

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 52

Form: Sinfonia - Recit (S) - Aria (S) - Chorale (S) - Chorale (SATB).
 "Whereas the librettist of Cantata 163, Salomo Franck, used the biblical account of the tribute money to create a very sturdy analogy between the coin and the heart of the Christian, here the wrath of the anonymous librettist is aroused exclusively by the cunning of the Pharisees who attempt to catch Jesus in a trap. The librettist, being a true child of his time, concludes that the Christian has no choice other than to turn his back on the world with all its falsehood and focus his mind on God alone. The murder of Abner by Joab (2 Samuel 3.27) is adduced as an example of worldly cunning. The four freely versified movements are ordered in clear antithesis: a recitative-aria pair each deals with the falsehood of the world (nos. 2-3) and the faithfulness of God (nos. 4-5). The cantata concludes with the first verse of the hymn 'In dich hab ich gehofft', Herr by Adam Reusner (1533)." See Alfred Dürr, translated by Richard Jones, "The Cantatas of J. S. Bach," 627. Concerning the work's tonal plan, see Eric Chafe's view in the side 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.)
 52/1. In the context of the overall libretto, the festive opening movement suggests celebration in face of opposition.

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.

Instrumentation:
 Corno I, II
 Oboe I, II, III
 Fagotto
 Vln I, II
 Vla
 SATB
 Continuo

The horns play traditional hunting signals, with triplets. The festive affect suggests all will be well in the end.

"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).

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13. **Horns & Oboes**
mf **Strings** **R.H.** **L.H.**
F major F major C major

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

18. **Strings** **Oboes** **Hns**
C major D7 G minor A7 D minor

21. **C7** **F major** **B-flat major**

23. **Horns** **Oboes I & II**
F7 B-flat major

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

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28. *mf* *cresc.* L.H.

D minor D7 D minor

31

G minor A(7)

33. Horns & Oboes Vlns

p

D minor F major D7 G major (G7) C major C7

36. Horns on half notes *cresc.*

F major F7 B-flat major F major

38. *f* *cresc.*

F major G7 E minor deceptive

40. climax *ff*

A minor F# dim.7 D7

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42. *dim.* *mf* *Oboes*

G7 C major C major (D7)

Detailed description: This system covers measures 42 to 44. The music is in G minor. Measure 42 starts with a piano texture marked *dim.* and a G7 chord. Measure 43 features a piano texture marked *mf* with a C major chord. Measure 44 continues with a C major chord and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The bass line consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 44.

45. *cresc.*

G major G7 E7 A minor A7 D minor

Detailed description: This system covers measures 45 to 46. Measure 45 starts with a piano texture marked *cresc.* and a G major chord. Measure 46 features a piano texture marked *cresc.* with a G7 chord. The bass line continues with a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 45 and two in measure 46.

47. *mf* *Horns* *Oboes I & II*

D minor A minor A minor (F major) F major

Detailed description: This system covers measures 47 to 49. Measure 47 starts with a piano texture marked *mf* and a D minor chord. Measure 48 features a piano texture marked *mf* with an A minor chord. Measure 49 continues with an A minor chord. The bass line consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 47 and two in measure 48.

50. *Vlins* (See full score for correct octave)

A7 D major (D7) G minor

Detailed description: This system covers measures 50 to 51. Measure 50 starts with a piano texture marked *mf* and an A7 chord. Measure 51 features a piano texture marked *mf* with a D major chord. The bass line continues with a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 50 and two in measure 51.

52. *f* *mf* *Horns* *Ob I* *Vln I*

G minor G minor C major F major G7

Detailed description: This system covers measures 52 to 54. Measure 52 starts with a piano texture marked *f* and a G minor chord. Measure 53 features a piano texture marked *mf* with a G minor chord. Measure 54 continues with a C major chord. The bass line consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 52 and two in measure 53.

55. *Horn I/Vln I* *+Horn II* *+Ob I*

C(7) F major

Detailed description: This system covers measures 55 to 56. Measure 55 starts with a piano texture marked *mf* and a C(7) chord. Measure 56 features a piano texture marked *mf* with a F major chord. The bass line continues with a simple harmonic accompaniment. There are two accents (^) in measure 55 and two in measure 56.

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57. *Oboes* *Horns*

F major

59. *Obs & Str* *R. H.* *L. H. . . .*

F major C major

61. *Horns* *Oboes* *cresc.* *L. H. p*

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

64. *Strings* *cresc.*

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

66. *Horns* *cresc.*

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

69. *Oboes* *ff*

D minor deceptive B dim.7 G7

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71. *dim.* *mf*

C7 F major F major

Detailed description: This system shows measures 71 and 72. The right hand features a complex texture of sixteenth-note triplets and sixteenth-note pairs. The left hand has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Dynamics range from *dim.* to *mf*. Chords are labeled as C7, F major, and F major.

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

73. *mf*

F major G7 C major

Corno I: 1 beat triplets

Detailed description: This system covers measures 73 and 74. The right hand continues with intricate sixteenth-note patterns. The left hand provides harmonic support. Dynamics are marked *mf*. Chords are F major, G7, and C major. Annotations include 'Corno II: 2 beats of triplets (see full score)' and 'Corno I: 1 beat triplets'.

76. *mf*

C major D7

Oboes

Detailed description: This system shows measures 75 and 76. The right hand has a melodic line with some grace notes. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics are *mf*. Chords are C major and D7. An annotation 'Oboes' points to a specific melodic line.

78. *tr* *cresc.*

G minor A7 D minor C major

Corno II: triplets

Detailed description: This system covers measures 77 and 78. The right hand features a trill (*tr*) in measure 77. The left hand has a steady accompaniment. Dynamics include *cresc.* Chords are G minor, A7, D minor, and C major. An annotation 'Corno II: triplets' is present.

80. *f*

C7 F major F7 B-flat major

Corno I: triplets

Detailed description: This system shows measures 79 and 80. The right hand has a melodic line with triplets. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics are marked *f*. Chords are C7, F major, F7, and B-flat major. An annotation 'Corno I: triplets' is present.

82. *dim.* *p*

C7 D minor deceptive F major F major

Corno I & II: triplets

Detailed description: This system covers measures 81 and 82. The right hand has a melodic line with triplets. The left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment. Dynamics range from *dim.* to *p*. Chords are C7, D minor deceptive, F major, and F major. An annotation 'Corno I & II: triplets' is present.

The opening text draws upon biblical passages such as Ezekiel 2:6: "And you, son of man, 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. **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?"

1. **Fag. Org. Cont.**

Fal - sche Welt, dir trau' ich nicht! Hier muss ich un - ter Skor - pi -

Chromaticism and harmonic instability depict the treachery of the world.

C# dim.7 D7 F7

3.

onen und unter falschen 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).

6.

heimliches Verderben: Wenn Jo. ab küsst, so muss ein frommer Armer sterben. Die Redlichkeit ist

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 Heuche - lei an

C7 D minor F# dim.7

12.

ihrer 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

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•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).

Motive of dismissal (A)

52/3.

1.

Vlns have eighth notes.

Other notes are editorial realization.

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

3.

Editorial

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).

Editorial

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

G minor

C# dim.7

A7

D minor

G# dim.7

E7

A minor

8.

Repeated figura corta.

Motives A & B combined.

Repeated figura corta.

Motives A & B combined.

A7 D minor

D minor

D major

D7

11.

Figura corta (see side note).

Figura corta (see side note).

G minor

C# dim.7

A7

A7

D minor

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,

Editorial. See full score.

D minor

15.

im - mer - hin, wenn ich gleich ver - sto - ssen bin, im - mer - hin, immerhin,

D minor D minor

18.

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

D minor

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

20.

hin, 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

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24.

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

E7 A minor G# dim.7 A minor A major A7

27.

D minor G# dim.7 E7 E7 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

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

31.

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

Ritornello

mf

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

For the significance of F major, see side note.

34.

C7 F major

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36.

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

F major A7 D7 B-flat major

p

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 red_lich mit mir_meint.

mf Ritornello *f*

C minor

43.

D7 D7 G minor

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

Immer_hin, immer_hin,

p

G minor D7 G minor

57. *ich gleich ver-sto-ssen bin, im-mer-hin, im-mer-hin!*

C# dim.7 **4. Recitativo** 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.

52/4. 1. **Sop.** E-flat D C B-flat G A

"Dictum 1." *Gott ist ge-treu!* / *er wird, er kann mich nicht ver-las-sen.* / *Will mich die*

Compare 52/1, mm. 1-2. 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

3. B A-flat F#

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. / **3.** *Gott ist ge-treu,* ge-*

D D C Continuo imitates

A7 D minor D minor F major F7

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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.

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)

1.

Oboes
Ritornello
mf
Oboes play a quasi-jeering figure.

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

Upward-reaching gestures are followed by downward falling gestures.

5.

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 E-flat major (F7) B-flat major

16. Soprano

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 al - lei - ne bleiben,

p *mf*

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

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

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

21.

ich halt'

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 al-lei-ne blei-ben, ich halt' es mit dem lie-ben

(D7) G minor C# dim.

36.

Gott, die Welt mag nur al-lei-ne, die Welt mag nur al-lei-ne bleiben.

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

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
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 F major F7

46.

Gott, Gott mit mir, und ich mit Gott, al-so 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 G pedal... C minor (G7) C minor

54.

al - so kann ich sel-ber Spott mit den fal-schen Zungen

Oboes tacet Editorial realization of continuo...

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

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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

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.

kann ich sel-ber Spott mit den fal-schen Zun-gen trei-ben, al - - - so

Oboes tacet; right hand here is editorial realization of continuo.

B-flat major B-flat major

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. f

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

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

79.

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

Oboes

p

D minor B-flat major B-flat major

83.

Welt mag nur al-lei-ne blei-ben,

mf Ritornello

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

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88.

ich halt' es mit dem lie-ben Gott, ich halt' es

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

93.

mit dem lie-ben Gott, die Welt mag nur al-lei-ne blei-

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

97.

ben, ich halt' es mit dem lie-ben Gott, die Welt mag nur al-

G minor (B-flat 7) 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.

B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 B-flat major B-flat major Dal Segno *

The 2 horns reappear: "A pair of horns—otherwise used 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**

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).

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.

Soprano 1. In dich hab' ich ge-hof-fet, Herr, hilf, dass ich nicht zu

Alto In dich hab' ich ge-hof-fet, Herr, hilf, dass ich nicht zu

Tenore In dich hab' ich ge-hof-fet, Herr, hilf, dass ich nicht zu

Basso In dich hab' ich ge-hof-fet, Herr, hilf, dass ich nicht zu

Corno II

+Corno I
Ob, I, II
Vln I

+Ob III,
Vln II

+Vla

F major

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

Schan-den werd', noch e-wig-lich zu Spot-te. Das

Schan-den werd', noch e-wig-lich zu Spot-te. Das

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

G7 C major F major C major F major

9. bitt' ich dich, er-hal-te mich in dei-ner Treu', Herr Got-te!

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

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

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

(D7) G minor D minor F(7) B-flat major F major F major