

## Cantata BWV 24 *Ein ungefärbt Gemüte/ An unstained character*

### 1. Aria Alto, *Violino I/II e Viola all' unisono, Continuo*

<p>Ein ungefärbt Gemüte          Von deutscher Treu und Güte          Macht uns vor Gott und Menschen schön.          Der Christen Tun und Handel,          Ihr ganzer Lebenswandel          Soll auf dergleichen Fuße stehn.</p>	<p>An unstained spirit (or: an undisguised intention)          of native faith and goodness          makes us beautiful before God and man.          The deeds and dealings of Christians,          throughout their whole life's compass          should on this footing stand.</p>	<p>Meditation: a pure spirit is the          foundation for a Christian life.           Gefärbt: dyed, tinted, stained          Gemüte: soul, spirit; also mind,          brain, human consciousness,          emotion</p>
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### 2. Recitative secco, Tenor, c

<p>Die Redlichkeit ist eine von den Gottesgaben. Dass sie          bei unsrer Zeit so wenig Menschen haben, das macht, sie          bitten Gott nicht drum.           Denn von Natur geht unsers Herzens Dichten mit lauter          Bösem um.           Soll's seinen Weg auf etwas Gutes richten, so muss es          Gott durch seinen Geist regieren und auf der Bahn der          Tugend führen.           Verlangst du Gott zum Freunde, so mache dir den          Nächsten nicht zum Feinde dsurch Falschheit, Trug und          List!           Ein Christ soll sich der Taubenart bestreben und ohne          Falsch und Tücke leben.           Mach aus dir selbst ein solches Bild, wie du den          Nächsten haben willt!</p>	<p>Honesty is a gift of God. In our time so few have          it—that is because they do not ask God for it.           For by nature, our hearts' imaginings are given over          to evil.           Should its path be directed toward good, then God          must be governing it through his spirit and leading it          on a path of virtue.           If you long for God as your friend, then don't make          an enemy of your neighbor through falsity, deceit,          and cunning!           A Christian should strive for the nature of a dove          and live without falsity and malice.           Make of yourself the kind of figure as you would          want your neighbor to have!</p>	<p>Lesson: Without God the          human heart inclines toward          evil. Cf Gen 8:21 “<b>the          imagination of man’s heart is          evil from his youth...</b>” Luther          Bible: <i>denn das Dichten des          menschlichen Herzens ist böse          von Jugend auf</i></p>
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### 3. Chorus, SATB, clarion, oboe 1-2, str, c

<p>Alles nun, das ihr wollet, dass euch die Leute tun sollen,          das tut ihr ihnen.</p>	<p>Everything, then, that you would that others to do to          you, you do that for them.</p>	<p>Matthew 7:12 <b>And as you wish          that men could do to you, do so          to them.</b></p>
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#### 4. Recitativo accompagnato, B, str, c

Die Heuchele ist eine Brut, die Belial gehecket. Wer sich in ihre Larve steckt, Der trägt des Teufels Liberei.	Hypocrisy is a brood hatched by Belial. Whoever puts himself into the larva wears the Devil's livery.	Matt 7:15–16. Beware false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.
Wie? lassen sich denn Christen dergleichen auch gelüsten?	What? Do Christians let themselves lust after such things?	
Gott sei's geklagt! die Redlichkeit ist teuer.	Alas! honesty is rare.	Lesson: False appearances are the devil's doing.
Manch teuflisch Ungeheuer sieht wie ein Engel aus. Man kehrt den Wolf hinein, Den Schafspelz kehrt man raus.	Many a devilish monster appears as an angel: the wolf hidden within, the sheepskin without.	
Wie könnt es ärger sein? Verleumden, Schmähn und Richten, Verdammen und Vernichten ist überall gemein.	How could it be worse? Slander, abuse and condemnation, damnation and destruction are everywhere.	
So geht es dort, so geht es hier.	So it is here, there and everywhere.	
Der liebe Gott behüte mich dafür!	Dear God protect me from them!	

#### 5. Aria, T, obda 1-2, c

Treu und Wahrheit sei der Grund aller deiner Sinnen,	Let faithfulness and truth be the foundation of all your thoughts.	Meditation: Let your outer appearance reflect your inner self.
Wie von außen Wort und Mund, Sei das Herz von innen.	As are your words and mouth on the outside, so be your heart be inside.	
Gütig sein und tugendreich macht uns Gott und Engeln gleich.	To be kind and rich in virtue Makes us like God and the angels.	

#### 6. Chorale, SATB, ob 1-2. str, c

O Gott, du frommer Gott, Du Brunnquell aller Gaben, Ohn den nichts ist, was ist, Von dem wir alles haben, Gesunden Leib gib mir, Und dass in solchem Leib Ein unverletzte Seel Und rein Gewissen bleib.	O God, you righteous God you fount of all gifts, without whom nothing is that is, from whom we have everything, grant to me a healthy body, and that in this body there remain a soul intact and a pure conscience.	Prayer for a healthy body and soul.
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### Conductor's Notes © Ellen Frye

When Bach took up his duties as Leipzig cantor in 1723, he threw himself into his long-dreamed-of undertaking of creating a “well regulated church music.” His vision was a five-year cycle of cantatas for every Sunday and feast day of the Lutheran church year. Some cantatas he would recycle from his earlier career, most would be newly composed. Before sitting down to compose, though, he would have to select a libretto, one that would be theologically sound and pass muster with the town councilors and church officials. Since Leipzig had no official librettist, Bach could either pull a libretto from a published collection or secure a local poet to write one. For the first two cantatas of his first year, BWV 75 and 76, he engaged a local poet, possibly Georg Lang, the city councilor who had championed his application for the cantorate. The third cantata was BWV 21 from his Weimar days with a libretto by court poet Salomo Franck. For the fourth Sunday after Trinity, Bach performed two cantatas, BWV 24, with an Erdmann Neumeister libretto, and BWV 185 *Barmherziges Herze der ewigen Liebe*, a Weimar solo cantata with a libretto by Franck.

One wonders why he chose the Neumeister libretto with its dry pedagogy and lifeless poetry. Martin Geck (*Johann Sebastian Bach: Life and Work*, pp 326ff.) points to one of the constraints within which Bach worked: the split between Lutheran orthodoxy and Pietism. The Pietist movement challenged Lutheran Orthodoxy for having too much emphasis on theology and not enough on individual piety. Pietists sought simplicity in church—no elaborate music, no polemics from the pulpit. Small groups conducting private Bible study were the real church.

Neumeister, hostile to the Pietism, wrote staunchly Orthodox libretti. Bach was loyal enough to Orthodoxy, but if his elaborate orchestrations fit the pomp of Orthodoxy, his sweet melodies and clear chamber textures suited the Pietist yearning for a more personal relationship with Jesus. BWV 24 is a wonderful example of dry theology being undercut by wonderfully expressive music. Even the recitatives, with their thundering polemics, move from wrath to tenderness. The chorale, a 17<sup>th</sup>-century “pre-pietist” hymn, alternates the square harmonies of the hymn tune with lilting orchestra interludes between the lines.

1. The opening movement is a trio sonata for alto, unison strings, and continuo. The theme introduced by the strings and continuo is similar to that found in the last movement of BWV 1014 Sonata for violin and harpsichord. Its simple melody and clear counterpoint contrast with the dull piety of the text.
2. The secco recitative for tenor moves between contemplation and harsh scorn of human frailty and ends with a tender arioso on the golden rule.
3. The central chorus is a prelude and double fugue setting of the golden rule as found in Matthew 7:15–16. It is scored for clarion (trumpet), 2 oboes, strings and continuo. Both parts of the text appear in both prelude and fugue, with the motifs for each text part introduced in the prelude and refined in the fugue. The 8-bar primary subject—“**Everything, then, that you would that others to do to you,**”—is smooth melody; the secondary subject—“**you do that for them**”—is a fanfare. In the conclusion, only the second subject appears, expressing the urgency for action. Both themes are similar to themes found in BWV 21 and several cadences recall BWV 131 as well as 21.
4. The text of the accompanied recitative for bass rails against hypocrisy but the musical affects move from wrath through false innocence to the quiet arioso plea for God’s protection.
5. The second aria, a quartet for two oboes d’amour, tenor, and continuo, is a meditation on matching one’s outer manner with one’s inner self. The primary motif, which moves through all parts, has a plaintive affect, as if achieving such a goal were near to impossible.
6. The closing chorale, the first verse of *O Gott du frommer Gott*, is scored the same as the chorus.

The cantata is symmetric, with the chorus the keystone movement, recitatives on either side of it, and arias before and after the recitatives.

### Epistle: Romans 8: 18- 23 God's children await the body's redemption

18. Denn ich halte es dafür, daß dieser Zeit Leiden der Herrlichkeit nicht wert sei, die an uns soll offenbaret werden.

[18] For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

19. Denn das ängstliche Harren der Kreatur wartet auf die Offenbarung der Kinder Gottes,

[19] For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20. sintemal die Kreatur unterworfen ist der Eitelkeit ohne ihren Willen, sondern um deswillen, der sie unterworfen hat auf Hoffnung.

[20] For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

21. Denn auch die Kreatur frei werden wird von dem Dienst des vergänglichhen Wesens zu der herrlichen Freiheit der Kinder Gottes.

[21] Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22. Denn wir wissen, daß alle Kreatur sehnet sich mit uns und ängstet sich noch immerdar.

[22] For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23. Nicht allein aber sie, sondern auch wir selbst, die wir haben des Geistes Erstlinge, sehnen uns auch bei uns selbst nach der Kindschaft und warten auf unsers Leibes Erlösung.

[23] And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

### Gospel: Luke 6: 36-42 Be merciful and do not judge

36. Darum seid barmherzig, wie auch euer Vater barmherzig ist.

[6] Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37. Richtet nicht, so werdet ihr auch nicht gerichtet. Verdammet nicht, so werdet ihr auch nicht verdammet. Vergebet, so wird euch vergeben.

[37] Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38. Gebt, so wird euch gegeben. Ein voll, gedrückt, gerüttelt und überflüssig Maß wird man in euren Schoß geben; denn eben mit dem Maß, da ihr mit messet, wird man euch wieder messen.

[38] Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

39. Und er sagte ihnen ein Gleichnis: Mag auch ein Blinder einem Blinden den Weg weisen? Werden sie nicht alle beide in die Grube fallen?

[39] And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

40. Der Jünger ist nicht über seinen Meister; wenn der Jünger ist wie sein Meister, so ist er vollkommen.

[40] The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

41. Was siehest du aber einen Splitter in deines Bruders Auge, und des Balkens in deinem Auge wirst du nicht gewahr?

[41] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42. Oder wie kannst du sagen zu deinem Bruder: Halt stille, Bruder! Ich will den Splitter aus deinem Auge ziehen; und du siehest selbst nicht den Balken in deinem Auge? Du Heuchler! Zieh zuvor den Balken aus deinem Auge und besiehe dann, daß du den Splitter aus deines Bruders Auge ziehest.

[42] Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

The German text is that of Luther's translation published in 1545, the English is the Authorised (King James) Version 1611.