

**General Topics :: JS Bach's Meditation on God****JS Bach's Meditation on God - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2006/12/9 16:55**

This poem is attributed to the musical genius, Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750). Not many people are aware that Bach occasionally tried his hand at poetry. He was a devout Lutheran in his day and is widely considered the all-time greatest Christian composer in Western history. In one of his keyboard booklets, this little poem was discovered, dated 1725. It is interesting to note that at the end of each keyboard study, Bach usually signed off with *To the Glory of God or In Jesus' Name*. In Japan, Bach is known as the 5th evangelist, as Buddhists have actually come to Christ while listening and performing the Saint Matthew Passion.

Whenever I take my pipe and stuff it,  
and smoke to pass the time away,  
My thoughts as I sit there to puff it  
Dwell on a picture sad and gray:  
It teaches me that very like  
I myself am unto this pipe.

Like me, this pipe so fragrantly burning  
Is made of nothing but earth and clay;  
To earth I too shall soon be returning  
And if it falls, ere, I should think to say  
It will break in two before my eyes,  
And awaiting for me, a like fate lies.

No stain the pipe's hue yet doth darken  
It remains white, and thus I know:  
That when death's call I must hearken  
My body, too, all pale shall grow  
But black beneath the sod I'll turn  
Like as the pipe, if oft it burn.

Or, when the pipe is fairly glowing  
Behold then, instantaneously  
The smoke rises into thin air going  
Till nothing but ash is left to see  
Man's fame shall likewise burn  
And into dust his body turn

How often it happens, when I am smoking  
The stopper's missing from the shelf  
And I go with my finger poking  
Into the bowl and burn myself  
If in the pipe such pain doth dwell,  
How much more are the pains of hell!

Thus, over my pipe in contemplation  
Of such things I can constantly  
Indulge in fruitful meditation  
And while doing so, puff contentedly  
On land, at sea, at home or abroad,  
I puff my pipe and worship God

**Re: JS Bach's Meditation on God, on: 2006/12/9 22:39**

Thank you for sharing this, brother Paul. I've never read Bach's poetry, but I have often enjoyed (and played) his music. :-)

I like the part about the fragility of life.

Quote:

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PaulWest wrote:

Like me, this pipe so fragrantly burning  
Is made of nothing but earth and clay;  
To earth I too shall soon be returning  
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Life is but the dash between two dates, date of birth and date of death, then comes eternity. What, oh what, are we doing in the days God has given us on this earth? These are the only days we have to take up our cross and follow Him. These days to sacrifice our desires and die to self.