

**Schedule of Meeting Times:** *modified until April due to the current virus threat*

WKAC 1080 AM Sunday 7:30 AM

*Speaker, Robert Emerson*

Study Sunday **Postponed**

Worship Sunday 11:00 AM

Worship Sunday **Postponed**

*Singing every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evening*

Study Wednesday **Postponed**

*Our gospel meeting is  
still scheduled with  
Lowell Sallee, April 26 to 29!*



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**Servants during March:**

**Songleader:** Larry (1), David (8), Peter (15), Chandler (22), Stanley (29)

**Reading:** Larry

**Announcements:** Kris

**Table:** Robert, Stanley, David, Peter

**Wednesday Lesson:** Stanley (4), Kris (11), Larry (18), Stanley (25)

**Lawn Mowing (week starting):**

Kris (8), Marty (15), Stanley (22), Robert(29)

**Hays Mill church of Christ**

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Elkmont, AL 35620

# The Bible . Examiner

*"Examine everything carefully..." – 1 Thessalonians 5:21 NASB*

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## Two Ways to Keep Members Faithful

*By Bill Hall*

There are two ways to keep members of the church "faithful."

The first way is to be sure everyone is involved. Have a project for each member, and make sure that he feels important in his role. Praise him for the good job he is doing. Make him feel needed; make him feel that the well-being of the whole congregation rests firmly on his shoulders. That will keep him "faithful." There are two problems with this method. In the first place, it encourages the creation of projects that are not remotely related to the work of the local church. One member plays on the


church ball team; another leads the Boy Scout troop; another is an active member of the "Dorcas Society"; another plans the program for the men's luncheon. Everybody is busy all right, but in activities that are not authorized in the New Testament.

In the second place, members are often given roles for which they are not qualified. A lady is chosen to teach a class, not because she is qualified, but because she needs to be involved. A man is appointed a deacon to help him to be "faithful." Another man is appointed to serve the Lord's Supper for a month in order

to encourage him to be present each Sunday that month. This method thus places “the cart before the horse,” for no one should ever be assigned any work in the Lord’s service who is not already faithful and qualified for the work to be done, 2 Tim 2:2.

The second way to keep people faithful is to develop within them a genuine love for the Lord. When people love the Lord, they will be faithful, and it won’t take some kind of “special” project to keep them faithful. They will also be involved: in worship, in study, in

prayer, in godly living, in sharing the gospel with a friend, in helping the needy. I have known literally hundreds of Christians who have never in their lives been appointed to any special work, but whose love for the Lord alone keeps them faithful. There is no superficial faithfulness on the part of these; theirs is a faithfulness that is real.

Special responsibilities are fine for those who are qualified, but the man who requires some special duty to be faithful has never learned what true faithfulness is. 

# The Problem of Profanity

*By Dee Bowman*

Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which he had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘This is what the Lord spoke saying: By those who come

near Me I must be regarded as Holy; And before all the people, I must be glorified.’ So Aaron held his peace,” Lev 10:1-3.

I am interested in the word “profane” in the above passage. It means irreverence for sacred things. Profanity is sinful because it bespeaks of a lack of regard for God. It may occur in either language or conduct, mind you,

inside of me. At one point I wondered if it was Mom speaking to me through the plant saying “there’s still hope, Steve, I’m still here, and everything is going to be alright.” But then I realized for sure it was God speaking to me saying “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world,”

Psa 19:1-4; and “For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse,” Rom 1:20.

This life is full of obstacles that will challenge and test our faith and hope in God. We have to lean on him for help during those times and open our eyes to his reminders that he is in control and in charge and has filled this world with his love. Even when it feels like all is lost the Christian says, “I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth,” Psa 121:1,2.

God renewed my faith and hope in him through his word, prayer, and worship but also through a simple little 4” tomato plant.

With whom do you place your hope? **The Lord!**

Who will get you through? **The Lord!**


Who loves you and will take care of you? **The Lord!**

**Praise be to His name!** 


## *Remember in Prayer*

Pray for **our nation**, that we might repent of our national sin and humbly seek God; **our leaders** as they make decisions on our behalf regarding the Covid-19 pandemic; for **local brethren** that are hurting physically or economically; for **brethren throughout the world** that may be suffering even more than ordinarily due to the virus; and that **those in the world** might seek the LORD in the midst of suffering.

Pray fervently for **Hazel Teeples**... she has been diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and will be taking treatments every other week; also for **Buddy and Pam** as they continue to deal with multiple concerns.

Let us not forget **Ruth Black, Madelene Britnell**; nor **Lois Adams, Carolyn Dennis, Tim and Dot Hice**, and **Polly McNatt**. 

that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for

salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," 1 Pet 1:3-5! 

# The Tomato Plant

*By Steven Bockmiller*

"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God," Psa 43:5.

Two years ago on a Saturday morning in early April, the family sat bedside in what would be my Mom's final few weeks to live. My Dad asked that Jeff and I go to Home Depot and buy him some tomato plants. Gardening is a peaceful distraction to life's distresses. So we went and bought my Dad three 4" plants including an additional one I decided to buy for myself. Dad planted his next to the house and I went home later and planted mine right in the middle of a proven garden.

The weeks went on and I watered my plant on a regular basis which was needed as 2011 proved to be one of the worst droughts Houston has ever experienced. My Mom died three weeks later and so did everything outside. There seemed to be a constant reminder

of death that spring and summer as the grass, plants, and trees turned more and more brown.

Dad's tomato plants actually sprang to life and we picked several from each plant in June. I continued to water mine but the leaves fell off and it remained its original size. By July I lost hope. I quit watering and quit caring. By now the weather was stifling, the recent life events were heartbreaking, and my sense of hope was squeezed.

The men's retreat in August helped recharge my batteries and then at the end of September we finally got our first rain in six months. Shortly after as I was passing by that tomato plant I noticed it doubled in size. I couldn't believe it! How did this little plant lie dormant for five months and still have life. Well, it did; and it rained another couple of times, and by October this plant was four feet tall and produced 30 hearty tomatoes.

Each day it grew I felt a sense of optimism and hope spring back alive

and is often seen in our age in the presumptuous undertaking of religious projects without duly constituted precedent. The profane actions of the sons of Aaron in the above narrative are the result of their taking the liberty to do as they pleased, without regard for God. Such presumptive supposition caused them to commit their act of effrontery, and thereby bring the wrath of God upon them.


Seemingly man just can't seem to content himself with doing what God has commanded in the way He commanded it. He presumes upon God's commands just as did Nadab and Abihu. He wants to do it his way—and he far too often does. Without shame, he writes creeds, alters Scripture, changes authorized worship, and makes his own rules superior to the rules of God. I suppose there to be no more repugnant sight to God than the visage of the skillful religionist, adorned in the trappings of his own innovations, bowing in his own self-righteousness before the altar of his own making, and worshiping God in the way that he has himself concocted. Presumptuous!

Any sort of man-made creed is presumptuous. Any statement of belief that is more or less than Scripture cannot be pure

Scripture, and is therefore odious to God. Any effort to add some new thing to what God has said must be met with immediate opposition by all God-fearing persons, since such innovations presume against the authority of the divine directive, 2 Jn 9. Conversely, we must studiously avoid any doctrine which would seek to please God with less than His word stipulates, for we simply don't have any assurance that He is pleased with less than what He has said, Jas 4:17. To substitute any human standard for the divine one is to invite sure spiritual disaster, Gal 1:6-9, for no matter how much "another gospel" seems to resemble the original, even the smallest change presumes upon the omniscient wisdom of the Most High God.

"Seek the Lord while He may be found. Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are My ways your ways,' says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts," Isa 55:6-9.

There's a principle in that passage that cannot be ignored. It plainly states that we have no method high enough that when implemented will result in our return to God. Nor is there any inventive genius in man potent enough to bring about his salvation. Truly, "the way of man is not in himself," Jer 10:23. Only as he turns to God and allows Him to direct his life can he have the hope of redemption and eternal life. Any less is presumptive and will surely bring about his eventual doom.

Jesus is the true and living way, Jn 14:6; no man can return to the Father by his own creed, no matter how pious he may seem to be. Jesus gave man the teaching he needs, 2 Tim 3:16,17, and we must follow it, not his own inventions. Let us cast off the shackles of human reasoning; let us do away with the councils and synods, conventions and associations, and return to New Testament Christianity. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God..." 1 Pet 4:11. 

and the uncommon attentiveness of the audience — which became a graceful avenue for the great melodies of the composer to find their mark.

In the case of this work, historical context enhances your appreciation for the piece. In 1892 Dvorak moved from Prague to New York. Not long after his arrival in "the new world," he began to study the music of this young society. He was fascinated by this music and felt that "this must be the real foundation of any serious and original" attempt to teach music and composition in America. The music was already here. It was his task to study it, teach it and capture it in his work. The melodies he heard in New York and during a summer in Iowa became the leading influence that resulted in this amazing piece, "The New World Symphony."

The most compelling melody in this composition is what we know as the song, "Going Home." Music historians are not agreed. Did Dvorak hear this and incorporate it into his symphony? Or was it original with him? Some even speculate the theme may have originated in the Czech music of his childhood.

Why does that melody so grip us emotionally? What images and thoughts are created in our minds

when listening to this? "Home" is a word that touches us. It is where you go for comfort; it is familiar; it is a place to relax after work. In whatever language, the concept is lofty and endearing.

The lyrics (likely written after the 9th Symphony was released):

*Going home. Going home. I'm a-going home.*

*Quiet-like some still day, I'm just going home.*

*It's not far, just close by, through an open door.*

*Work all done, cares laid by, Going to fear no more;*

*Mother's there expecting me, Father's waiting, too.*

*Lots of folks gathered there. All the friends I knew.*

Someday, will you be going home? Death will not be the end of your existence. You will move from this earth into the next realm. Heaven will be the perfect and final home. Father's waiting ... folks gathered there ... fear no more ... cares laid by. Are you going home?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and

# 'Going Home'

## The Melody & The Hope

*By Warren E. Berkley*

I love good music. For me it is therapeutic and a pleasant mental recreation. I am intrigued by the technical talent of skilled musicians and interested in various interpretations of conductors, arrangers and performers. But there is another valuable product of music for me: the stirring of good memories and hopeful thoughts.

All of these benefits are shared in Antonin Dvorak's Symphony No. 9 in E minor, popularly known as "From The New World," or "The New World Symphony." I was privileged to hear this performed by The Valley Symphony Orchestra recently. Everything was there. The teamwork of talented musicians, the passionate interpretation of the conductor