

There's hope for grieving hearts

Dan Nelson- pastor

Calvary Chapel of the Ojai Valley

Tragedy struck through the heart of the Ojai Valley this past week as the entire community was rocked to the core. One life was snuffed out at the hands of another and the shock has stunned us all. We lost two of our own this week and the grief runs deep.

I had barely arrived at church on Sunday morning when I was approached with the news; a late-night altercation among some of our teens and a party that turned deadly. For some, tears had been flowing for hours. One of our youths was fatally stabbed by another, and for many, the whole world had turned upside down. Torrential emotions flushed the faces of those close to the kids; these are not strangers that we are hearing about in some far away city, but ones that are known and loved right here at home. I heard stories that start with the day Seth was born and run the time line of his 16 years. We halted the service for a few moments so we could all pray for his family. Yet tragically, there are many victims of this senseless violence.

Seth was a victim and so is his family, as well as so many others affected by this.

We often worry about exposing our youth to things that can harm their minds. For the 30 or so teens who witnessed this horrifying ordeal, they too are victims. Many suffered the loss of a friend this week and parents have lost the innocence in their children. Further, there is a family of a 14-year-old that has been arrested whose hearts are completely torn out. And the whole community sulks in grief.

Shock, denial, confusion, anger, this is all part of grieving. People are asking the question, "How can this happen?" Some will see more clearly on the matter than others in order to take steps to prevent a recurrence of violence. But right now there is a need for healing. In their confusion, some will choose to blame God instead of call out to him. But God extends arms of love to everyone, if only we would look to him as our source of comfort. The Bible deals honestly with suffering, death, and pain. The entire mission of Jesus is to bring restoration to the broken, hope for the lost, and life that goes far beyond the grave to all those that

want what he offers. For the families and friends of these teens, our hearts break together. Shall we not also receive comfort together, healing by his spirit, and peace from God in the name of Jesus Christ? Our prayers are with you and our whole community.

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.



P.O. Box 1443
Ojai, CA 93024
(805) 640-9498
www.calvaryojai.org

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