

# National Day of Prayer

Dan Nelson – pastor

Calvary Chapel of the Ojai Valley

As we gather on the lawn at City Hall in downtown Ojai, there is a sense of wonder at the possibilities. Hopeful people of different backgrounds come together for a common purpose. Although a diverse group, there was a sense of unity and commonality as each person attending desires the very best for the community and the world we live in, and chooses to request the help of Almighty God.

Every first Thursday of May is the National Day of Prayer and there are gatherings throughout the country commemorating this momentous occasion. Although it has become popular today to downplay our roots as “One Nation Under God,” this day is an official American calendar day and has been so for much longer than I have been alive. While the story goes way back much deeper into our nation’s history, it was in 1952 that a joint resolution of the U.S. Congress passed this bill that was subsequently signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. On this day each year, people of faith gather to pray.

Doctors and scientists have recently studied and proven what some of have known for a long time; prayer changes things. It is a worthy investment of your time to pray. But many people don’t understand the purpose and value of prayer and others don’t know how to pray.

The disciples were intrigued by the life of Jesus and identified that he understood something about prayer that had always eluded them. They finally came to the place in their own life journey where they humbled themselves and admitted that they didn’t know how. That’s a big deal for someone to admit who has grown up in “religious circles” all their life. But, you know, real prayer does require humility. This is a “show stopper” for many people, including and especially God’s critics. But for those with Jesus that day, the humility and honest confession mixed with the request for help in this crucial area was a key that would change the rest of their lives. There are a lot of needs in the world we live in today and the demands that are placed upon our leaders are tremendous. They need our prayer. The Bible teaches us to pray for those in government and those in authority whether you agree with their positions or voted them into office or not. I confess that I have not always done that. It seems that there is a tendency to pray for the leaders who are requesting that we pray for them, or those that we like. But everyone needs prayer and each person needs to pray.

One thing that fascinates me is when listening to people who are at the end of their lives and are evaluating the time they spent on Earth; you do not hear people say that they regret time invested in prayer. Instead they tell us often that they regret not spending enough time doing what really matters; like praying.

If you want to learn more about prayer, you have a resource in the Bible. For those who want to make a difference in this world, this is time well used. Consider answering the call to prayer. We have direct access to the throne of grace in the name of Jesus.

To read other articles by Pastor Dan visit [Ojai Valley News Articles](#)

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

## **Mid-Week Study:**

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

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