

THIS IS ONEIDA YEAR-ROUND RESOLUTIONS

I spent the night of December 31 at my sister's home in Mercer County. I would say that I am embarrassed to tell you I went to bed at 10:00 p.m. and didn't even stay up late enough to watch the ball drop, but I really am not. The turn of the calendar from one year to the next has never meant much of anything to me. New Year's Day usually means the day off from work and some decent football bowl games, but other than that January 1 is one out of 365 days of the year for me.

As we sat around my sister's living room, the topic of New Year's resolutions came up. My wife, as she does most every year, wanted each person in the room to say what their resolutions would be. My youngest son said, "I am going to play with our three dogs more." Shortly after we acquired three dogs in August, a co-worker told me they were concerned about my judgment and ability to lead a school since I had acquired the three dogs. Other resolutions offered were pretty typical, such as spending more time with family, eating better, exercising, etc.

When it was my turn to offer resolutions, my wife asked what my resolutions would be. She knows me well enough by now to know that I don't like to make New Year's resolutions, but I love her for continuing to ask each and every December 31.

Now that we are at the end of January, I wonder how many of us have kept our New Year's resolutions. Most folks make it a few days or maybe even a few weeks, but rarely uphold their resolutions much longer than that. The word "resolution" means a course of action determined or decided on. January 1 seems like the natural time to do something because we have probably eaten poorly, been lazy, or encountered relational problems with family members during the holidays. If we are serious about doing something, we shouldn't have to wait until the turn of the yearly calendar to do it.

On the Oneida campus we have new students arrive all throughout the school year. Our students come to us from many different backgrounds and places for many different reasons, but they all seem to have goals and resolutions when they begin their time here. Perhaps they want better grades, better relationships, new friends, or a number of other things, but each and every student has the opportunity to determine a new course of action.

Oneida is a place of not only second chances, but in many instances a second, third, and fourth chance. Often times we can accept and then minister to students that other schools cannot or will not accept. Forgiveness is a cornerstone of the Christian faith. There are consequences to sin and our mistakes, but the Lord forgives us and we should forgive one another. We do our best to forgive our students, both the ones we have and the ones who aren't even here yet. We want each of our students to have a clean slate and fresh start. Some problems are small and some are bigger, but no problem is bigger than the Lord's forgiveness. Praise the Lord that he gives each of us a clean slate each and every day.



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