse 6) (See also 12/7, 75/14, 100/6.)  
● God's sovereign will accepted, even affliction (99/6).

**Choral. (Eigene Melodie.)**

Soprano. *f*.

+Cornetto  
Flauto traverso  
Ob. d'amore  
Vln I

+Vln II

+Vla

Was Gott thut, das ist wohl - gethan, da - bei will ich ver - blei - ben;  
es mag mich auf die rau - he Bahn Noth, Tod und E - lend trei - ben,

so wird Gott mich ganz vä - ter - lich in sei - nen Ar - men

so wird Gott mich ganz vä - ter - lich in sei - nen Ar - men

so wird Gott mich ganz vä - ter - lich in sei - nen Ar - men

so wird Chromatic voice leading is reminiscent of that in foregoing movements. nen - Ar men

hal - - ten: drum lass' ich ihn nur wal - - ten.

hal - - ten: drum lass' ich ihn nur wal - - ten.

hal - - ten: drum lass' ich ihn nur wal - - ten.

hal - - ten: drum lass' ich ihn nur wal - - ten.

M. Samuel Rodigast

D major B minor

D7 G major