Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Easy Piano Sheet Music

J. S. Bach (BWV 147)

Level 3 | Full score, fingering, practice tips

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Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Key	Time Signature	Tempo	Difficulty	Measures
G major	3/4	Moderato, 72 BPM	Beginner - Level 3	17

About This Piece

The music is No. 10 (also numbered No. 6) of Cantata BWV 147 by J. S. Bach (d. 1750). Its chorale tune is by Johann Schop (d. 1667); the German text, by Martin Jahn (d. c. 1682), is not printed here. We read the notes from the Bach-Gesellschaft edition, vol. 30, edited by Paul Graf Waldersee (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1884), and checked them against B. Todt's vocal score from about 1890. Measures 1-8 are the triplet line of the first violins and oboes. Measures 9-17 give the chorale melody in the source key of G major; Bach's triplets under its second phrase are left out at this level. This is not Myra Hess's piano transcription.

Notes and Hand Positions

Fingering Guide

Right Hand: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5
Home position with the thumb (1) on G4, index (2) on A4, middle (3) on B4, ring (4) on C5 and pinky (5) on D5. The triplets move the hand often: in measures 1 and 5 the thumb takes the second C5 right after finger 4 plays the first, in measures 2 and 6 the pinky reaches G5 for the broken G chord G5, D5, B4, G4 on 5-3-2-1, and in measure 3 the middle finger crosses over the thumb to B4. Measures 4 and 13 put the thumb on D4, and measure 7 starts with the thumb on E4 before the leap to D5. The chorale notes of measures 9-17 sit in the home position, and the last G4 is on the thumb.

Left Hand: G2, A2, B2, C3, C#3, D3, E3, F#3, G3 (single notes)
One note at a time. G2 on 5 at the start and end, E3 on 1 in measures 1-2. Measure 3: A2-B2-C3 on 5-4-3; measure 4: D3-F#3-D3 on 2-1-2; measure 7: C3-C#3-D3 on 4-3-2. Chorale: G3-F#3-E3 on 1-2-3 (m9, m14), F#3-E3-D3 on 2-3-4 (m10), back up on 3-2-1 (m11); D3 on 4 in m12-13.

Notes Used in This Piece

Right Hand

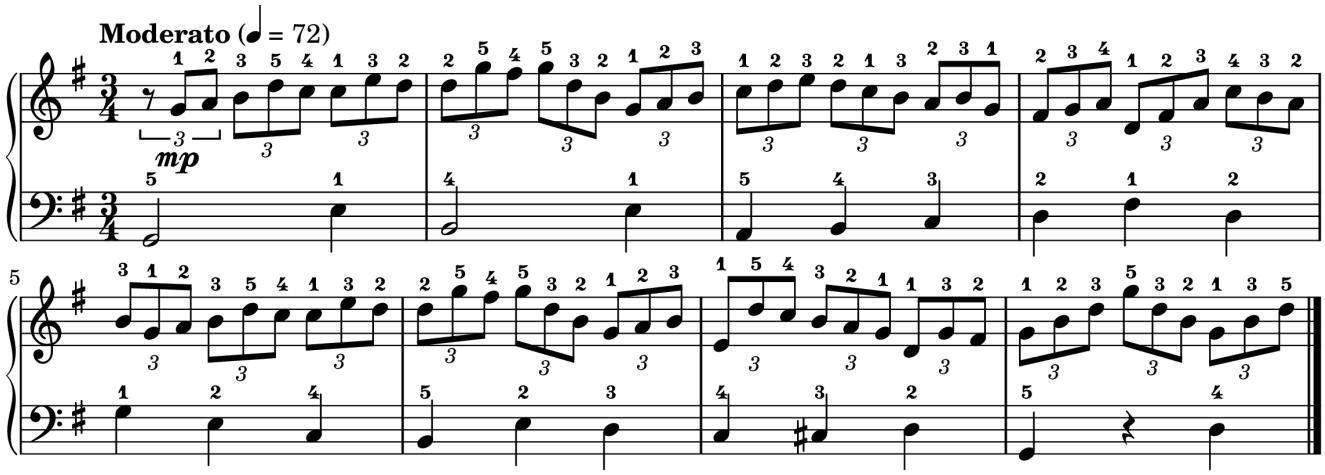
Note	On the Staff	On the Keyboard	Finger
D4	Space below treble staff	Between the two black keys	Thumb (1)
E4	Bottom line of treble staff	Right of the two black keys	Thumb (1)
F#4	First space, treble (sharp)	First of the three black keys	Index (2)
G4	Second line of treble staff	Between first two of 3 black keys	Thumb (1)
A4	Second space of treble staff	Between last two of 3 black keys	Index (2)
B4	Middle line of treble staff	Right of the three black keys	Middle (3)
C5	Third space of treble staff	One octave above middle C	Ring (4)
D5	Fourth line of treble staff	Between the two black keys	Pinky (5)
E5	Fourth space of treble staff	Right of the two black keys	Middle (3)
F#5	Top line of treble staff (sharp)	First of the three black keys	Ring (4)
G5	Space just above treble staff	Between first two of 3 black keys	Pinky (5)

Left Hand

Note	On the Staff	On the Keyboard	Finger
G2	Bottom line of bass staff	Between first two of 3 black keys	Pinky (5)
A2	First space of bass staff	Between last two of 3 black keys	Pinky (5)
B2	Second line of bass staff	Right of the three black keys	Ring (4)
C3	Second space of bass staff	One octave below middle C	Ring (4)
C#3	Second space, bass (sharp)	First of the two black keys	Middle (3)
D3	Third line of bass staff	Between the two black keys	Ring (4)
E3	Third space of bass staff	Right of the two black keys	Middle (3)
F#3	Fourth line, bass (sharp)	First of the three black keys	Index (2)
G3	Fourth space of bass staff	Between first two of 3 black keys	Thumb (1)

Section A - Triplet Line (Measures 1-8)

Bach's triplet line at mp, three notes to each beat. The same patterns come back: B4, D5, C5 then C5 on the thumb, and the G chord falling from G5 in measures 2 and 6. Measure 7 leaps from E4 to D5, and measure 8 runs up, down and up the G chord.

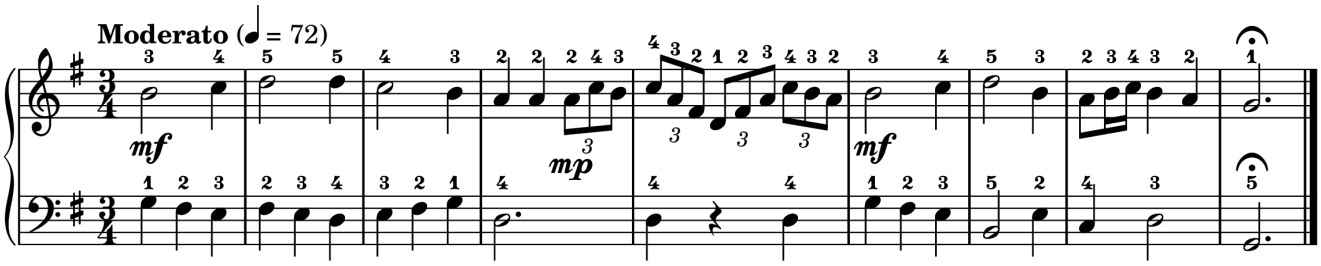


Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Section A - Triplet Line

> **How to Practice This Section**
>
> Play each beat as one hand movement at x0.5: three fingers, one gesture. In measure 3, let the middle finger cross over the thumb without a bump.

Section B - Chorale Tune (Measures 9-17)

The chorale tune at mf in half notes and quarters, with the triplets back for a short link at mp (measure 12, beat 3, and measure 13). The second phrase, measures 14-17, ends with a quick A4-B4-C5 turn and a long G4.

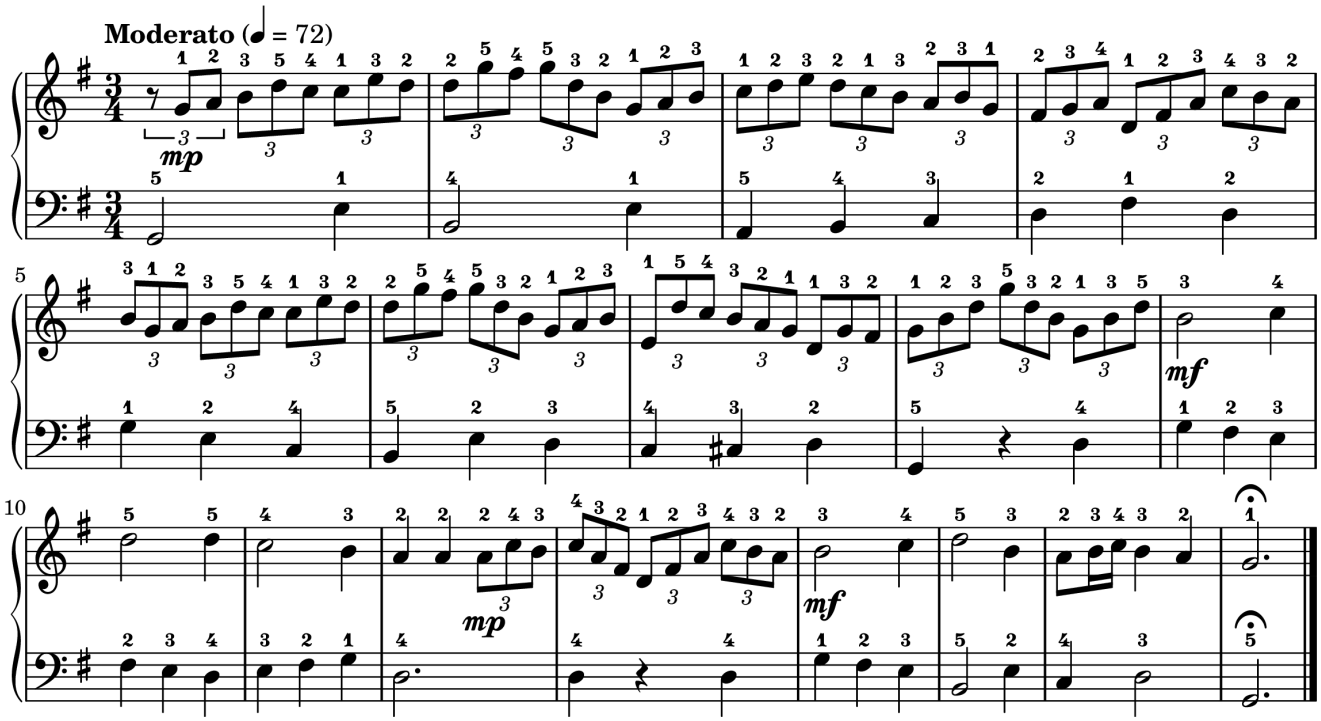


Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Section B - Chorale Tune

> **How to Practice This Section**
>
> Loop measures 12-14 at x0.5 to switch from long notes to triplets and back without changing the beat. Count three in each chorale bar out loud.

Full Score

Here is the complete piece with all sections combined.



Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - J. S. Bach (BWV 147)

Step-by-Step Practice Guide

Step 1: Right Hand Alone

1. Measure 1: rest, G4-A4 on 1-2, B4-D5-C5 on 3-5-4, then play C5 again with the thumb so the hand is ready for E5 and D5
2. Measures 2 and 6: D5-G5-F#5 on 2-5-4, then the G chord G5-D5-B4-G4 on 5-3-2-1, one smooth movement down the chord
3. Measure 3: C5-D5-E5 on 1-2-3, D5-C5 on 2-1, then 3 crosses over to B4
4. Measure 7: thumb on E4, then lift the hand to D5 on 5 for the leap

Step 2: Left Hand Alone

1. Measures 1-2: G2 and B2 held two beats (5, then 4), E3 on the thumb
2. Measure 3: A2-B2-C3 on 5-4-3, one finger per step; measure 4: D3-F#3-D3 on 2-1-2, with the thumb on F#3 between the two D3s
3. Measure 7: C3-C#3-D3 on 4-3-2, climbing by half steps to the D3 that leads back to G2 in measure 8
4. Measures 9-11: G3-F#3-E3 on 1-2-3, F#3-E3-D3 on 2-3-4, then back up E3-F#3-G3 on 3-2-1, one note per beat

Step 3: Hands Together

1. Start at x0.5 (36 to the quarter) and say 1-trip-let on every beat
2. Section A: each left-hand note falls on the first note (or rest) of a triplet
3. Measure 9: when the triplets stop, keep the same beat for the half notes
4. Target 72 to the quarter: mp triplets, mf chorale, mp link in measures 12-13



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