

# Adding spiritual plans to summer

Dan Nelson- pastor

Calvary Chapel of the Ojai Valley

Although the official calendar says we are still finishing spring, for most people in our beautiful little valley, summer is here.

School is out and the lazy days of fun in the sun have now begun. Graduation ceremonies are behind us and now there seems to be a sigh of exhale that can be heard across our community. We can barely catch our breaths from all of the final exam preparation, sports banquets, and end-of-the-year parties. And just when you thought there might be a moment to breathe, summer has been thrust upon you like Christmas at Thanksgiving, before you're really ready for it.

I may be sounding a bit melodramatic, but, then again, that is the sense I am getting from a lot of people. So as you transition from gridlock onto the open road, what are your summer plans? Maybe I shouldn't have used a driving metaphor with gas prices the way they are. But, that is partly my point. It seems that almost everyone is rethinking their travel plans. It is right now as you set your summer goals and lay out your calendar that I want to catch you before it is too late.

The good news is that because we actually live in a vacation destination spot, we have a plethora of really cool things to do right here. Over the last few days, the beaches and hiking trails are starting to fill up. This will, no doubt, increase more and more over the ensuing months. Some of our young people will be picking up summer jobs. Others will be catching up on household projects or pursuing hobbies. I spoke to some who had fitness goals for the summer and others who want to pick up a new musical instrument. Many of us will be doing a lot of reading. For a lot of people this is enjoyment and recreation, but others feel forced by their mandated "Summer Reading List." Let's face it. Parts of our summer schedule will be out of our control and some of it is completely within it. And here is my challenge: What are your spiritual goals?

Often we make our plans that emphasize body or soul, such as losing weight, learning some new skill, or spending time in our favorite activity. But the Bible teaches that God made us as a triune being: body, soul and spirit. Jesus taught that "spirit" should actually be our top priority since it is there that we meet with God. Do you have any spiritual growth goals for the summer? How about diving into a Bible study or going on a mission trip? You can get involved in a ministry at your church or a community

project to help someone in need. You could memorize Scripture or commit to a daily reading. How about getting a prayer partner and agreeing to pray for one another every day? Everyone is different and we each will make our own plans. My point is to add spiritual plans into your summer and, if possible, make them the top priority. Jesus said, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). Which "things" was he talking about? Well, searching that out could be quite an adventure for the summer.

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Dan Nelson is a frequent contributor to the Ojai Valley News and currently serves the Ojai Valley Ministerial Association and community as editor of the Religion Column. Permission is freely granted to reprint the article in its entirety. Dan Nelson is pastor of Calvary Chapel Christian Church of the Ojai Valley.

OJAI VALLEY NEWS



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## **Sunday Worship:**

**9:00 & 10:30am**  
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley  
195 Mahoney Ave., Oak View

## **Mid-Week Study:**

**7:00pm Thursday**  
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley  
195 Mahoney Ave., Oak View