

## Anything worth doing is worth doing right

Dan Nelson

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There is an old saying that goes, "Anything worth doing is worth doing right." I would say that definitely includes how we "do life," wouldn't you? People build things every day. I have a 14-year-old nephew who recently told me that he built his own computer. There is someone in my neighborhood who is building a racing car. While driving through town yesterday, I noticed new construction at Ojai Valley School. Imagine for a moment that after great care in building his computer, my nephew decided that a power cord was an unnecessary expense. Or after hundreds of critical hours planning and assembling her racing car for top speeds, my neighbor decided that "cheap tires" would be an acceptable risk in order to save money for high gas prices. Imagine that after the Ojai Valley School deployed professional architectural and engineering plans, sparing little expense for a building to be enjoyed by students for years to come, the contractor decided to shave costs by using imported low-grade nails, screws and mounting hardware. Sound crazy? Yet people employ this approach with the most important building project of all — their own lives.

We invest tremendous energies toward our education, career planning, developing skills, providing a home for our families, ensuring that our children have all the best available, managing accounts, planning for vacations and retirement, but spiritual health is approached as that unnecessary power cord, those "cheap tires" or low-grade mounting hardware. They are all essential for ultimate success but given an inappropriately low priority. Although a superficial glance might give someone the impression that the job is complete, trying to actually operate well is a whole different story altogether. To the untrained person, low-grade hardware looks the same. But I don't want my children inside any structure that could collapse on them at any moment. Do you? Then why do we live and raise children in homes with no spiritual strength and try to pass it off to the building inspector as though it is good enough?

First of all, let me be clear. I believe that God alone is the only one who can inspect anything on this level. The Bible says, "God alone is wise" and he is able to see the thoughts and intents of the heart. But you know what? Children grow up to become adults and hold opinions on how they were raised. I hear those opinions all the time. My wife and I want to raise our children in a way that draws their respect even when they have grown. The Bible teaches there is a way to do that. Jesus tells the story of the foolish person who builds his house with sand as his foundation, and the wise person who builds his house using rock as his support. They both appear fine until they are put to the

test. In Jesus' story, he describes the winds and rains that come and test the strength of the houses; in the end, one falls and one stands. In our lives, our spiritual strength is tested regularly. We receive a letter that the rent is going up and we have no idea how it will be paid. You discover at work that layoffs are coming and your name is on the list. A family member dies that you planned on being with for many years to come or you arrive home one day to find divorce papers on the kitchen table. You are told that you have cancer and it is terminal. These examples are real. They happen every day. How will your house stand?

Many people I am around once thought that their spiritual house was fine until one day it was tested and its true strength, or lack thereof, was revealed. Jesus describes himself as the rock that we should build our lives upon that will not merely survive the storms, but thrive, unto everlasting life. This is a choice that he promises we would never regret. In blue skies, it's difficult to see the difference. But in Jesus Christ, we are prepared and empowered for anything.

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. This article was published in 2005. Permission is freely granted to reprint the article in its entirety. Dan Nelson is pastor of Calvary Chapel Christian Church of the Ojai Valley.



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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