

= Halt im Gedächtnis Jesum Christ , BWV 67 =

Halt im Gedächtnis Jesum Christ (Keep Jesus Christ in mind) , BWV 67 , is a church cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach . He composed it in Leipzig for Quasimodogeniti , the first Sunday after Easter , and first performed it on 16 April 1724 .

Based on the prescribed gospel of the appearance of Jesus to the Disciples , first without then with Thomas , an unknown poet compares the situation of the doubtful Thomas to the Christian in general . He places Nikolaus Herman 's Easter hymn " Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag " in the centre of the cantata , repeats the line " Friede sei mit euch " (Peace be with you) several times , and ends with the first stanza from Jakob Ebert 's hymn " Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ " (Thou Prince of Peace , Lord Jesus Christ) . Bach structured the work in seven movements , arranged in symmetry around the central chorale , and scored it for three solo voices , a four @-@ part choir and a Baroque instrumental ensemble of a slide horn for hymn tunes , flauto traverso , two oboes d 'amore , strings and basso continuo . Besides the unusual central chorale , the cantata contains a dramatic scenem with Jesus repeating " Peace be with you " against the enemies .

= = History and words = =

Bach composed the cantata in his first year as Thomaskantor in Leipzig , shortly after he first performed his St John Passion , for the First Sunday after Easter , called Quasimodogeniti . The prescribed readings for that Sunday were from the First Epistle of John , " our faith is the victory " (1 John 5 : 4 ? 10) , and from the Gospel of John , the appearance of Jesus to the Disciples , first without then with Thomas , in Jerusalem (John 20 : 19 ? 31) . The unknown poet begins with a verse from the Second Epistle to Timothy , " Remember that Jesus Christ ? was raised from the dead " (2 Timothy 2 : 8) . The poet sees Thomas as similar to the doubtful Christian in general , whose heart is not at peace . The center of the cantata is the Easter hymn " Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag " (The glorious day has appeared) by Nikolaus Herman (1560) , praising the day of the resurrection . In contrast , movement 5 recalls the danger by the enemies , until in movement 6 Jesus appears , as he did to his disciples in Jerusalem , finally bringing peace . The line " Friede sei mit euch " (Peace be with you) is repeated four times , framing three stanzas of a poem . The closing chorale is the first stanza of " Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ " (Thou Prince of Peace , Lord Jesus Christ) by Jakob Ebert (1601) .

Bach led the first performance on 16 April 1724 .

= = Structure and scoring = =

Bach structured the cantata in seven movements , arranged symmetrically around a central chorale . He scored the work for three vocal soloists (alto , tenor , bass) , a four @-@ part choir and a Baroque instrumental ensemble of corno da tirarsi (Ct , a slide horn that Bach scored for a short period) , flauto traverso (Ft) , two oboes d 'amore (Oa) , two violins (VI) , viola (Va) , and basso continuo .

In the following table of the movements , the scoring follows the Neue Bach @-@ Ausgabe . The keys and time signatures are taken from Alfred Dürr , using the symbol for common time (4 / 4) . The continuo , playing throughout , is not shown .

= = Music = =

The opening chorus reflects the contrast of hope and resurrection versus simultaneous remembrance and doubt , which is present throughout the cantata . The chorus is structured in symmetry in seven sections , beginning with an instrumental sinfonia of all instruments , the horn introducing a theme representing remembrance in a melody which resembles the choral tune of " O Lamm Gottes , unschuldig " which Bach would later use as a cantus firmus in the opening movement of his St Matthew Passion . Bach thus alludes to the idea that Jesus suffered innocently

for the " sins of the world " before he rose again . In the second section , this melody is sung by the sopranos , while the lower voices stress the word " Halt " (hold) by several homophonic chords . In the third section , the sopranos repeat the melody in a fugue , while the altos simultaneously sing a countersubject that rises in fast movement for more than an octave , illustrating the resurrection . The fourth section is a reprise of the sinfonia with the voices added , then a variation of sections 2 to 4 follows as 5 to 7 .

The tenor aria *Mein Jesus ist erstanden* (My Jesus is arisen) is accompanied by an obbligato oboe d'amore . The theme is presented in the opening by the strings and later picked up by the voice , illustrating the word " auferstanden " by an upward run .

The Easter hymn " *Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag* " marks the center of the composition . In symmetry , it is framed by two alto recitatives , the second a reprise of the first .

The idea of a solo singer alternating with a chorus is extended in the following movement , the bass aria with chorus *Friede sei mit euch* (Peace be with you) . A string introduction depicts in agitated forte passages in 4 / 4 time the attack of the enemies . John Eliot Gardiner describes it as " a dramatic scena in which the strings work up a storm to illustrate the raging of the soul 's enemies " . In sharp contrast the bass as the vox Christi (voice of Christ) sings the greeting of Jesus from verse 19 of the Gospel , " Peace be with you " , three times , accompanied by woodwinds in dotted rhythm in 3 / 4 time , marked piano . Musicologist Julian Mincham describes the music as serene , a " gentle , rocking , almost cradle @-@ like rhythm creating a perfect atmosphere of peaceful contemplation " . The upper voices of the choir (without basses) answer to the music of the introduction , seeing Jesus as help in the battle (" hilft uns kämpfen und die Wut der Feinde dämpfen ") . The greeting and answering is repeated two more times in two stanzas of the poem , reflecting the strengthening of the weary in spirit and body (" erquicket in uns Müden Geist und Leib zugleich ") , and finally overcoming death (" durch den Tod hindurch zu dringen ") . The following fourth appearance of " Peace be with you " is accompanied by both woodwinds and strings , and peace is finally achieved . Klaus Hofmann describes the movement as an " operatic scene " and continues " Bach resorts to unconventional means ; he shows himself as a musical dramatist and , in the process , stresses the element of contrast : he comments upon the words of the faithful with agitated , tumultuous string figures , whilst Jesus ' peace greeting sounds calmly and majestically , embedded in pastoral wind sonorities . " Bach adapted this movement as the Gloria of his Missa in A major , BWV 234 .

The closing chorale " *Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ* " is a four @-@ part setting .

= = Selected recordings = =

The table below is taken from the selection on the Bach @-@ Cantatas website . Performing groups are roughly marked as large by red background , while green background indicates vocal ensembles singing one voice per part (OVPP) and instrumental groups playing period instruments in historically informed performances .