

# Give us a break!

# Ojai Valley News

Dan Nelson - pastor

Calvary Chapel of the Ojai Valley

Across the community, seeing students walking on the bike trail, hanging out in the parks, or shopping at Vons, during regular school hours caused some to wonder what was going on last week. And when you asked certain kids why they were not in school, one could hear a sigh of condescending indignation that seems to resonate with "Get a clue," as if the planets have aligned but you somehow missed it.

Spring break excitement hit the Ojai Valley. It's the biggest thing for many between Christmas vacation and summer. Beaches and movie theaters filled up. The waves were good. The sun was out. And the mall is open. Many were breaking out the shorts, T-shirts and flip-flops that they haven't seen in six months. But all of this fun cannot be fully realized without the most important ingredient of all for this annual festivity: no school. Even non-spiritual people found themselves praying for surf, and rebuking the "evil" of end-of-the-week rain that the weather reports continued to threaten us with. For many, this was a much-needed time off.

The demands and pressures that many students face surely demonstrate a generation that is bombarded with stress. A by-product of living in the "Information Age" is that there is more demanded to be learned than in any previous generation. We expect them to understand the philosophers and leaders of history, their ideas, circumstances and lessons, to know the old math and the new, to be as conversant in the biographies of Plato and Napoleon, as Ghadafi and Bill Gates, and to be technologically savvy while still knowing their way around the kitchen, under the hood, and in the tool shed. We don't understand why most teenagers don't know cultural icons of the previous era because we expect that they be conversant in past as well as contemporary issues. When Elizabeth Taylor recently died, most young people said "Who?" Some presumed you were confusing her with Taylor Swift.

Worldwide media and instant access across the Earth has created required participation as global citizens. And we have spent decades creating such epic problems that have the potential to destroy everything that we know, from the breakdown of marriage and family to nuclear proliferation and environmental catastrophe, and many are placing all of their hopes in the upcoming generation to fix our mess. We just need them to sign on the dotted line that they will assume our national mortgage and take over the payments of the social experimentation loan that birthed them into a godless, purposeless, existence where there is nothing to really live for except to conscript impressionable younglings into their role of minions of the Darwin regime.

We are seeing youth revolutions take place around the world. Many don't know what they want but they are convinced that there is something a whole lot better out there. I have been meeting young people, locally, who have never been exposed to the real Jesus. Their

parents have adamantly kept them out of a church and far from anything bearing the emblem of heaven or salvation. Their textbooks misrepresent Jesus to emphasize the fakeness of some who claimed to follow him. And some describe a concerted effort to keep them in the cultural status quo. At spring break, we are marketing hedonism rather than holiness, because one generates revenues and the other costs a lot. I wonder if it is the "love everybody" message that is so troublesome, or the news flash that "all of us need God's love and grace to save us from ourselves" that offends so deeply. But it doesn't take a deeply insightful person to admit that to place requirements and expectations upon a person or generation, without tools to handle the challenges is unjust. Couldn't you look past your own defiance and get the young people in your life in contact with Jesus? He can take it from there. While you're at it, you might want to stick around and introduce yourself. You might be surprised to learn that he already knows your name.

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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.



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### **Sunday Worship:**

**9:00 & 10:45am**  
195 Mahoney Ave., Oak View  
Calvary Chapel Ojai Valley

### **Mid-Week Study:**

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