

Redemption and Human Freedom in the Bach *Passions*

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Gareth Moore loved music, and he loved, in particular, the music of J. S. Bach. He owned an extensive collection of Bach recordings and could quote from the choral works, especially the chorales, from memory. One year, as I recall, he devoted himself to learning to play the *Goldberg Variations* on the piano. Gareth and I became acquainted through the Oxford Bach Choir, where our singing together grew into a long friendship whose conversational mainstays were music, theology and philosophy. One of the special joys of our friendship over the years was a series of conversations about the theology and tonal allegory of Bach's great renderings of Christ's Passion—the *St. John Passion* and the *St. Matthew Passion*.

Bach's *Passions* were the subject of several lecture series Gareth had given in his later years, and though at least one of the series of lectures (delivered in French!) was tape-recorded, it is our loss that Gareth did not collect more systematically his many insights into Bach's musical theology. I was fortunate, however, to participate with Gareth in several colloquia on both *Passions*, occasions which allowed us both to explore in an intelligent though not strictly academic setting the meditative dynamic of Bach's work.¹ I am indebted to Gareth for much of what I know about Bach, as for so many other things human and divine. And however deficient my own appreciation of Bach may be, it is the product of a love which Gareth shared so generously in his gentle and penetrating conversation. A non-specialist account of Bach's *Passions*—gathering together as they do the full range of divine and human passions—seems, therefore, an appropriate gift in memory of Gareth, who himself was a profound gift to those who were blessed to know him.



The birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are at the heart of the Christian understanding of sin and redemption. Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection have always been central Christian tenets, but each has received different theological emphases, both across time and from the different traditions within Christianity. The Lutheran tradition in particular has tended to focus on the Crucifixion, seeing the cross as both the location of Christian redemption and the means by which this redemption is

accomplished. Bach's two great treatments of the Passion in the *St. John Passion* and the later *St. Matthew Passion* are best seen as complementary musico-theological reflections on the Crucified as viewed respectively from the triumph of the Resurrection and the humility of the Incarnation.

Reading the two Bach *Passions* as complementary musico-theological works would be mundane and even banal were it not for the variety of attempts by scholars, over a considerable period of time, to account for the theological and musical divergences between the two *Passions*. Understanding the mutual relation of the *Passions* is complicated by the fact that each was substantially revised over a period of several decades as Bach made his own theological and musicological re-evaluations and as he responded to the exigencies of performance. The fact remains that, despite the similarity of their subject matter, the two *Passions* are very different in textual subject matter and tonal expression. Because the earlier *St. John Passion* is dramatic, (relatively) brief, and coloured by an austere sense of the abstract, it is often viewed as a first effort which is only fulfilled musically and theologically in the more meditative *St. Matthew Passion*, which is almost twice as long as the *St. John Passion* and expresses a greater sense of human emotion in a more complex and innovative tonal structure.

Scholars have looked in detail at Bach's musical and theological sources for evidence that the *St. John Passion* represents an orthodox theological position while the *St. Matthew Passion* reflects Bach's fuller (and likely pressured) engagement with German Pietist theology, or for suggestions of the later work's presumed theological and musicological maturity.² Jaroslav Pelikan has shown that the two *Passions* embody quite different understandings of the Atonement—the *St. John Passion* the Christus Victor theology of the early Greek Fathers and the *St. Matthew Passion* the Anselmian satisfaction theory.³ But consistent with all of these very useful approaches is the fact that the most essential differences between the two *Passions* are reflections of Bach's own engagement with the quite different Gospel texts themselves. Surely we must read Bach's *Passions* as the theological traditions have read the Gospels—together, side by side, allowing each to cast light on the other and trying to reconcile the tensions between them.

That Bach's different musico-theological renderings of each narrative should reflect the differences between the two Gospels should come as no surprise especially since, as Chafe has demonstrated, Bach took great care in developing the libretti and in expressing each text in terms of a complex vision of tonal allegory. The discontinuities within Bach the theologian need trouble us only as much as do the discontinuities between Matthew's and John's Gospels themselves. Bach, like any good theologian, sought a faithful exegesis of the Gospel texts; only by reading Bach's two great musical narratives in concert do we begin to fathom his contribution to our understanding of the paradoxical meaning of the Cross.

Reading the *St. John Passion* and the *St. Matthew Passion* alongside one another as complementary expressions of redemption in Christ confronts us immediately with the paradox of redemption itself—God’s strength is made perfect in weakness. While the *kenosis* of Christ is treated by both Passion renderings, the *St. John Passion* stresses Christ’s triumph, his majesty, and the power of his command, while the *St. Matthew Passion* discloses Jesus’ subjection to death, his humility and his love. Similarly, both *Passions* elicit complementary responses from the faithful. The *St. John Passion* demands submission to the “Lord our Master” of the work’s opening lines—obedience and discipline are the proper spiritual responses to a work which revolves around the theme of obedience and disobedience. The *St. Matthew Passion*, on the other hand, presents the theme of guilt and innocence, initiating the listener into an extended meditation on Christ’s suffering and our own unworthiness. Finally, the meditative struggles of our response to Christ’s call are implicated in two distinct settings. The *St. John Passion* is directed toward Christ’s supremacy over the kingdoms of this world; our choice between the heavenly and earthly cities is made clear in the violent choral assertion “we have no king but Caesar” (No. 23). In the *St. Matthew Passion*, however, the Church (and not the earthly kingdom) is the locus of our meditative struggle with sin and our learning to cast ourselves “in Jesus’ arms” (No. 60). Separately, these visions illuminate only one side of the Godhead and of the act of redemption, and correspondingly only one appropriate response to that act. Together, however, these complementary visions reflect more complete accounts of the several aspects of the divine act and of our proper responses.

Theologically, each *Passion* pivots around the crucifixion (more specifically, the Crucified) from, as it were, opposite directions. The ambit of the *St. John Passion* is the view of the Passion from the triumph of Christ’s Resurrection. By contrast, the gaze of the *St. Matthew Passion* is reflected back and forth between the Incarnation and the Passion. In the *St. John Passion*, the Passion is ordered to the Resurrection; in the *St. Matthew Passion*, the Incarnation is ordered to the Passion.⁴ Only when the *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion* are viewed together do we see that the Incarnate Son who is Crucified is also the Judge who has already triumphed over death and will reign in glory.

Additionally, both of Bach’s *Passions*, like Anselm’s *A Meditation on Human Redemption* and Luther’s *A Meditation on Christ’s Passion*, are calls to remember and consider anew the redemption and liberation accomplished by Christ’s death. Anselm’s call is for his reader to “meditate upon what you owe your Saviour” whose suffering has bought our freedom.⁵ Luther outlines the process of our proper response evoked by the Passion—first, a sense of terror; second, a recognition of our complicity in Christ’s death; third, a trust in the resurrection; and fourth, a concerted effort to live a life based on Christ’s example.⁶ Both *Passions* articulate our

complicity, offer some reassurances of forgiveness, and elicit emulation of Christ. That said, it is in the *St. John Passion* that we feel most acutely the terror of Christ's judgement (e.g., in the opening chorus) and our complicity in his crucifixion (e.g., the extended fugal choral insistence to Pilate that Jesus be crucified, No. 21, repeated at No. 23), and it is in the *St. John Passion* that we experience the uneasy trust of standing unworthily before God in his victorious majesty. Similarly, it is in the *St. Matthew Passion* that we discern the struggles of Christ with us, struggles which give us the unpretentious confidence of the good shepherd's arms (No. 1, No. 60) over and against the sceptre of the risen King.

From a slightly different theological vantage point, the two *Passions* also reflect Christ as both sacrament and example. The distinction goes back to Augustine (in *De Trinitate* 4.3) and was taken up by Luther—Jesus Christ is a *sacramentum*, a meaningful sign (*exemplum*) which “simultaneously effects that which it signifies....[B]efore Jesus Christ comes to be considered as an *exemplum* for our behaviour, he must be affirmed as the *sacramentum* that changes our being.” The theology of the *St. Matthew Passion*, which emphasizes Christ as *exemplum*, presupposes the theology of the *St. John Passion*, which stresses Christ as *sacramentum* (perhaps most strikingly in the Tenor Aria “Erwäge”, which compares the “blood-coloured back” of the scourged Christ with the “lovely rainbow” of the Genesis covenant⁸). In this, the significance of the two *Passions* together goes beyond and in some sense reconciles the apparent conflict between the Christus Victor and Anselmian theories of atonement represented by the *St. John Passion* and *St. Matthew Passion* respectively. Both *Passions* embrace both the sacramental and exemplary work of Christ, but they do so in dual aspects. In the *St. John Passion*, God is in Christ, reconciling himself to the world. In the *St. Matthew Passion*, Christ is with us, reconciling us to him.

We glimpse these different emphases in the ways in which, for example, Bach deploys the same chorale to quite different effect in the two *Passions*. As Pelikan has noted, Bach adopted Johann Heerman's “Herzliebster Jesu”, the first and seventh stanzas of which serve as the initial chorales of the *St. Matthew Passion* and *St. John Passion* respectively. The chorale appears twice more in *St. Matthew Passion* and once again in *St. John Passion*, where the melody is used for the chorale “Ach grosser König.” When Bach sets Heerman's hymn in the *St. Matthew Passion*, he does so to emphasize Jesus' suffering with and for us. When Bach uses it in the *St. John Passion*, he does so to reinforce Christ's majestic and decisive love.

Similarly, the crimson chorale thread which is woven throughout the *St. Matthew Passion*—“O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden”—reflects the Incarnation ordered to the Passion. As Pelikan has noted so strikingly, Bach inserts the famous chorale five times in *St. Matthew Passion*, each time in a descending key, from four sharps, to three flats, to two sharps, to one flat,

and finally, “in the ultimate simplicity of no sharps, no flats, and in a combination of thankfulness for redemption with personal preparation for the hour of death.”¹⁰ This most beloved of all German Protestant Passion hymns is deployed to call attention to “the qualities in the suffering Jesus that he in fact shared with all the martyrs of all the ages.”¹¹ The choral thread of the *St. John Passion* are the “Jesus of Nazareth” choruses, the music of which appears five times, each time reinforcing Christ’s Kingship despite all appearances to the contrary. The third, and central, appearance, as Chafe has shown, symbolically joins the name of Christ with the cross with the use of the flute part to recall Christ’s Kingly presence despite his humiliation. “The overarching allegory in the ‘Jesus of Nazareth’ choruses is unquestionably the ability of faith to see the truth through appearances.”¹²

Perhaps most striking are the ways in which the complementarities of the two *Passions* are implanted in the opening choruses of each. The haunting instrumentation with which the *St. John Passion* opens builds to the crescendo of the chorus’ opening forte on the thrice-repeated word *Herr* (“Lord”). This opening chorus is a theological and musical knife-thrust. Immediately, the work asserts God’s sovereign might as our master (“Herr, unser Herrscher”), emphasizing Christ’s Lordship in breaking the spiritual and political bonds of slavery to this world in a decisive call to Christian liberty. The power of the triumph of the Son of God, even in the deepest humiliation, asserts itself musically with a dominance that prompts our liberation from sin through humble submission. We have here not Christ the suffering servant but Christ the Lord of Creation who conquers sin and death. His death is the decisive moment in salvation history as well as individual salvation. Bach’s treatment is a forceful presentation of the moment of decision—salvation understood in the stage of initial conversion rather than the ongoing process of the never-ending struggle of self-mastery. The music demands a willful turning to Christian liberty, away from the slavery of sin and earthly political idolatry. And the decisive victory of the Resurrection is sung by the chorus against the instrumental backdrop of the pre-existent Word hovering, with the Spirit, over the face of the waters of Genesis 1.

The *St. John Passion*, like the gospel on which it is based, explicitly links the spiritual and political struggle for Christian freedom. Christ’s power is revealed in his weakness upon the cross, but it is clear that the weakness of his martyrdom undercuts the tyranny of political idolatry. The first words of the drama, after the choral introduction and Evangelist’s recitative, sets the dominant question—“Wen suchet ihr?” asks Jesus, “Who is it that you want?” The entire *St. John Passion* is an answer to that question. The choral opening has already given us the answer. Christ the Lord (No. 1: “Herr, unser Herrscher”) is identified as “King of the Jews” in No. 23, where the Jews of the Passion narrative violently reply, repeatedly: “We have no king but Caesar.”¹³ Christ is a substitution for us on the cross because we have substituted Caesar (and all he stands for) for Christ our

rightful king. To this is the contrast of Christ's own words to Pilate in No. 18: "'King' is your word. My task is to bear witness to the truth." Christ the King of Creation is the Christ whose humility speaks truth to political power and who cautions his people against idolatrous allegiance. The humiliation of the Cross becomes the source of Christian spiritual liberty precisely in the context of resistance to worldly power.

The texture of the *St. John Passion* is correspondingly confident and the music proceeds at a brisk tempo. Tight and crisp instrumentation places more emphasis on the bright assurance of the major keys, a paradoxical but ultimately consistent rendering of the predominant themes of this Passion narrative. The entire tonal motion of the piece, as Chafe has shown, descends in flats to the crucifixion and then ascends in sharps for the remainder of the *Passion* to represent the cross as a lifting up of Christ in glory.¹⁴ The opening chorus asks Christ to "show us by your Passion that you, the true eternal Son of God, triumph even in the deepest humiliation." Musically, Bach is able to do just this in, for example, the juxtaposition of the Alto and Bass Arias (Nos. 30 and 32). The Alto laments, in a minor key with plaintive viola da gamba accompaniment, the finality of Christ's offering:

The hero from Judah
Ends his victorious fight.
It is accomplished.

In the Bass Aria with Chorus which follows immediately upon the Evangelist's momentary narration of Christ's death, Bach turns the emphasis from death to victory. He shifts to the major key, thankfully acknowledging that Christ has paid the debt we owe and in doing so has conquered the bondage to sin on our behalf:

...it is accomplished,
am I released from death?
Can I gain the heavenly kingdom
through your suffering and death?
Is it that the whole world is redeemed?
You cannot speak for agony,
but incline your head to give a speechless "Yes!"

In contrast to Bach's *St. John Passion*, which emphasizes the decisiveness of Christ's power over death and is signaled by the assertion of Christ's Lordship, the *St. Matthew Passion* begins with an invitation—"Kommt, ihr Töchter"—which is immediately conversational, set as it is for two choirs and structured around a series of questions and answers stressing patience, guilt, mercy, cross, the Bridegroom and the Lamb. The sovereign King of the *St. John Passion* is the Spouse and Lamb of the *St. Matthew*

Passion. The lilting orchestral prelude to the opening chorus has a tone of reflective consolation, but cast in a minor key the music conveys Christ's prolonged suffering and suggests our own Gethsemane.

The dialogue of the opening chorus opens the meditation of love and liberty, a meditation punctuated by a commentary (sung by the boys choir) reminding us of Christ's innocence and his willingness to give his life freely for us:

CHORUS

Come you daughters, help me bewail in plaint.

Behold!—Whom?—the Bridegroom.

Behold him!—How?—like a Lamb!

Behold!—What!—behold the patience.

Look!—Look where?—on our own guilt.

Behold him out of love and mercy

He bears the wood of his own cross.

CHORALE (boys choir)

O Lamb of God, innocently slaughtered

On the wood of the cross,

Found patient always, ...

Here, Bach unifies Anselm's matrimonial theology of the Bridegroom's (Christ's) love of his bride (the Church) with the juridical theology in which Christ is understood as the sacrificial lamb slain for the debt of sin. Significantly, the music is directly recalled by the final Alto Aria (with chorus), "Sehet, Jesus hat die Hand" (No. 60):

Behold how Jesus outspread his arms

In order to embrace us.

Come—wherein?—in the arms of Jesu

Seek salvation, take compassion.

Seek—where?—in the arms of Jesu,

Live, die, take your rest.

O you lost little chicks,

Stay—where?—in the arms of Jesu.

This is but one of many examples of how, both musically and in the text, Bach crafts a meditative dialogue in which the *Matthew Passion* continuously asks and answers questions about the human condition and the possibility of redemption.

The opening chorus evokes another, later invitation. The paradoxical, sweet suffering of Christ pervades the *Matthew Passion*, and becomes explicit in the Bass Aria "Komm, süßes Kreuz" (No. 57):

Come, sweet cross, thus will I say,

My Jesus, give it to me ever, always!

If my suffering ever becomes too heavy for me,

Then you yourself will help me to carry it.

Christ's suffering, and our experience of the guilt of sin whose penalty Christ paid, is the bitter root which yields sweet salvation. Contemplation of Christ's Passion both renders the pain of sin acute and reveals the source of consolation—Christ's arms outstretched in crucifixion are the same arms which give consoling embrace to the repentant sinner (as in the Alto Aria, "Sehet," No. 60, quoted above). Thus, Bach gives musical voice to Luther's account of how meditation on Christ's suffering moves us from the despair of sin to the consolation of divine love. "First," writes Luther, "you must no longer contemplate the suffering of Christ...but pass beyond that and see his friendly heart....Then your heart will be filled with love for him, and the confidence of your faith will be strengthened."¹⁵ Bach emphasizes this love in the opening orchestral chorus by using the driving rhythm of the walking bass, and heartbeat which, as Gareth observed, recalls the *Misericordia* of the *Magnificat*.

Freedom, it would seem, comes in the recognition of Christ's ordeal and our participation in it. The chorus is both the conscience of sinful human beings and the dramatic embodiment of the crowd which puts Jesus to death. The *Matthew Passion*, with its interplay between choral and solo numbers, is an occasion whereby the audience both undergoes suffering with Christ and re-enacts the participation of all human beings in Christ's death. By meditating upon that participation we come to embrace the liberating redemption Christ offers.

Redemption is accomplished by Christ's "free obedience to the Father" in Anselm's terms, which both illuminates the sinful condition of fallen humanity and becomes a pattern for righteous human action. So, Luther writes, "Christ's passion must from that day on become a pattern for your entire life," a subject of meditation which "changes man's being and, almost like baptism, gives him a new birth."¹⁶ Freedom comes through the ordeal of suffering understood as an unconstrained act of love.

The disorder and disobedience of sin find healing and atonement in the reciprocal giving of ourselves in free obedience to Christ. This reciprocal gift-giving and submission to grace are most sublimely rendered by Bach in the Soprano Aria "Ich will dir mein Herze schenken" (No. 13):

I will make my heart a gift to you,
Sink deep within it, O my Saviour!
I want to sink myself in you;
Is this world too small for you,
O, you alone shall be for me
More than heaven and earth together.

The imagery of union (sinking, bathing) and the reciprocity of love between Christ and the human soul not only by the soprano's melodic line, but also the underlying orchestral intertwining of the two duelling oboes

d'amore (which Bach uses consistently in his music to evoke associations of love), recalls both Anselm—"Let your love seize my whole being; let it possess me completely"—and Luther: "Christ and I must be entirely enjoined and united together that he may live in me and I in him."¹⁷ For Bach, the demands of the law are satisfied by the material indwelling of love. Yet, Bach recognizes that this love does not come without cost; and so the later Soprano Aria "Aus Liebe" (No. 49) is a plaintive reminder of Christ's innocence and the judgment which we ought properly to bear.

Out of love,
Out of love my Saviour wants to die,
Of sin knows he nothing.
So that eternal corruption
And the sentence of judgment
Will not remain on my soul.

Theologically, Christ's Incarnation and Crucifixion are understood in terms of divine self-giving or self-emptying. In contrast to the *St. John Passion*, which emphasizes Christ's decisive victory, the *St. Matthew Passion* spells out divine freedom, not in terms of power but of love, of strength made perfect in weakness. "God is not," writes von Balthasar, "in the first place, 'absolute power,' but 'absolute love' and his sovereignty manifests itself not in holding on to what is its own but in its abandonment." This Bach portrays in his painfully poignant musical depictions of Christ's agony in Gethsemane (and his abandonment by his sleeping disciples; nos. 22-24) and at Golgotha (No. 61). Christ's death raises us from death; his self-emptying and prostration before the Father elevate us from our fallen state. So, Bach follows the stunning desolation of Christ's death with the rich reassurance of the bass recitative "Am Abend, da es Kühl war" (No. 64) and the warm tonality of the following Bass Aria "Mache dich, mein Herze rein" (No. 65), which is undergirded once again by the heartbeat of the walking bass. The brittle afternoon heat, the darkening of the heavens, and the undoing of the temple veil give way to the tender twilight of the "cool of the evening," the "beautiful time," "O vesper hour," the fullness of the cross.

Both individually and together, the *Passions* suggest that freedom from sin is not achieved mechanically and, once achieved, must be attentively preserved. Bach's two meditations on the Passion underscores the fact that complacency is a powerful threat to liberty. In this life, there are no permanent solutions effecting redemption and human freedom. Each are in some sense gifts requiring effort and constant re-engagement. Insofar as music expresses natural relationships of fittingness and proportion (harmony), it reveals the paradoxical metaphysics of love which may undergird the experience of freedom. The freedom of Bach's music is most

fully manifested by his exploration of extraordinary musical possibilities within innumerable constraints of text, liturgical setting, existing tunes and conventions, instruments and players, and the logic of harmonic theory. Such is not an argument for constraint but a recognition of its inexorable character. So, too, human freedom, even graced by redemption, is the submission to truth in love.

Gareth strongly preferred the ending of the *St. Matthew Passion* to the choral conclusion of the *St. John Passion*, which always seemed to him too tidy, both musically and thematically. The completion promised by the *St. John Passion* remains a promise, partly fulfilled but ultimately not descriptive of the world as we experience it. The tentative ending of the *St. Matthew Passion*—the restless rhythm of the final chorus is reminiscent of the opening bars and the closing chord resolves itself only at the last instant—suggests that the conclusion is itself an invitation to begin anew. The piece as a whole thus becomes a prelude to continued meditation in anticipation of the victory of the resurrection, but with the sober recognition that victory, the possession of unqualified freedom, is fully realized only in the life to come. We have passed through the Passion as participants, both in the liturgy and in our spiritual condemnation of Christ. Consideration of the character of our own souls, like the contemplation of freedom itself, demands always to be begun anew.

Together, the two surviving Bach *Passions* define the hope and suffering, the promise not yet realized and the comfort already offered, the triumph of the timeless Son and the patience which both we and God must exercise in this world. In reading both *Passions* together we enter into Bach's extraordinary grasp of things divine and human, expressed in a musical language which moves us by its disciplined precision, passion and compassion, graceful worship, and gentle love. These are among the qualities that Gareth too loved in Bach, and they are among the characteristics that Gareth himself embodied—both in joy and in suffering—so beautifully.

- 1 The several colloquia were graciously sponsored by the Liberty Fund of Indianapolis, Indiana, to which I express gratitude for the opportunity to have formulated many of the reflections communicated here. I also gratefully acknowledge the use of Thomas Levergood's unpublished translation of the libretto of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Most quotations from the text of the *St. John Passion* are taken from Marrison, *infra*.
- 2 Eric Chafe, *Tonal Allegory in the Vocal Music of J. S. Bach* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) pp. 275–6 admirably summarizes, with bibliography, these differences of approach to and explanation of the *Passions*. It is possible that Bach's revisions to the *St. John Passion* were intended to render it more consistent with the theology of the *St. Matthew Passion* (see Chafe, pp. 301–304). Chafe, in his a brilliant study of Bach to which I am greatly indebted, does look directly at Bach's "direct interaction with the

- Gospel [of John] itself” (p. 276). He also wishes to differentiate the two *Passions* as occupying different stages in the “meditative dynamic” (p. 278) Luther lays out in his *A Meditation on Christ’s Passion*. In this view, the differences (in part) correspond to the perspective of the resurrection (*St. John Passion*) which follows, in Luther’s account, from (in Chafe’s words) “the process—successive in nature—by which the opposition [between man and God] is bridged” (p. 278).
- 3 Jaroslav Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Pres, 1986) pp. 89–115.
 - 4 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale: The Mystery of Easter*, Aidan Nichols, O.P. trans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), pp. 12–14.
 - 5 Anselm, “A Meditation on Human Redemption” in *Anselm of Canterbury*, vol. 1, J. Hopkins and H. Richardson eds. and trans., (Toronto: Edwin Mellon Press, 1975) pp. 137–144; quotation from p. 142.
 - 6 Martin Luther, “A Meditation on Christ’s Passion” in *Luther’s Works*, vol. 42, M. Dietrich ed., (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969) pp. 7–14.
 - 7 Eberhard Jüngel, “The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ as Sacrament and Example” in *Theological Essays II*, J. B. Webster ed., (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995) pp. 163–190 (see esp. pp. 168, 176), develops the distinction between sacrament and example in the context of current theology, emphasizing the theological priority of the former.
 - 8 For an extended analysis, see Jaroslav Pelikan, “‘Blut ist ein ganz besondrer Saft: Am färbigen Abglanz haben wir das Leben’. The Aria ‘Erwäge, wie sein blutgefärbter Rücken’ in J.S. Bach’s Saint John Passion” in A.A. Clement, ed., *Das Blut Jesu und die Lehre von der Versöhnung im Werk Johann Sebastian Bachs*, North-Holland, Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen Verhandelingen, 1995) pp. 205–213.
 - 9 Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians*, p. 80.
 - 10 Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians*, pp. 84–88; quotation from p. 87.
 - 11 Pelikan, *Bach Among the Theologians*, p. 85.
 - 12 See Chafe, *Tonal Allegory*, pp. 286–301; quotation from p. 297.
 - 13 The insistence of John’s Gospel—particularly as interpreted by Luther—on malicious Jewish complicity in Christ’s execution has long provoked the charge of anti-Judaism, a charge applied derivatively to the *John Passion*. Suffice it to say that in the *Passion*, at least, the crowd persecuting Christ in demanding his execution is understood *theologically* to be all sinners and not one race in particular, a point underscored *liturgically* by the fact that the accusations are sung by the chorus: the congregation, that is, us. For the most comprehensive and sensitive modern discussion, with a splendid translation of the libretto, see Michael Marrison, *Lutheranism, Anti-Judaism, and Bach’s St. John Passion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
 - 14 See Chafe, *Tonal Allegory*, p. 284.
 - 15 Luther, “A Meditation on Christ’s Passion” p. 13.
 - 16 Luther, “A Meditation on Christ’s Passion” pp. 13, 11.
 - 17 Anselm, “A Meditation on Human Redemption” p. 144; Luther, “A Meditation on Christ’s Passion”.