Christ Jesus lay in death’s strong bands Hymnal 1982 no. 186

Melody: Christ lag in Todesbanden 8 7. 8 7. 7 8. 7 4.

British spelling



Christ Jesus lay in death’s strong bands

for our offences given;

but now at God’s right hand he stands

and brings us life from heaven;

therefore let us joyful be,

and sing to God right thankfully

loud songs of alleluia! Alleluia!

It was a strange and dreadful strife

when life and death contended;

the victory remained with life,

the reign of death was ended;

stripped of power, no more he reigns,

an empty form alone remains;

his sting is lost for ever! Alleluia!

So let us keep the festival

to which the Lord invites us;

Christ is himself the joy of all,

the sun that warms and lights us;

by his grace he doth impart

eternal sunshine to the heart;

the night of sin is ended! Alleluia!

Then let us feast this holy day

on the true bread of heaven;

the word of grace hath purged away

the old and wicked leaven;

Christ alone our souls will feed,

he is our meat and drink indeed;

faith lives upon no other! Alleluia!

Words: Martin Luther (1483-1546), translated by Richard Massie (1800-1887)

Music: Melody from *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn*, 1524, adapted and harmonised by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)