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***Jesu Meine Freude:***  
**A Cultural Reception Analysis of Romans 8**  
**Bach the Evangelist and Our Contemporary**  
**Secularized Society**

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*(This is the second and final installment of an essay on a pericope from St. Paul's letter to the Romans, its treatment by Augustine and Luther, and its transformation by the Lutheran musician, J.S. Bach, in his sacred motet, Jesu, Meine Freude. The first installment appeared in the previous issue, Vol. 32 No. 1. For the convenience of the reader, we present once again the text of the motet together with its translation. The author is an ordained pastor and an elder of her church, a student of theology, and a professional singer. – Editor)*

*Text*

Jesu, meine Freude  
 meines Herzens Weide,  
 Jesu, meine Zier.  
 Ach, wie lang, ach lange  
 ist dem Herzen bange,  
 und verlangt nach dir!  
 Gottes Lamm, mein Bräutigam  
 außer dir soll mir auf Erden  
 nichts sonst Liebers werden

*Es ist nun nichts Verdammliches<sup>1</sup>  
 an denen, die in Christo Jesu sind  
 die nicht nach dem Fleische wandeln,  
 sondern nach dem Geist.*

Unter deinem Schirmen  
 bin ich vor den Stürmen  
 aller Feinde frei.  
 Laß den Satan wittern  
 laß den Feind erbittern,  
 mir steht Jesus bei.  
 Ob es itzt gleich kracht und blitzt,  
 ob gleich Sünd und Hölle schrecken:  
 Jesus will mir decken.

*Denn das Gesetz des Geistes,  
 der da lebendig machete in Christo Jesu,  
 hat mich frei gemacht  
 von dem Gesetz der Sünde und des Todes.*

Trotz dem alten Drachen,  
 trotz des Todes Rachen,  
 trotz der Furcht darzu!  
 Tobe, welt, und springe  
 ich steh hier und singe  
 in gar sichere Ruh.  
 Gottes Macht halt mich in acht;  
 Erd und Abgrund muß verstummen,  
 ob sie nicht noch so brummen.

*Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich,  
 sondern geistlich  
 so anders Gottes Geist in euch wohnt.*

*Translation*

Jesus, my joy  
My heart's solace,<sup>2</sup>  
Jesus, my treasure.  
Oh how long, how long,  
The heart craves  
And pines for you!  
Lamb of God, my bridegroom,  
None on earth shall I love  
More dearly than you.

*There is now no condemnation of those  
who are in Christ Jesus,  
who walk not in the flesh,  
but in the Spirit.*

Under your protection  
I will be free from the assaults  
Of all my enemies.  
Let Satan sense it;  
Let the foe plead;  
Jesus will stand by me!  
Even if thunder and lightning crash,  
Even if sin and hell frighten:  
Jesus will protect me

*For the law of the Spirit  
of life in Christ Jesus  
has made me free  
from the law of sin and death*

Defy the ancient dragon,  
Defy death's revenge,  
Defy all fear of it!  
Rage, world, and leap  
I stand here and sing  
In the surest peace.  
God's power will watch over me;  
Earth and abyss must grow silent,  
However much they roar.

*For you are not of the flesh,  
but of the Spirit;  
so differently does God dwell in you*

*Text*

*Wer aber Christi Geist nicht hat,  
der ist nicht sein.*

Weg mit allen Schätzen!  
Du bist mein Ergötzen,  
Jesus, meine Lust!  
Weg, ihr eitlen Ehren,  
ich mag euch nicht hören,  
bleibt mir unbewußt.  
Elend, Not, Kreuz, Schmach und Tod  
soll mich, ob viel muß leiden,  
nicht von Jesus scheiden.

*So aber Christus in euch ist,  
so ist der Leib zwar tot um der Sünde willen;  
der Geist aber ist das Leben  
um der Gerechtigkeit willen.*

Gute Nacht, o Wesen,  
das die Welt erlesen,  
mir gefällst du nicht.  
Gute Nacht, ihr Sünden  
bleibet wir dahinten,  
kommt nicht mehrs ans Licht!  
Gute Nacht, du Stolz und Pracht!  
Dir sei ganz, du Lasterleben,  
Gute Nacht gegeben.

*So nun, der Geist des,  
der Jesum von der Toten auferwecket hat,  
in euch wohnet, so wird auch derselbige  
der Christum von den Toten auferwecket hat,  
eure sterbliche Leiber lebendig machen  
um des willen, daß sein Geist in euch wohnet.*

Weicht, ihr Trauergeister,  
denn mein Freudenmeister,  
Jesus, tritt herein.  
Denen, die Gott lieben,  
muß auch ihr Betrüben  
lauter Zucker sein.  
Duld ich schon hier Spott und Hohn,  
dennoch bleibst du auch im Leide,  
Jesus, meine Freude.

*Translation*

*Yet whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ,  
is not his.*

Away with all treasures!  
You are my delight,  
Jesus, my desire!  
Away with all vain honours!  
I will hear none of you,  
Remain unknown to me!  
Suffering, distress, the cross, shame and death,  
However much I suffer,  
Will never part me from Jesus.

*But in this way Christ is in you:  
the body is dead by the will of Sin,  
but the Spirit is life,  
by the will of righteousness.*

Good night, earthly existence –  
What the world offers –  
You please me no longer.  
Good night, sins,  
Stay away from me,  
Do not come to light!  
Good night, pride and splendour!  
To you all, you life of burden,  
I bid good night.

*But now the Spirit  
who raised Jesus from the dead  
lives in you: so also will the same one  
who raised Jesus from the dead  
instill life into your mortal bodies  
so that his spirit shall live in you.*

Away, lamenting spirits,  
For the master of my joys,  
Jesus, enters in.  
For those who love God,  
Your grief must become  
As sweet as sugar.  
I will suffer all mockery and scorn;  
Yet for all my suffering, you remain,  
Jesus, my joy.<sup>3</sup>

The movements of Bach's *Jesu Meine Freude* alternate between verses from Romans 8:1-11 (shown in italicized text-style) and Johann Franck's 1653 Lutheran chorale (shown in regular text-style). Let's begin with an examination of the signification in each text as well as the inter-textual relationship between them.

### **Theological Examination of Chorale Text**

Klaus Hoffman draws an apt comparison about Bach's choice of texts: the Romans 8 verses express the *zentrale Aussagen christlicher Dogmatik* (central statement of Christian dogma) while Franck's chorale is a *Hymnus der Jesusliebe* (hymn of love for Jesus).<sup>4</sup> The six verses of the chorale reflect the late medieval Pietistic ethos of their composition, in that Pietistic hymnody focused on the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ in order to reawaken the awareness of sin as the debt for which the price had been exacted.<sup>5</sup> Pietistic hymnody used language of intense intimacy that personalized the relationship between the believer and Jesus. Although Bach was an orthodox Lutheran, he appreciated Pietistic writings and hymnody and utilized them in his "musical sermons" for the effect of awakening the moral sensibilities of his listeners. Musicologist Gerhard Herz notes that even though Bach was inspired by aspects of Pietism he was never shaken from his orthodox conviction: "Pietism sought the enlargement and broadening of the congregation, not the preservation of the congregational nucleus in the strict Lutheran sense ... it led to a dangerous spiritual isolation and individualization of its members."<sup>6</sup>

*Jesu Meine Freude* was a bridge between the two competing practices that were contemporaneous with each other. On the one hand, it affirms the Orthodox dogma of the acceptability of praying to the second person of the Trinity, as many of Bach's chorales and cantatas do.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, its language is the intensely personal language of Pietism that conjures for the reader the feeling of *Angst*, or awareness of sin.<sup>8</sup>

*Jesu Meine Freude* is "narrated" through the first person, with most of the pronouns reflecting *meine/mich/mir* or *deine/du/dir*.<sup>9</sup> This use of pronouns personalizes the text, in that it is not an abstract relationship that is described. It is not the general observation: "Someone loves Jesus," but rather a specific relationship: "I love Jesus." This use of pronouns transforms the text from language into

speech; the reader becomes the speaker, deeply involved in the subjectivity of the passage.<sup>10</sup> This use of pronouns removes focus from the author (Franck) and places it on this ideal reader who assumes the subjectivity of the text, hereafter called “the believer.”

The first verse quickly displays its Pietistic focus through language of emotional yearning. Jesus is established as the object of the believer’s desire through descriptions of him as joy, heart’s desire, and sweetness. Then the believer’s yearning is explicitly expressed: “Ah, how long, how long the heart craves and pines for you!”

The next two labels of Jesus move into specific theological typography (or signification). Jesus as *Gottes Lamm* (“Lamb of God”) denotes sacrificial images from the Hebrew Bible as well as triumphant images from Revelation: the signifier focuses on Jesus’ saving activity.

This typology of *Gottes Lamm* brings the reader’s attention to God’s saving activity through Christ, which connotes Paul’s salvation formula in 8:3-4, without the accompanying explanation of law and human nature. *Mein Bräutigam* (“my bridegroom”) was a classic Pietistic description of the believer’s relationship to Jesus that also resonated with Judaistic tradition: through circumcision, male Israelites are able to “take the position of the female” in faith-relation to God, and thereby regard God as “bridegroom.”<sup>11</sup> Martin Luther stated that in the conscience, which is the “bridal chamber” for the believing bride and the divine Groom, “grace, not law must prevail.”<sup>12</sup> These two images of Lamb of God and bridegroom communicate that the theological understanding of Jesus expressed in the text is orthodox and connected to the Judeo/Christian tradition and at the same time that it is emotional and connected to personal piety through Pietistic rhetoric.

After establishing Jesus as the believer’s source of consolation, hope and salvation in the first verse, the believer describes the many *Feinde* who threaten this equilibrium. The first enemies listed are Satan, thunder and lightening, and sin and hell. The second are the old dragon, death’s revenge, fear, and the world itself. This comprehensive list of opponents creates opposition in the text: Satan and all of the tools at Satan’s disposal oppose Jesus and the believer. This text personifies the difference between life in the Spirit and life in the flesh that Paul describes in Romans 8 by ascribing all manner of evil to the flesh. This in a way exonerates the believer for being

tempted because the evil is now external, and not seen to be internal, because after all, the heart of the believer truly desires Christ.

This association of enemy is much greater than in Paul's text. Paul attributes weakness to the sphere of flesh, sin and death, which can be seen to be both internal and external, but is not personified. Paul's presentation of adversity is more systemic than localized (Satan), because in his view human failings have their root in human nature, and any power that Sin (as a sphere) has is due to human nature. Franck's focus on externalized enemies almost relieves the believer of the responsibility of confronting this basic weakness – theology and accountability have shifted outward.

The next two verses in the chorale describe more inner temptations that would lead the believer away: treasures, suffering, distress, the cross, shame and death. In the fifth verse, the believer relinquishes all earthly ties, stating: "Good night, earthly existence – what the world offers – you please me no longer." Even pride is relinquished, seen as the target of Luther's justification.<sup>13</sup>

The fifth verse of the chorale connotes the proleptic eschatological focus of 8:9-11, by describing the life of the believer outside of the worldly realm (ἐν σαρκί, or "under the dominion of flesh"). It is not a fully eschatological statement because it implies that the believer is still in the flesh, and not transported fully into the realm of the Spirit. Yet it does describe the spiritual peace and confidence that Romans 8 offers.

The final verse of the chorale text seems to address the specific setting of death, in that *ihr Trauergeister* are commanded to leave, perhaps seen as the sadness of those who are left behind by the departing believer. Those who are sad are directed to transform their grief to sweetness, which is the classic description of the experience of faith in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries: bitterness turned to sweetness (*Zucker*).<sup>14</sup> This chorale text perfectly describes someone who lives in the Spirit, who is at peace with God and is actually able to please God. It is still focused, beginning to end, on Jesus.

This chorale text does have similarities to the Romans 8 text, as it conjures the themes of salvation, eschatology and living in the Spirit. However, the Spirit is not mentioned, and the focus is almost exclusively on Jesus: he is mentioned directly eight times, and indirectly many more times. God is mentioned three times in the chorale, and it is possible that *Gottes Macht* ("God's power") in verse

three connotes the Spirit, but the overall effect of the chorale is that the believer has a direct and unmediated relationship with Jesus. The Spirit has almost no role to play.

Some of the theological differences between the Romans and Franck texts can be explained by historical context. The chorale's externalization of the threat to the believer's relationship with Jesus may reflect more than 100 years of Protestant battles with Catholicism.<sup>15</sup> In other of Bach's compositions, he contrasts the *Feind* with those who follow God's word, perhaps comparing the enemy to those who instead follow the Pope and Roman Catholicism.<sup>16</sup> Luther described Satan thus: "Pray for the increase of the Word against Satan. He is strong and he is evil, and at this time he rages with fury, because he knows that his time is short and the kingdom of the Pope is in danger."<sup>17</sup>

Another historical consideration in the interpretation of this chorale is the proximity of its composition to the Thirty Years' War, in which an estimated 10 million people in Europe died.<sup>18</sup> Death was a familiar presence in the culture at the time, and there was almost an obsessive interest in it in Bach's cantatas and in Pietistic writings: Pietism developed into a high art the longing for the end of life.<sup>19</sup> While the chorale verse *Gute Nacht* may be read as a metaphysical meditation on spiritual intentionality, it may also be read as a glorification of death. Overall, *Jesu Meine Freude* may focus on external enemies so predominantly because of the many threats to life that existed at that time.<sup>20</sup> Regardless of these influences, the rhetoric of the chorale stirs the believer to strengthen his or her personal relationship with Jesus.

## **The Musical Text**

*Jesu Meine Freude* is a motet, or a religious piece for voices intended for liturgical use that, in contrast to the newer cantata form, used an older style of composition dating back to Palestrina.<sup>21</sup> In Bach's time, there was conflict over worship in the Lutheran church because Orthodox believers embraced the use of all available forms of music (including more operatic forms) in worship, while Pietistic believers distrusted the use of high art in worship and preferred simple music that expressed devotion, like chorales.<sup>22</sup> The cantata form placated both Orthodox and Pietist Lutherans by incorporating scripture, poetry and hymn texts with various musical forms (chorale, aria, and

concerted style).<sup>23</sup> Cantatas were the largest in quantity of Bach's output (over 200 have been preserved), while motets were the smallest – only six motets are attributed to him.<sup>24</sup> *Jesu Meine Freude* is written for five part chorus: sopranos one and two, alto, tenor and bass.

The musical elements that Bach used in *Jesu Meine Freude* to increase the signification of the written texts and the piece overall are examined below.

### *Structure*

*Jesu Meine Freude* is highly ordered. The piece has eleven movements that alternate between the Franck chorale text (odd movements) and the Romans 8 text (even movements), creating a chiasmic structure (or *Symmetriekonzept*) that features the central movement containing the text of Romans 8:9.<sup>25</sup> This structure itself signified Christ in the metaphysics of the music theory of the day: chiasmus represented the Greek letter *chi*, which is both the first letter in the Greek name for Jesus (Χριστός), and resembles the cross in appearance: X.<sup>26</sup> Bach used this form in many of his more mature compositions, notably in the St. John Passion.

### Chiasmus in *Jesu Meine Freude*

- 1) Jesu Meine Freude [chorale]
- 2) *Es ist nun nichts*
- 3) Unter deinem Schirmen [chorale]
- 4) *Denn das Gesetz* [trio]
- 5) Trotz, dem alten Drachen
- 6) *Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich* [fugue]
- 7) Weg mit allen Schätzen
- 8) *So aber Christus* [trio]
- 9) Gute Nacht
- 10) *So nun der Geist*
- 11) Weicht, ihr Trauergeister [chorale]

When this diagram is rotated ninety degrees counterclockwise, *Jesu Meine Freude* appears as an arch, with the central fugue as the keystone of the work, the trios as the supporting beams and the outer chorales as the foundations. There is also inner symmetry: movements four and ten begin with the same melodic material and

similar quasi-fugal developments, although movement ten is more optimistic musically through its development in a major key.

There is symmetry within the overall proportions of the work as well. Movement six, *Ihr aber seid nicht Fleischlich*, is at the exact center of the work, with 209 bars preceding it and 208 following.<sup>27</sup> This numerical observation may be simply coincidental, or it may reflect Bach's personal constraint to bring forward the key message of the work through its position at the absolute center of the piece. There are many numerical coincidences throughout Bach's composition that lead some Bach scholars to conclude that Bach architecturally mapped out the structure of the work at a number of levels of hierarchy.<sup>28</sup> Whether the number of bars in the piece is accidental or planned, I interpret Bach's use of chiasmus as a device to enhance the signification of the juxtaposition of movements and to signal Romans 8:9 as the most important element of the composition.

### *Function of Chorale*

Another important feature of Bach's compositional structure is his use of chorale. He not only uses the six verses of Franck's text, but he uses his own four-part harmonization of Crüger's chorale tune in the first and last movements. In movements three and seven, the sopranos sing the chorale melody over the busy motion in the lower three voices. Despite the activity in the other voice parts, the melody is clear.

It is also possible to find traces of the chorale melody in the contrapuntal movements. For example, at the beginning of the fourth movement, the Soprano II line outlines the descending chorale melody in bars in the first three measures, while the unison choir sings the next phrase's contour in the fourth measure. Moments like this are not likely to be noticed by the hearer, but they do demonstrate how Bach intentionally wove *Jesu Meine Freude* around the chorale, both text and melody. In some sense, the chorale bears the "weight of the climax" of this work because of its omnipresence and its placement at the beginning and end of the piece.<sup>29</sup>

Of Bach's five other motets, only *Komm, Jesu, Komm* and *Der Geist hilft* include chorales.<sup>30</sup> However, those motets use the chorales more as codas than as an essential part of the musical exposition, because in both cases they only appear at the end of the work almost as punctuation. Whether integrated into the composition or not,

Bach's use of chorale heightened the religious reception of the texts because of the previous associations that the worshipping community would have with the text and tune.<sup>31</sup>

### *Baroque Metaphysics of Music*

In the baroque period, it was believed that musical compositional techniques were able to communicate eternal truths. One aspect involved the metaphysics of key signatures. As Calvin Stapert explains, in Bach's time keys held significance: keys signatures with sharps were "hard," and keys with flats were "soft."<sup>32</sup> Hardness was associated with strength and anger, while softness was associated with weakness and comfort.<sup>33</sup> Composers would utilize this system to achieve certain affective states, and the listener would feel it in a general sense, in the rising and falling motion between the keys.<sup>34</sup>

The pinnacle within this system of musical interpretation was the key of C major, and within that, the C major chord, considered to be representative of divinity. The natural triad of C major was considered to make audible the *trias perfectionnis et similitudinis*, or the "triad of perfection and [God-] likeness" which enabled people to believe in the essential identity between God and the universe.<sup>35</sup> This chord was at the pinnacle of metaphysical harmonic interpretation, which saw major triads as representing the divine, and minor triads as representing the human.<sup>36</sup> The clarity of sound that a key with no sharps or flats must have had at the time explains the high estimation of this tonality.

The Lutheran church had its own metaphysics of music at the time. As stated above, the orthodox Lutheran church appreciated music, and diverse musical styles. In his commentary on Colossians 3:16, Luther asserted that music is an essential part of the proclamation of the word of God, and that "music-making among the people of God is a sharing in the spiritual benefits of grace."<sup>37</sup> Eric Chafe states that Bach's cantatas strove toward "the interpretation and enhancement of the message of scripture to stir the affections or emotions of the believer."<sup>38</sup> Bach himself believed that the substance of music was a form of religious reality, and that the better the composition and performance, the more immanent God was in the music.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps Bach said it best, "And so the ultimate end or final purpose of all music ... is nothing other than the praise of God and the recreation of the soul."<sup>40</sup>

Bach employed baroque musical metaphysics to achieve his theological goals. The original chorale appeared in G minor (with two flats) in the Lutheran hymnal, so it was Bach's decision to move the key "up" to E minor (one sharp). This choice made the key "harder" and stronger than G minor, and closer to C major. E minor was also the key associated with suffering in the baroque period, which may have reflected the text's focus on enemies and sin, and the potential setting of a funeral service.<sup>41</sup>

### *Key relationships in Jesu Meine Freude*

Bach's key motion in *Jesu Meine Freude* exemplifies spiritual descent and ascent. Once he began in E minor, he largely stayed in that key signature until the central fugue, when he brightened the tonality through the related major key of G and then got "harder" at the epilogue of the movement through the higher key of B minor (2 sharps). The harder key helps to deliver the message of exclusion, "whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ is not his." The music then returns to the "softer" central key of E minor, and progresses to an even "softer" key in movement eight of C major, our aforementioned home key with all of its metaphysical resonance and aural clarity, which remains only long enough to express the text, "But in this way Christ is in you."

Movement nine retains the open musical space established by C major in the beginning of movement eight through its key of A minor (no accidentals). Unlike the tonally-active movement eight, it remains in the same key with the same texture throughout the piece. Movement ten returns to the now "harder" home key of E minor to finish the piece. Overall, the piece is established one step above the ideal key of C major (with one sharp), and it sustains tension throughout the first five movements until it "descends" to that key a few times briefly, and then "ascends" out of it through the related key of A minor until the end. This piece has a compressed series of modulations (there are no written keys with multiple accidentals, and modulations through "busier" keys are short-lived). This method of composition maximized the beauty and clarity of the musical system of Bach's time.

### *Temporal delay*

Music creates tension through the temporal delay of resolution. One of the most renowned theoreticians of Western music, Heinrich

Schenker, created a model for music analysis based on the continuous musical progression from equilibrium to tension and then to resolution.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately, music is viewed as the prolongation of the tonic and dominant triads: the dominant is extended to delay the arrival of the tonic. This process in music mirrors the problem of delay in life, whether in a day-to-day sense (waiting for Christmas or a vacation) or in a cosmic sense (waiting for the parousia).<sup>43</sup> Music builds tension through delay on numerous simultaneous levels: the listener waits for the cadence (resolution) of a certain musical phrase at the *same* time that he or she waits for the resolution of the section or movement and for the resolution of the work as a whole. Music constantly functions to create and relieve tension, and musical experience can be seen as the process of enjoying tension.<sup>44</sup> The fugal sections in *Jesu Meine Freude* are brilliant examples of delay. Every time a new voice enters, or a new key appears, the listener instinctively feels him or herself farther away from “home” and experiences increased longing for resolution.

### *Repetition*

Tension in music is also created by repetition, and music is one of the only art forms that intentionally repeats itself.<sup>45</sup> In *Jesu Meine Freude*, not only does Bach repeat the chorale melody, he also repeats text within the contrapuntal movements. For example, Bach begins the second movement with a *forte* statement of “*Es ist nun nichts*” followed by a *piano* repetition of the statement. Twenty bars later, Bach repeats this sequence with a slightly different melody and the device of switching the top two voices, (the II Soprano sings the I Soprano line) while preserving the appearance of imitation. Repetition heightens tension because the audience experiences the same material in a different way based on the intervening music. It also creates tension simply from hearing it again – the listener wants to know where the music is going. In describing the cinema of Ingmar Bergman, Michael Bird shares that “the act of repetition takes the form of a meaning-giving re-creation in which surface yields to depth and apparent sameness to radical otherness.”<sup>46</sup> The challenge to the listener is to distinguish apparent sameness from fundamental change, in the way that the final movement of *Jesu Meine Freude* differs in experience from the initial movement, despite the same chorale harmonization. The listener experiences this last movement

in a different way than the first movement due to the experience of the work in its entirety, with its variety of permutations of the same musical material.

### *The fugue*

Bach saved his most powerful musical device, the fugue, for the central movement. In this form of composition, each voice (five in this case) enters at a different time with the same musical material, alternating between the tonic key and the dominant. After all have entered, the material is developed and the voices will then “re-enter” with the fugal theme.<sup>47</sup> Not only did Bach create a challenging fugue with five voices rather than just three or four, he constructed a double-fugue which has two musical themes, one for the text “*Ihr aber seid nicht fleischlich*” and another for the text “*so anders Gottes Geist in euch wohne*.”<sup>48</sup> The fugue is one of the most complicated musical forms to absorb, and it draws heavily upon imitation, repetition and long contrapuntal lines; hearing a fugue is a dynamic experience that “requires the perception of the process in which fragments are brought together to form the whole.”<sup>49</sup>

The fugue in movement six draws attention to the central text of Romans 8:9, even though it is more difficult to hear due to the density of the vocal lines. The first emphasis is the difference between *fleischlich* (“of the flesh”) and *geistlich* (“of the Spirit”), through Bach’s use of time. Bach gives only two beats of time to *fleischlich* but places *geistlich* on a long and florid melisma.<sup>50</sup> This contrast in temporality affects relative importance: even though the “longer” word is more difficult to understand since the two syllables are separated by a full bar of music, the ear picks up on the beauty and interest of the melisma and gives priority to hearing and understanding that word of text. In this way, Bach temporally enacts his metaphysical and theological interpretation of the quality of the Spirit.<sup>51</sup>

In his second fugal theme, “*so anders Gottes in euch wohnet*,” Bach places a melisma on the verb *wohnet*, or “dwell,” which echoes the importance that this verb has in the Greek text. For one moment, both singer and hearer are temporally dwelling in the Spirit.

Bach also uses melismas in the parallel movements two and eleven. In the first movement, the melisma occurs on the verb *wandeln* (“walk”), in the negative context of those who walk in the flesh, and in the latter movement melisma occurs on *wohnet* in the

positive context of the Spirit's indwelling. Bach has paired these verbs together across the space of the piece to contrast "living after the flesh" with "dwelling in the Spirit," and perhaps to go so far as to transform the former aspect through the repeated musical motif and the temporal journey.

In the final musical analysis, Bach did not use restraint in his composition of *Jesu Meine Freude*. He utilized all of the tools at his disposal to create a beautiful and meaningful piece of music. He used theological discretion and musical expertise to decide which words to highlight, and he combined texts and music to achieve the maximum effect of scripture and theology. His structural craft and creativity in chorale use point to an astutely theological approach to composition.

### **Encounter with the Text**

The circumstance of the initial performance of *Jesu Meine Freude* is not known. As such, it is impossible to reconstruct that performance with any precision. What is probable is that the work was performed in German for a German audience in a Lutheran church, for the purposes of a special memorial or funeral service. In that context, the work and the text could be understood directly by those who heard it (insofar as the clarity and diction of the performance allowed) without the mediation of a printed text. Also, once the congregation heard the opening chorale and exposition, they would have expected to hear a combination of canonical and devotional texts based on the other liturgical music of the day by Bach and his contemporaries.

It is certain that Bach composed this work during his tenure at *Thomaskirche* in Leipzig, which celebrated in the orthodox Lutheran style. This suggests that the congregation would have an understanding of Luther and Christianity that would differ from their contemporaries in the Pietistic and Reformed traditions. The chorale of *Jesu Meine Freude* was in their hymnals, and although it sounded very Pietistic through its emotional appeals, it probably would have been interpreted through the lens of orthodox Lutheranism. Pelikan observes that the theological *cantus firmus* of *Jesu Meine Freude* is "Luther's affirmation of the centrality of Jesus Christ as the beginning and the end of faith."<sup>52</sup>

Those who heard it likely would not have come specifically to hear Bach on this occasion, but would have come for personal reasons (to remember someone who recently died) or to worship. The

texts would have been familiar because the chorale had been sung in worship for at least seventy years and the letter to the Romans was influential in the formation of Lutheranism. Due to the emphasis of scriptural authority and the availability of German Bibles in the Lutheran church, the listener would likely have had some degree of biblical literacy, at least to the point of distinguishing between the canonical and non-canonical movements in *Jesu Meine Freude*.

We return to our semiotic question, “What kind of reader is Bach asking me to become?” The following narrative represents the perspective of one of Bach’s congregants, and is intended to present a possible reaction to a performance of his work would have been.

Bach is asking me to listen to his musical composition with my aesthetic sensibility, my belief, my mind and my emotions. He wants me to respond to the text: to identify with the first person in the chorale and seek relationship with Jesus with great emotion. He knows that I am Lutheran and well grounded in scripture and liturgy, so he expects that when I hear the theology of Franck that I will embrace the conclusions of the combined texts and accept the comfort of relationship that he offers.

Bach also expects that I will appreciate both the humility of the chorale setting and the magnificence of his complicated vocal lines. He wants to persuade me intellectually with his great fugue, just as Augustine was persuaded by the great rhetoric of Ambrose. He expects that I will keep track of the texts as they pass by, and that any despair that I may have felt in contemplating enemies and hardship in the first half will be transformed into confidence by the second half, and that I would be able to face death by the end of the work.

Bach wants me to deepen my personal relationship to Jesus, and to claim the promise of the indwelling of the Spirit. He wants me to be able to focus on spiritual things and not on earthly things. This music brings me sorrow because it speaks of death, which reminds me of how fragile our life is, and of those I have known who have died, but that sense of pathos deepens my spiritual commitment. When I hear this music, I contrast it with the Latin masses that the Roman Catholics use in their services, and I feel very Lutheran, and claim this music as my own – I am proud of it! This music is like a prayer to me; it reminds me of the core of my Lutheran faith.

The messages transmitted through *Jesu Meine Freude* are certainly similar to those found in the baseline analysis of Romans 8, but there has been some transposition of concepts. The foci of both the Pauline and Bachian texts are relationship with God and the

contrast between earthly things and spiritual life, but the sphere and results are different. Through the addition of the Franck chorale, *Jesu Meine Freude* overwhelms the didactic and theological nature of Romans 8 with a much more emotive and moral sensibility. The interest in community life that drove Paul's arguments is missing in Bach's text; the omitted verses of Romans and the power of the pronouns in the chorale shift focus from the plural to the singular in the overall text. A reading of *Jesu Meine Freude* results in an invitation to personal piety, not community transformation.

### *Law*

Paul's theological explanation of life in the Spirit and life in the flesh is missing in Bach's text, along with Paul's explanation about law and salvation. Bach's text is not primarily concerned with issues arising over any kind of law, Jewish or otherwise, or with how salvation is accomplished. The assertion in 8:1 becomes a guarantee of confidence for the believer that enables him or her to face and defy the enemies to faith, through the juxtaposition of verses.

### *Human nature*

The change that Luther's translation effects in 8:9-11, by interpreting the verses as assertive statements rather than conditional, continues this confident reading. Now the dangers of *σάρξ* dwell not in Paul's text, but in Franck's, and they have migrated from an internal to an external threat. The tension in Bach's text does not reside in the Romans verses, but in the emotion of the chorale text and the temporal effects of the musical text. The Franck text does highlight the need for Jesus' help – that is, it is not a Pelagian text – for the implied believer depends on God.

### *Indwelling of the Spirit*

Bach's musical text has added the experience of temporality to Romans. Bach privileges certain words through his melismas for rhetorical effect. His depiction of Spirit in the melismas of the central fugue is lived theology, and his shifts from minor to major keys between movements cannot help but conjure the affects of hope and joy. However, due to the christocentric nature of the chorale text, the focus on the Spirit is minimal.

### *Activity and Nature of Christ*

In this text, Jesus is a close, intimate companion. Jesus is also Saviour, through the language of *Gottes Lamm* (Lamb of God), but the relationship described in the music is personal, not abstract. There is no conversation about Jesus' divinity or humanity; the focus is on relationship. This text is even less suggestive about the activity and nature of Jesus than Paul himself was, and Paul was not very descriptive. The effect of this piece is christocentric, and focuses on God's power over the enemy, compared to Romans 8 with its emphasis on the indwelling of the Spirit.

### *Eschatology*

The eschatology portrayed in this text is shown from a personal viewpoint. There is no inference of God's judgment of political powers, because the piece preserves the personal Romans text and omits the abstract text (other than the first verse). That means that everything in the Romans text can be interpreted as affecting only the hearer and not his or her larger context.

The text of the chorale does carry a larger significance of struggle and victory, not through the abstract list of enemies of cross, suffering and shame, but in *Wesen* ("earthly existence"), *Lasterleben* ("life of burden"), and the repeated mention of death. This is not the political opposition that Paul roused in Romans 8, but it is a spiritual struggle against the world and metaphysical enemies (Satan and the gates of hell).

The quality of the message of Romans 8 has changed in its journey from Rome to Germany. Paul called believers to live together in unity, and to respond to God's grace with evangelism and charity. Through his composition, Bach called believers to strengthen their spiritual relationship with God. Despite his expertly crafted rhetoric that elicited a specific response on the part of the reader, Paul was mystical in explaining the believer's relationship with God: one must experience it to understand it. However, Bach layered the more descriptive Pietistic mysticism of the Franck text over Paul's mysticism, which concretized the relationship with God that Paul, perhaps intentionally, left vague.<sup>53</sup> For Paul, life in the Spirit is the opposite of life in the flesh, whereas in *Jesu Meine Freude*, life in Jesus is the epitome of emotional attachment.

## **Cultural Reception Of Romans 8 Via Jesu Meine Freude In 2006 Vancouver**

### *Introduction and Social Context*

This final section will explore the reception and signification of Romans 8 and *Jesu Meine Freude* in a contemporary context in Vancouver BC, Canada. This investigation will acknowledge current transmission issues and the differences between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries regarding the reception of Bach and art music, the expectations of worship and worship music, and the worldviews representing the Enlightenment and postmodernism. The insights yielded by this study will inform my conclusions about contemporary cultural reception and signification of Romans 8 and the other themes in *Jesu Meine Freude*.

### *Current context and transmission*

Although the performance practice of Bach's music has changed over the past 275 years, the text of *Jesu Meine Freude* has remained the same. However, in a contemporary context German is not the everyday language due to the widespread use of English in North America in general and Vancouver specifically. This means that the person hearing *Jesu Meine Freude* likely does not understand the text that she or he is hearing, but must rely on the printed translation of the text in English in the programme. This adds another layer to the process of reception, and creates difficulties in understanding where no translation is available either due to the lack of a programme or to poor lighting conditions.

### *Changing interpretations of Bach*

Moreover, the style of music of the composition of *Jesu Meine Freude* has been reinterpreted. In Bach's time, his music was considered elaborate, but still appropriate for worship, and thereby considered fit for common consumption.<sup>54</sup> His personal correspondence shows that he had a fiery temper and that he held his compositions in high esteem compared to his contemporaries, but nonetheless he considered himself a workman and minister as well as an artist, following the Baroque convention of dedicating his compositions *Soli Deo Gloria* ("May glory be only to God").<sup>55</sup> In his essay, "Toward a New Image of Bach," musicologist Gerhard Herz claimed, "When Johann Sebastian Bach died in 1750, the world did

not mourn the death of its greatest composer but rather the passing of its greatest harpsichord and organ virtuoso.”<sup>56</sup> Much as Bach tried throughout his life to gain a larger stage for his musical expression, applying in vain to serve in Danzig and at the Catholic court in Dresden, in the end the focus was solely on his performance.<sup>57</sup>

After Bach’s death, musical styles changed with the emergence of Beethoven and Mozart and the Classical period, and Bach slipped into obscurity. Beethoven’s career path impacted the later reception of Bach and forever changed the face of musical interpretation. Beethoven had a great deal of political and artistic support for his compositions and career, and he was distinguished above his peers as being a “genius.”<sup>58</sup> This esteem led to a hierarchical view of talent and potential that continued into the 19<sup>th</sup> century and until today.<sup>59</sup>

Felix Mendelssohn’s revival of Bach’s *St. Matthew’s Passion* in 1829 sparked interest in Bach and his composition.<sup>60</sup> Bach was brought into the public eye through his larger works, his *Passions* and *Mass in B Minor*, and the public accepted him not as a church cantor or virtuosic keyboardist, but as a genius composer. This focus lent little attention to the devotional and spiritual messages Bach strove to impart through his composition. In semiotic terms, if Bach intended his music to serve as an interpretant pointing beyond himself to God, his music instead was used to point to himself. Bach’s status as a genius has endured; the contemporary musicologist Martin Zenck asserts that Bach’s music has “continued to be relevant to our understanding of music and composition at each historical stage.”<sup>61</sup>

### *Changing expectations of worship music*

Not only has Bach’s music has been moved out of the chapel and into the concert hall, but also the music of worship has changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Due to the influence of the Reformation, worship music in Western churches has long been in the vernacular, but Vatican II spread that phenomenon to Catholic churches as well. Not only does worship music now reflect the dominant language of the community, it also tends to reflect the musical styles that influence the community, whether they are praise choruses displayed on an overhead and performed with a band, multicultural hymns, or music involving a variety of instrumentation.

Worship music in Protestant and Catholic churches today is much less focused on the specialist than it was in the Baroque period,

excepting perhaps an organist or choir director. Music is generally less complex and more inclusive of the congregation. Bach's music is less often performed liturgically, other than his organ works and chorale harmonization in hymns, because his music requires skilled and extensive singing and instrumental forces. In this way, Bach's music has been removed from churches both from within and without: by cultural moves that celebrate his music as art and by liturgical practices that routinely distance themselves from elaborate music.

### *Changing worldviews*

Contemporary reception of *Jesu Meine Freude* is greatly affected by the changing world of interpretation that influences the interpretation of its biblical and chorale texts.

During the Enlightenment, the time of Bach's composition, developments in science, literature and politics moved society toward the effective enthronement of reason, which was intended to grant individuals freedom from inherited identities and dominant structures.<sup>62</sup> This emphasis on reason weakened superstitious and allegorical interpretations of both life situations and texts which were more prevalent in the Middle Ages. Luther's emphasis on grammatical and historical study in his translation process over and against allegory is a sign of this shift. The historical-critical methods of biblical criticism that resulted from this more rational avenue of study were fueled by both a liberal sense of the continuous upward progress of human civilization and the classic modernist assumption that there is empirical truth that can be discovered through the exercise of reason.<sup>63</sup> In biblical studies, this resulted in quests for the historical Jesus and attempts to strip away all biblical interpretation that had accrued over centuries of study in order to access the mind of the biblical writers: the only valid interpretation being the initial authorial intent.<sup>64</sup>

Postmodernism has arisen out of a suspicion of the classic modern assumptions of empirical truth and the larger stories that promote the worldview of that truth (meta-narratives). The Bible is seen as one of those stories, at least in the holographic way that it has been presented through the Christian church: a unified salvation history that applies to all peoples in all times.<sup>65</sup> The Bible has been vigorously deconstructed to show how its formation was

heterogeneous – that it was not written as a unified text. The Bible is now treated as a text that has many formative contexts and interpretations, and thereby one which demands interpretation. In challenging the dominant paradigm represented by the narrators of the biblical accounts, postmodern biblical scholars sift through the gaps and overlooked details in stories to search for suppressed theologies and viewpoints.

Dissatisfaction with biblical and political meta-narratives has led to increased scrutiny of biblical accounts. Genocide, gender relations and the relationship between the believer and the civil State have been examined carefully with hermeneutical lenses that privilege the oppressed and are wary of power relationships. Postmodern biblical interpretation asks the question: “How does Scripture mediate God to the Church in the midst of genocide, Holocaust and violence?” These issues have led to the emerging fields in biblical studies of feminist, liberation and postcolonial theologies, many of which are heavily based on biblical interpretation, along with reason, philosophy and the social sciences.

One side effect of both historical-critical and postmodern biblical interpretation is increased doubt about the authority of the Bible. These approaches treat the Bible more as literature than as inerrant, divine text – they emphasize the human element of biblical writing and transmission. The most sensational conclusions are broadcast widely, with or without the context that might help the reader to integrate the information into his or her belief and practice. In the result, the credibility and authority of the Bible is eroded, and the biblical content and message is either ignored or denied. Alternatively, believing Christians ignore or avoid biblical scholarship because it is seen as a threat to faith.

This change in biblical interpretation shifts the function of the biblical canon. The Christian biblical canon was intended to preserve the record of Jewish prophecy on which Christianity is built (Hebrew Bible) while at the same time promoting apostolic writings as a witness to Jesus’ life and ministry.<sup>66</sup> The canon was intended to interpret itself and to delimit the faith and beliefs of the church and individual believers.<sup>67</sup> However, in his examination of the act of reading, Certeau notes that “when the Church began to weaken, the reciprocity between the text and its readers appeared, as if by withdrawing the Church had opened to view the indefinite plurality of the ‘writings’ produced by

readings. The creativity of the reader grows as the institution that controlled it declines.”<sup>68</sup> The Bible has become open to the interpretation derived from the life experience of each individual reader and not just to the professionals in the clergy and academia. In looking at the Bible in a more literary light, it is interpreted in relationship with and within the contexts of other texts, not just within its own canon.<sup>69</sup> This relationship between texts does not privilege the Bible in the same way that a more “modern” interpretation does.

This increased ambiguity toward biblical canon is not entirely negative in my mind. The traditional meta-narrative of the Bible has dominated Western culture: Gianni Vattimo claims that “the Bible has been the most eminent textbook for all Western interpretations of the world.”<sup>70</sup> The outcome of inter-textual readings of the Bible may deflate its historic position of authority, but at the same time it asserts the Bible’s contemporary relevance while addressing the exclusive or harmful aspects of its historical transmission (sexual attitudes, gender roles, racism and violence). This approach is similar to Bach’s compositional approach: many of his cantatas and motets, like *Jesu Meine Freude*, were inter-textual experiments in which he employed contemporary theological texts to comment on biblical texts.

A good example of the change in biblical interpretation in the twentieth century can be seen in the analyses of Paul performed by Krister Stehdahl and Daniel Patte.

Stendahl worked vigorously in the field of biblical studies in the middle of the twentieth century, and published important works like “The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Conscience of the West,” “Energy for Life: Reflections on the Theme, ‘Come Holy Spirit – Renew the Whole Creation,’” and “The Bible and the Role of Women.”<sup>71</sup> Stendahl studied Paul extensively, and based his research on Kümmel’s rhetorical and syntactic analysis of Romans 7, which concluded that Paul was not burdened with remorse over his previous failings, but rather that he was defending the law through the rhetorical device of first-person discourse.<sup>72</sup>

Stendahl also observed that the societal factors that influenced Luther’s introspective interpretation of Paul derived from his experience as an Augustinian monk in the late medieval period: “the rigors of penance, the self-examination characteristic of monastic life, the soul-searching that followed in the dreaded path of the Black Death.”<sup>73</sup>

As a result, Stendahl's understanding of Paul is different than that of Kümmel. For example, Stendahl characterizes Paul as conscious of his sins after baptism, but confident in the coming judgment and willing to attribute his weaknesses to the work of his enemies.<sup>74</sup> Stendahl emphasized that Paul's focus on law in his arguments about justification by faith were intended to discourage Gentiles from following the Mosaic law. They were not intended to answer the universal question about finding a gracious God.<sup>75</sup>

Daniel Patte examines Romans through a late 20<sup>th</sup> century, postcolonial lens. He approaches biblical studies through a literary and semiotic framework which encourages the reader and writer to be aware of the influence of their interpretive frame as they work.<sup>76</sup> Patte acknowledges that his reading of Paul is influenced by his personal experience of injustice: Patte has an inherited sense of persecution coming out of his French Huguenot heritage and he faced anti-Semitism directly in France during WWII.<sup>77</sup> He claims that Paul's gospel reveals discrimination such as anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, colonialism and imperialism to be manifestation of the evil that God condemns.<sup>78</sup>

Patte's guiding question asks, "How does the gospel 'rescue' us from our discrimination?"<sup>79</sup> He identifies three aspects of Paul's persuasive writing in Romans: Paul's use of theological, rhetorical, and apocalyptic arguments.<sup>80</sup> Patte concludes that Paul's theological arguments deal with the outcome of guilt; his rhetorical arguments tackle arrogance; while his apocalyptic arguments implicate the larger power systems of discrimination.<sup>81</sup> This final interpretation addresses Patte's guiding question by acknowledging the human need for divine transformation in order to confront harmful systems of power.

### *Contemporary Reading Strategies*

Who forms the modern audience? Why do people attend a performance of *Jesu Meine Freude* today?<sup>82</sup> Unlike the model listener in Bach's day, for most moderns the primary reason for "receiving" the text is to experience the beauty and order of Bach's music, rather than to experience formal worship. Here is Certeau's description of this situation: "the ethical and esthetic form of the concrete religious act remains (though its dogmatic content is disappearing), and [the] artistic creation is still considered as a *moral* and *technical act*" (emphasis added).<sup>83</sup> The concrete performance of

*Jesu Meine Freude* remains, and its content is seen as being morally and technically superior to many other cultural expressions, yet belief in its dogmatic content is limited, though some aspect of religious nostalgia may linger.

Contemporary reading strategies are shaped by many factors, including evaluation of the function of culture, the estimation of Western European culture in North America, and the increasing secularity and individualization evident in Western culture overall, and Vancouver specifically.

### *Function of art culture*

In my experience of reading the audience of classical vocal music in Vancouver as a text, I evaluate audience members as well-educated and financially comfortable people who are past middle age, and who consider themselves to be cultured.<sup>84</sup> I use the term *cultured* to describe the belief that exposure to the fine arts, such as music, literature, visual art, cuisine, dance, and design can enhance spiritual, mental and emotional capacities. This goal extends the motive behind cultural consumption beyond entertainment to self-improvement.

The paradigm for this kind of cultural consumption is based on a social hierarchical stratification which distinguishes between the “Experts” who are socially authorized to have opinions and everyone else whose unsanctioned interpretations are considered to be either heterodox or insignificant.<sup>85</sup> By choosing to consume culture, at some level audience members align themselves with the Expert side of the duality: they acknowledge the domain of the author, the actors (who provide the performance) and the cultural guardian that transmits the text (the arts organization/publisher). However, there is greater freedom than ever before for individuals to read the performance outside of authorial and cultural intention.

### *Cultural Identification*

The audience for European classical choral music is an audience that identifies with Western culture, even more so than the audience for European symphonic music. I suggest that this observation resonates truthfully because the skill of mastering Western classical instruments such as the violin or piano is prized in a variety of cultural settings whereas the skill of mastering singing in German, French and Latin is less valued in circumstances where Western

culture is not the dominant paradigm. The verbal text of the sung composition reduces the purely affective quality of the music and ties it more closely to its original place and cultural power. Perhaps, following Talal Asad, in reproducing the music we reproduce the networks of power from which it came.<sup>86</sup>

The attraction to attend a choral classical event of this nature extends beyond impulses of religion and art culture. Sociologist Anthony Giddens would see this form of entertainment as a way of acknowledging and reconnecting with the traditions of the colonizers of North America. According to his study of tradition, in the former worldview under Christendom in the Western Europe tradition was transmitted through the ritual (liturgy) and information (biblical texts and interpretations) passed down by the guardian institution of the Christian church.<sup>87</sup>

In the more secular Canadian context, reception of the Romans text is still based on tradition, but instead of being religious tradition, it is now cultural tradition, and it is passed down by artistic guardians. The music and text of *Jesu Meine Freude* reflect the religious and social context of 18<sup>th</sup> century Germany, so the performance of this work in a contemporary setting in Canada at some level shows the enduring value that the colonized area of North America ascribes to the cultural values of its Western European colonizers.

### *Secularity*

Although individual concert-goers may have strong religious ties and beliefs, likely based in the dominant Western religion of Christianity, the public performance that they are attending and participating in is not overtly religious. It may be a performance of religious music taking place in a church, but there are no prayers or homilies or liturgical sacraments. Rather, the setting is classified as “art,” like a museum or gallery, and thus falls on the secular side of the modernist sacred/secular duality.<sup>88</sup> The distinction inherent in this duality was a product of 19<sup>th</sup> century Enlightenment, and would not have been relevant in Bach’s time. It is also important to note that the idea of secularity may be an essentially Christian concept, in that it is not completely divorced from religion or Christianity but can instead be seen as fully-recognized Christian hospitality toward the “other.”<sup>89</sup> Vattimo observes secularity as “an interpretive application of the biblical message that situates it beyond the strictly sacramental,

sacral or ecclesial realm.”<sup>90</sup> This view of secularity identifies it as an inherently Christian phenomenon, and not a non-religious domain. At the same time, people understand a difference between attending a church service and attending a concert, whether they derive spiritual, aesthetic or emotional benefit from it, or connectedness to their ethnic or adopted heritage.

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, Vancouver is the second most ethnically diverse city in Canada, after Toronto. Entertainment in Vancouver comes in many forms from many places, ranging from the movies of Bollywood to Dragon Boat races. Cultural expressions from outside the Western European domain have been hybridized or assimilated into the broader society, whether it be through cuisine, fashion, music or architectural design. There are television and radio stations which broadcast in languages other than English and French, and there is a strong sense that cultural distinctions are valuable rather than threatening.

This diversity of ethnicity is reflected in religion as well, for there are mosques, Buddhist temples, and gurdwaras in the city alongside Christian churches and cathedrals. There is also a vocal segment of people who disavow religion but embrace spirituality, often through the experience of nature or pagan practices. This diversity of religious and spiritual practice necessarily leads to an increased hospitality of tolerance toward the other, in the way that we have seen secularity described above.

### *Individuality*

Another aspect of the audience’s expectation is that they expect to experience a communal event individually. No audience member expects or hopes to be the only person in the hall for a public performance; on the contrary, small concert turnouts tend to make audience members anxious because it makes them more exposed, more visible. Concert-goers do expect other people to come, but they also expect to experience the event in anonymity, under the protection of privacy offered by civility. This civility has as its aim “the shielding of others from being burdened with oneself” which allows individuals to share the same space while limiting their social interaction.<sup>91</sup> There is a major difference here between the way the Roman and German churches received Paul’s text, and the way the modern audience receives it. Although all three settings are communal – that is, a *group*

of people hear the text aloud at the same time – the goals of transmission are markedly different.<sup>92</sup> In the first setting the goal was to unify and commission the audience, in the second setting the goal was to call individual believers to increased belief and piety, and in the third setting the authorial intentions of both author and composer are subverted by the intentional individual appropriation and interpretation of the texts. The communal setting is merely the location for a series of simultaneous individual experiences.

### *Encounter with the Text*

Within this context of postmodern biblical reception, the audience member in the concert hall hears (in German) and reads (in English) the semiotic text that Bach has prepared: the inter-textual play between Franck's chorale and verses from Romans 8, his own musical genius, and the "web of signification" that the audience member applies to the text. How does a postmodern person in a post-Christian setting receive these texts? This reading of a hypothetical audience member is based on a middle-aged professional's experience of *Jesu Meine Freude*: someone who is frequently distracted by outside thoughts because of his or her busy lifestyle, who is analytical by nature, and who appreciates music but is not an expert in musicology or performance.<sup>93</sup>

As the music begins, I realize that this is exactly what I had in mind: solemn music with beautiful singing. I recognize the opening line as meaning "Jesus, my joy," and as I scan the translation, I am surprised by the earnestness of the text: there is no irony or doubting in these verses. As the music continues, the chorale tune returns, which prompts me to check the translation to see how we are progressing. This verse about enemies sounds extreme; it reminds me of the language of fundamentalists the world over – my mind attends to the latest world events.

Now this is beautiful: just three voices weaving in beautiful harmony, singing about freedom from the law of sin and death. *Sin*: there is another loaded concept. Once again my mind wanders to negative images of Christianity: preachers who pound pulpits so they can scare people and solicit money.

The fifth movement starts with a bang and startles me with its "Trotz!" That word keeps repeating with a great sense of urgency until it changes into a sweeter-sounding section; I see from the translation that the verse changes mood from confrontation to confidence.

We're halfway through. Now this is what I have been waiting for: a single, soaring voice gradually joined by other voices, and in a major key – it sounds almost miraculous! That word is so beautiful: *Geistlich*. I see in the program that it means “of the Spirit,” and I like this idea of indwelling Spirit, which is easier to accept than the hyper-devout chorale. That's not me! How does Bach continue to create such interesting lines without a train wreck? Ah, now the singers gather and deliver the moral in a minor key: one cannot find salvation or belong to God without Jesus. Once again, I find this exclusivity problematic. Where is the tolerance in this message?

The chorale is back – now this text reminds me of that story about the rich young ruler. I certainly identify more with him at the moment. I'm not interested in their plea to send away all treasures. It is disturbing to hear the chorale punctuated by those angry-sounding voices below – it sounds very confrontational.

What a change into the next verse – another lovely trio, in a major key. I see, this time he has painted “Spirit” and “life” with those lovely long lines. This is an easier message to accept than the last one, but that idea of righteousness at the end is difficult. It reminds me too much of perfection and rejection: “holier than thou.”

Ah, so peaceful and still, just three voices singing; the tenor stepping along under the two beautiful solo lines. The altos have that chorale melody again and it sounds much more poignant this time. This verse almost makes me nostalgic for a time that fostered such a pure faith, although I don't feel it myself, nor am I sure I would want to. The rest of the text of this piece makes it clear that the cost is too high. The text keeps repeating, *Gute Nacht*, but it changes around in the voices, and I don't begrudge the time – I wish this one would continue!

Ah, back to our feisty exposition, but this time it moves around all over the place, minor to major and back again. What is happening in the text? An explanation of how this spirit dwells in people. Very technical. Now we're back to the final chorale. The text seems a bit morbid; with all of this talk about death and suffering, but somehow hopeful, especially with the major chord at the end. It's a long piece, but not completely tiresome. Did I learn anything about myself or the world? Perhaps not, but I did enjoy listening to it, and it seems like an important piece of music.

This hypothetical narrative of reception shows how the ideology of an audience changes over time and location. It also demonstrates how the interpretation of scripture is greatly influenced through translation and inter-textuality with other texts and music. In the stages of transmission brought to light by this study, the Roman

audience responded directly to Paul's plea for spiritual unity and community while Bach's audience responded to his plea for spiritual pietism through the individual promise of the Spirit's activity. The contemporary audience receives portions of these messages but chooses how much of them to accept and reject. This audience freely reads and rewrites the text.

### *Law*

The issue of "law" passed our audience member by. This is ironic, seeing that Paul devoted so much space in his letter to the Romans to the law, and also seeing that our audience member is probably is a professional, and perhaps a lawyer him or herself. The word *Gesetz* ("law") appears only twice in the work in the fourth movement and passes by quickly, with none of the dramatic word painting offered to other choice words. In that movement the drama is reserved for *lebendig* ("living") and *Christo* ("Christ") in the first clause and *Sünde* ("sin") and *Todes* ("death") in the second, through long note lengths and melismas.

### *Activity and Nature of Christ*

The impression of Jesus left on our audience member might rightly be that of a bodyguard. The nature and activity of Christ have changed from cosmic Saviour to personal protector: *Jesus will mir decken* ("Jesus will protect me"). In place of the original salvation formula in 8:3-4, the listener is left only with the passive description of Jesus' state of having been raised in 8:11, and the chorale text is mainly interested in "what Jesus can do for me."

The nature of Jesus has also shifted in translation. There is no mention in *Jesu Meine Freude* of Jesus' appearance in the likeness of sinful flesh, as there is in Romans 8:3. What does appear in the text is Jesus' role as the Lamb of God, and as the believing soul's bridegroom in the first verse of the chorale. These two images of Jesus carry theological significance, but pass by too quickly in the German of the musical text to sink in for deep reflection.

### *Indwelling of the Spirit*

In comparison to the original Romans text, the chorale text adds little to our audience member's impression of the Spirit. However, Bach's music does. Bach's setting of *geistlich* ("of the Spirit") in the fugue

provokes more than a passing curiosity. The audience member's openness to beauty through music provides free play for an encounter with this Spirit which Vattimo reminds us can be simultaneously "breath, wind, blowing, something volatile, fleeting, of which thought lost the memory when it began conceiving of spirit as the evident and indubitable foundation of self-consciousness."<sup>94</sup> This musical effect does not explore life in the Spirit didactically in the way that Romans 8:3-8 does, but it honours the theology of Romans 8 which privileges the activity of the Spirit. Bach's music creates the opportunity for that indwelling through its aesthetic semantic effect.

### *Human Nature*

The theme of human nature is not brought to the fore by this combined text in the way that it is in the canonical Romans pericope. The most overt mention of human nature in Bach's Romans text appears in 8:9, "For you are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit." This statement does not sound very powerful without the condemnation of flesh in 8:3-8, but it does set up the chorale for its condemnation of *Schätzen* ("treasures") and other worldly things. The chorale turns flesh into an external foe to be fought rather than seeing it as an inner reality that requires the transformation of the Spirit.

Our listener quickly passed over references to sin and human dependence on Jesus. The secular humanism that permeates much of liberal culture is predicated on a view of human capacity that is much more positive than that of Bach's time. This neo-Pelagian view of humanity's ability to help itself and accomplish good works on its own is not a new phenomenon (it hearkens back to Luther's rare disagreement with Augustine), but it seems quite at home in Vancouver.

### *Eschatology*

The contemporary listener to *Jesu Meine Freude* would not have any extra-textual scriptural context at hand in the concert hall, and I am not presuming that he or she would be scripturally literate, as in the case of the 18<sup>th</sup> century listener. Therefore, the only eschatological information that would be available is what resides in the text. The proleptic promise of the indwelling of God is in the text (8:1, 9), but the promise of the renewal of creation (8:23) is not, and neither is the distinction between the present time and the future glory (8:18). Thus the setting of the text in *Jesu Meine Freude* is not necessarily seen as

referencing death or a new age, it could merely be an opportunity which is available in the present.

There is eschatological information in the chorale, which is connected to the enemies faced by the believer. The contemporary listener may choose to disregard this information, but it is quite prominent in the text. The third movement of the motet speaks of the assaults of enemies and Satan, and the threats of sin and hell, while the seventh and ninth movements together move the listener past earthly things to that which lies beyond, a cumulative effect that inspires contemplation on end times.

Our audience member did pick up on the highly personal nature of the setting by noticing all of the first-person pronouns in the chorale, even though she did not choose to identify with that viewpoint.<sup>95</sup> Unfortunately, the English translation of the Romans text reinforces this personalized view, because the English second person pronouns, both singular and plural are identical: the word “you.” If our listener understood German, he would notice the use of *ihr* and *euch* in the text, but we will not assume that he was that careful or informed. In this way, the late medieval Pietistic reading of Paul remains intact into the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Paul is left consoling the “introspective conscience” rather than offering hope of spiritual rebirth to believers within a religious community.

This observation returns to the main thrust of this paper: that through *Jesu Meine Freude* Bach shifted the sociological location of Paul’s message in Romans from a communal exhortation to a personalized morality play. Meeks observed that the theological dialectic in Romans “cannot be separated from [the] social dimension of Paul’s whole missionary career.”<sup>96</sup> Throughout his ministry, Paul’s focus was on the whole church, or *ekklesia*. He addressed his letters to congregations, rather than individual leaders, encouraging them to deal with all transgressions as the people of God.<sup>97</sup> Paul was always a Jewish Christian who had the pastoral concerns of his congregations at heart, and the controversy in Rome over racial inclusion must have troubled him personally. His interpretation of community would have had Jewish overtones, perhaps as “Torah fulfilled in the creation of the new people of God in Christ and by the Spirit.”<sup>98</sup> Roetzel emphasizes that:

God’s call, for Paul, is more than a summons to enjoy salvation; it is an invitation to participate in a divine happening that is bigger than

oneself – God’s salvation of the entire world – human and nonhuman. It is well to remember that for the apostle there was no separation between individual fulfillment and group participation ... So although in a certain sense Paul’s message was personal, it was never private.<sup>99</sup>

This summary of Paul’s intentionality does not deny the fervent personal relationship described in *Jesu Meine Freude*, but it does insist that the relationship between God and the believer is not the terminus of salvation. The British Council of Churches insists that the New Testament gives no encouragement for the kind of introverted piety that is unable to see beyond the individual’s relationship with Jesus.<sup>100</sup> *Jesu Meine Freude* comes dangerously close to identifying with this definition, in that the believer is the focus of the text, and all external elements other than God are seen to be threats. The chorale text is not a formula for community.

Perhaps Wright summarized Paul’s concerns best: “Paul’s strong incorporative theology of the church is balanced by an equally strong view of the necessity of each individual member of the community being indwelt by the Spirit.”<sup>101</sup> Paul’s promises in Romans 8 apply to God’s new people, the children of God and co-inheritors with Christ that he mentions in 8:16-17: to individuals and to the community.

## Conclusion

The experience of the cultural reception of Romans 8 differs greatly in the three audiences in this study, based on their sociological locations, languages and expectations. The audience in Rome experienced Paul’s passion for spreading the gospel and his concern for community practices and interpretation of law and gospel. They were in the midst of a difficult decision about the relative importance of the Torah in their corporate practice, and the resulting uncertainty disturbed their unity and fellowship. The congregations that received Paul’s message of salvation and the promised indwelling of the Spirit would have been encouraged (by his message) to expand their definition of fellowship through his emphasis on the life in the Spirit. They would also have responded to Paul’s authority by supporting his request for aid for his mission to Spain and the collection for the poor in Jerusalem.

The audience in Leipzig experienced Romans 8 through the music of their tradition. Bach’s adaptation of Romans retained Paul’s

emphasis on the Spirit, but demonstrated greater assurance in salvation through Luther's confident translation. Bach's synthesis of Franck and Paul emphasized the believer's personal relationship with Jesus, rather than subjecting him or her and the entire church body to a Pauline exhortation. The audience in Bach's time may have received more of Paul's message than just the five verses that Bach included, because their scriptural literacy would have brought to mind related Pauline passages, and perhaps may have filled in the scriptural gap left in Bach's rendition. Bach reinforced his theological messages through his use of the metaphysical musical conventions of the day, and his masterful compositional skills.

The contemporary audience experiences the aesthetic beauty of an ordered and beautiful musical composition, with flashes of insight into piety and genius, but little of the point of Paul's rhetoric. The individualistic message of *Jesu Meine Freude* well matches the individualistic experience of the person in the audience, although the dogma of the piece is not highly attractive to him or her. The audience of today does not base its reception of religious music on scriptural literacy or traditional interpretation of scripture, and does not generally ascribe metaphysical effects to music, beyond the occasional emotional affect that occurs.

The complex setting and message of Romans 8 have been overwhelmed by the Pietistic sensibility of the chorale text and simplified into a message about the individual believer's hope in Christ and life in the Spirit. However, Bach's masterful treatment of the Romans verses provides a lived experience of the scripture: the listener is able to experience the scriptural passages *in time* through the musical setting. Listeners can live in the Spirit, just for a moment, through the long, beautiful lines in the fugal and chorale expositions. The listener is open to this experience through his or her expectation of aesthetic beauty, and so is able to experience spiritual communion through the dynamic interweaving and sharing of the vocal lines. Unlike the modern experience of reading silently in isolation, this experience is embodied and experienced by eyes and ears.

It is true that the modern audience does not receive the force of Paul's rhetoric in Romans 8 through *Jesu Meine Freude*, with its rich exposition on the nature of God, human nature, the relationship between God and humanity through law and Christ, and the hope that God has for all creation through the working of the Spirit. Yet through

the compositional mastery of Bach, the Romans text *is* still received, and it offers both theological stimulation through its combination of texts and translations and an invitation to delve further into Paul's gospel. *Jesu Meine Freude* preserves and transmits the Pietistic and Orthodox roots of its setting along with Paul's theological reflections on the meaning of life, death and hope.

### ***Jesu Unsere Freude***

What if Paul's rhetoric in Romans 8 was reconnected to his primary arguments and reinterpreted for a modern context? For the chorale, acknowledging Paul's original context would mean aligning the German translation with the currently accepted Greek text: 8:2 – *hat dich frei gemacht* (“has made **you** free”); 8:10 – *Wenn Gottes Geist in euch wohnet* (“**If** God's Spirit dwells in you”). More importantly, the pronouns in the chorale would need to change to reflect Paul's community-mindedness: *Jesus unsere Freude*: “Jesus **our** joy.”

For the scripture text, Daniel Patte's apocalyptic argument would suddenly have much greater resonance, in that through Paul's apocalyptic reasoning he encouraged resistance against systems of power. Paul tried to persuade the Romans to regard each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, whether Greek or Jew – his first argument was for ethnic tolerance within religious practice. That tolerance was intended to lead Roman Christians into unified support for Paul's mission to spread Christianity westward and to support the destitute in Jerusalem. Paul's rhetorical strategy moved from pastoral concern to mission and evangelism.

This rhetorical strategy translates too easily into a contemporary context. As Patte notes, the issues of discrimination that face the church today are massive and pervade society as well as the church. These issues today are not only between Jew and Greek, although the issue of anti-Semitism is alive, but it is between genders, sexual orientations, nationalities, economic classes, races, religious traditions, and Christian denominations themselves. If Romans is again interpreted as instruction for the larger Christian community, then these differences cannot be tolerated, and Romans 8 again becomes an emotional *peroration* which encourages us to honestly follow Christ's gospel as an “inverted imperial conquest” that brings hope through seemingly futile gestures, like death on a cross.<sup>102</sup>

The musical performance of Romans 8 through *Jesu Meine*

*Freude* will likely never reflect the communal focus of first century Rome ... nor should it. The piece is grounded in its time and is part of the Western musical canon of repertoire, which means that it is not available for reconstruction. What is possible is to liberate Romans 8 from the individualistic focus on salvation that it has acquired through its inter-textual association with *Jesu Meine Freude*.

If Romans 8 escapes its individualistic interpretation and is embraced as a living text of challenge, then it calls the church to reconsider all aspects of its exclusionary practice, within the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>103</sup> It then calls the church, just as in Paul's day, beyond fear and death to mission and compassion. The message of Romans is not limited to an insulated church environment, but rather is Paul's exhortation to bring forward the kingdom of God.

If we hear this call as a body, we will be able to say with Karl Barth: "We can neither conceal nor deny nor obscure the fact that we have heard the sound of the wind of heaven, that we have seen the New Jerusalem and have encountered the decision of eternity: we cannot deny that we are *in* Christ Jesus (emphasis added)."<sup>104</sup> We will live in the Spirit.

So long as *Jesu Meine Freude* is performed, it will be received in different ways and inspire discourse and reflection on Romans 8. Through this process, Romans 8 transcends its status as a classic text and remains a living text, functioning inter-textually in society by inspiring theological reflection and interest in the worlds that shape its meaning.

## Notes

- 1 Italics show the verses from Romans 8.
- 2 Literally: pasture.
- 3 Adapted from a translation by Ray Nurse, January 2004.
- 4 Klaus Hofmann, *Johann Sebastian Bach: Die Motetten* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2003), p. 116.
- 5 Jaroslav Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p. 62.
- 6 Gerhard Herz, *Essays on J.S. Bach* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985), 3.
- 7 Pelikan, p. 47.

- 8 Ibid., p. 61.
- 9 There are nineteen first-person pronouns in the chorale text, compared to one in the German Romans text and none in the Greek Romans text. This is an extreme difference in viewpoint.
- 10 Jose Faur, *Golden Doves with Silver Dots: Semiotics and Textuality in Rabbinic Tradition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), p. 43.
- 11 Pietistic analysis from Pelikan, p. 65. George Aichele, *The Control of Biblical Meaning: Canon as Semiotic Mechanism* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 2001), p. 141.
- 12 Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 39.
- 13 Ibid., p. xvii.
- 14 Eric Chafe, *Analyzing Bach Cantatas* (New York: Oxford, 2000), p. 251.
- 15 Hofmann, p. 116.
- 16 Pelikan, p. 51.
- 17 Martin Luther, *Martin Luther*, E. G. Rupp and Benjamin Drewery, eds. (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), p. 179.
- 18 Pelikan, p. 68.
- 19 Ibid., p. 70.
- 20 Jeremy Begbie, *Theology, Music and Time* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2001), p. 72.
- 21 Donald Grout and Claude Palisca, *A History of Western Music* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Norton, 1988), p. 513. Musical analysis drawn from study of Bärenreiter's published score: J. S. Bach, *Motetten: BWV 225-230*. Konrad Ameln, ed. Kassel: (Bärenreiter, 1995).
- 22 Grout, p. 431.
- 23 Ibid., p. 437.
- 34 Calvin Stapert, *My Only Comfort: Death, Deliverance and Discipleship in the Music of Bach* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), p. 29.
- 25 Hofmann, p. 124.
- 26 Robin A. Leaver, "The Mature Vocal Works and Their Theological and Liturgical Context," in *Cambridge Companion to Bach*, ed. John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1997), p. 101.
- 27 Hofmann, p. 125.
- 28 Stapert, pp. 17f. Zenck claims that Bach's music possessed a cosmic and theological mathematical ontology which is lost to us today: that his

- music contained Leibniz's principle of "unconscious counting" as well as numerically determined proportions. Martin Zenck, "Bach Reception: Some Concepts and Parameters," in *Cambridge Companion to Bach*, ed. John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 1997), p. 224.
- 29 Stapert, p. 216.
- 30 The chorale text for *Komm, Jesu, Komm* is from a hymn text written by Paul Thymich, and the text for the chorale in *Der Geist hilft* is Martin Luther's text from *Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott*. Interestingly enough, Bach used Romans 8 again in this motet, this time vv. 26-27. Klaus Hofmann, "Preface," trans. by J. Bradford Robinson, in J. S. Bach, *Motetten: BWV 225-230*. Konrad Ameln, ed. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1995), p. viii.
- 31 Stapert, p. 31.
- 32 Ibid., p. 15.
- 33 Ibid., p. 16.
- 34 The sound of music in the baroque period influenced this metaphysical interpretation of keys. Music was organized according to a system of tuning called "just intonation" in which instruments were tuned around the ratio of distance between the intervals of the natural scale, which was a scale with no accidentals. This meant that key signatures with few accidentals, that were close to C major or A minor, would sound the most pure because they were the most in tune. If a composer set a piece of music in a key with many accidentals, like F-sharp major, which has six sharps, then he or she would expect a jangling effect from the key, regardless of the harmony within the composition. Michael Kennedy, ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 455, 882.
- 35 Christoph Wolff, *Johann Sebastian Bach, the Learned Musician* (New York: Norton, 2000), p. 338.
- 36 The major triad signified Christ's nature. It is composed of a major and a minor third: the major third in the chord represented his divinity while the minor third represented his humanity (Chafe, p. 24), Minor triads are made up of two minor thirds, hence its significance of humanity.
- 37 Robin A. Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1985), p. 30.
- 38 Chafe, p. 4.
- 39 Butt "Bach's Metaphysics," p. 46.
- 40 Ibid., p. 53.
- 41 Bach used E minor as the central key in the *St. Matthew Passion* as well. Stapert, p. 16.

- 42 Begbie, p. 39.
- 43 Ibid., p. 103.
- 44 Ibid., p. 103.
- 45 Ibid., p. 158.
- 46 Michael Bird, “Secret Arithmetic of the Soul: Music as Spiritual Metaphor in the Cinema of Ingmar Bergman.” (Spring 1996): <http://www.kinema.uwaterloo.ca/bird961.htm>: 19.
- 47 Kennedy, p. 323.
- 48 Hofmann *Die Motetten*, pp. 136f.
- 49 Bird, p. 7.
- 50 A melisma is the assignment of more than one musical note to one syllable of the text (in this case 25 notes), producing a long, slurred effect.
- 51 Laurence Dreyfus, “Bachian invention and its Mechanisms” in *Cambridge Companion to Bach*, ed. John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1997), p. 191.
- 52 Pelikan, p. 26.
- 53 For example, it is difficult to translate the end of 8:5: οἱ δὲ κατὰ πνεῦμα τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος – “but the ones [who are] according to the Spirit [are on the side] of the Spirit.” Paul could have been much more specific by adding very little text.
- 54 Motets and cantatas were not intended primarily for “the ‘delectation’ of a concert *public*, but rather for the ‘edification’ of a church *congregation*” (Butt “Mature Vocal Works,” p. 86).
- 55 Some academics accuse Bach of being a “Lutheran of convenience” based on a newer chronology of Bach’s works that assigns his religious works (other than the Passions and the B minor mass) to the earlier part of his career and his more secular works to the latter (Leaver “Music and Lutheranism,” p. 38). I believe that this opinion is in the cultural minority, and there is newer evidence to contest it – for example, his annotations in the Calov Bible (ibid., p. 39).
- 56 Herz, p. 149.
- 57 Ibid., pp. 158, 168.
- 58 Beethoven was taught by Haydn and composed at the court at Bonn. Tia DeNora, *Beethoven and the Construction of Genius: Musical Politics in Vienna, 1792-1803* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), pp. 1, 3.
- 59 Ibid., p. 190.

- 60 Kennedy, p. 43.
- 61 Zenck, p. 223.
- 62 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000), p. 32.
- 63 Barry Harvey, “Anti-postmodernism” in A. K. Adam, *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2000), p. 7.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 3.
- 65 I am using the term “holographic presentation” to represent the dominant meta-narratives or paradigms in the Bible: the viewpoints of those who are typically scribes, the ruling classes, male, or some combination of the three. These viewpoints typically reify power and condone hardship for those who are different or threatening.
- 66 The four requirements for the inclusion of books in the New Testament were catholicity (universal in application and not context-specific), apostolicity (likely provenance of a witness of Jesus), orthodoxy, and wide traditional usage in the early church. Aichele, p. 94.
- 67 *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 21.
- 68 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 172.
- 69 Intertextuality takes into account the “web of signification” in which a text does not stand alone but is influenced in meaning by any number of other texts: intertextuality breaks over the wall of canonical control and adds fluidity to the definition of what it means for a text to be biblical. Timothy K. Beal, “Intertextuality” in *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation*, A. K. M. Adam, ed. (St. Louis: Chalice, 2000), pp. 128-130.
- 70 Gianni Vattimo, *After Christianity*, translated by Luca D’Isanto (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 45.
- 71 Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), pp. vii, 78; Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 327.
- 72 Westerholm, p. 146.
- 73 *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- 74 Stendahl, pp. 90f.
- 75 Westerholm, p. 148.
- 76 Daniel Patte, “Critical Biblical Studies from a Semiotics Perspective,” *Semeia* 81 (1998): 20.
- 77 Patte, *Global Bible Commentary*, p. 429.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid., p. 431.

80 Ibid., p. 432.

81 Ibid., pp. 434, 436, 438.

82 I will assume that the audience for this fictional contemporary performance has some interest in hearing this particular work, although *Jesu Meine Freude* is always paired with other works due to its length (22-25 minutes) and may not be the main attraction for each audience member.

83 Certeau, p. 74.

84 My description of the audience is not based on scientific data, but on my sustained observation of audiences over the past ten years of extensive performing in classical choral concerts in Vancouver, and on my experience of being an audience member in similar settings.

85 Certeau, p. 171.

86 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 270.

87 Anthony Giddens, *Runaway World: How Globalization is Reshaping our Lives* (London: Profile, 1999), pp. 41f.

88 Leaver observed that the dualism between sacred and secular was not a concern in Bach's time, but rather a 19<sup>th</sup> century problem. "Mature Vocal Works," p. 90. Pelikan commented that all beauty was sacred to Bach, without distinction between what was intended for liturgy and otherwise (Pelikan, p. 139).

89 "If it is the mode in which the weakening of Being realizes itself as the *kenosis* of God, which is the kernel of the history of salvation, secularization shall no longer be conceived of as abandonment of religion but as the paradoxical realization of Being's religious vocation" (Vattimo, p. 24).

90 Ibid., p. 45.

91 Bauman, pp. 95, 97.

92 This paper is written strictly from a communal perspective and focuses on live performances and group reception of text. However, technology has created many new ways to experience musical performance. The technology of printing in the 16<sup>th</sup> century gave many people the ability to read privately, enabling them to read the Bible at home instead of only hearing it aloud at church. Likewise, the spread of recording technology in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries gives people the unprecedented ability to hear music in isolation, unlimited by setting. Before the

invention of the phonograph in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, only the wealthy could afford to commission a private performance, and even then it was not truly private, because the performer or ensemble was there as well. At this point in the Western world, almost anyone can download a symphony or rock concert and transport it in their pocket. This development raises other questions of textuality, because electronic delivery of music, like *iTunes*, removes context from music: there are no liner notes or translations to follow. However, these questions are best left for another paper.

- 93 This narrative of reception is not an attempt to reflect my own reception of the piece – mine appears elsewhere in the analysis of texts and music. My reception is affected by my musical, biblical and theological training, which move me toward the “Expert,” or establishment, side of reception. This narrative is my attempt to describe Certeau’s “ordinary man” – the person whose opinions and reactions are not validated by socially-accepted experts (Certeau, pp. ii, 172).
- 94 Vattimo, p. 52.
- 95 As Hooker observed, “Though Luther’s interpretation of Paul’s words may have brought the gospel to medieval Europe, it may itself become a ‘veil’ which conceals the meaning of the gospel in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Paul seen through Luther’s eyes may be as much an anomaly in the modern world as is a 20<sup>th</sup> century church built in Gothic style.” Morna Hooker, *From Adam to Christ: Essays on Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge, 1990), p. 10.
- 96 Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*. (New Haven: Yale, 2003), p. 168.
- 97 Gordon D. Fee, “Paul and the Metaphors of Salvation: Some Reflections on Pauline Soteriology,” in *The Redemption: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Christ as Redeemer*, eds. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, SJ, and Gerald O’Collins SJ, (Oxford: Oxford, 2004), p. 46.
- 98 N. T. Wright, *New Interpreter’s Bible Volume X: Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), p. 402.
- 99 Calvin Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), p. 181.
- 100 British Council of Churches, BCC Study Commission on Trinitarian Doctrine Today, *The Forgotten Trinity* (Sussex: British Council of Churches, 1989), p. 22.
- 101 Wright, p. 584.
- 102 Patte, *Global Bible Commentary*, pp. 438, 443.

- <sup>103</sup> Miroslav Wolf defines exclusion as elimination, assimilation, domination and abandonment. He asserts that Jesus' example to us is through the cross, through de-centering and sharing God's solidarity with the world. See Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), pp. 22, 70, 75.
- <sup>104</sup> Karl Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Translated by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (New York: Oxford, 1976), p. 273.