

“Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn” BWV 1165 (Anh. 159)

Ich lasse dich nicht, du segnest mich denn,¹ mein Jesu. I will not let you go unless you bless me, my Jesus.³

**Weil du mein Gott und Vater bist,
Dein Kind wirst du verlassen nicht,
Du väterliches Herz!
Ich bin ein armer Erdenkloss,
Auf Erden weiss ich keinen Trost.²**

**Because you are my God and father,
You will not forsake [me,] your child,
You paternal heart.
I am a wretched clump of earth;
On earth I know no comfort.**

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)



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GENERAL NOTE. The first publication of this work, in 1823, added a four-voice harmonization of “Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?” as a second movement. It now appears that this was not part of Bach’s composition.

¹Genesis 32:26.

²A stanza of “Warum betrübst du dich, mein Herz?”

³This line expands upon the story in Genesis 32 of Jacob, the father of the tribes of Israel, wrestling with God at Peniel. God says to Jacob, “Lass mich gehen” (“Let me go”), and Jacob answers, “Ich lasse dich nicht [gehen], du segnest mich denn” (“I will not let you [go], unless you bless me”). According to Luther’s radically christocentric reading of the Hebrew scriptures, it was Christ himself with whom Jacob wrestled at Peniel—hence the textual addition of “my Jesus” in this libretto.