

THIS IS ONEIDA DARKNESS VS. LIGHT

Can you remember those summer nights of your youth when your mother called you inside either for supper or because it was getting dark? I find it amusing that as an adult I so often desire to get home as soon as I can. As a child, I didn't want to go to bed at a decent hour. My mother was a stickler for bedtime, and I can remember sometimes going to bed while it was still daylight outside. Angie and I now find ourselves sometimes wanting to put our kids to bed before dark so that we can go to bed or steal a few moments of peace and quiet. It's funny how our perspective changes as we grow older.

Our spring sports are baseball, softball, tennis, and track and field. Our athletic fields sit in a flood zone, so we have never had lights for our athletic fields. I recently attended a home baseball game. For the first four innings or so, our team was getting knocked around pretty good and trailed 13-2, but in the next two innings we rallied and trimmed our opponent's lead to 13-10. Our team had the momentum and really believed they were going to win the game, but there was a significant problem. It was getting dark quickly. Before the final inning could commence, the umpires met with the coaches and suspended the game due to darkness. It was obvious our team wanted to continue with the game and in turn continue with their comeback, but it simply wasn't safe. Hitting a round ball with a square bat and fielding the ball with a piece of leather is difficult enough when it is light outside. As darkness took over, the game ended. When our team travels to this opponent for a road game, the suspended game will be completed. Perhaps we will continue our rally. Perhaps we will lose the game, but we will get our chance in spite of the previous darkness.

Scripture talks about the evil that men do in darkness, and it also talks about the need for light, The Light, in the world. Darkness caused the young men on our baseball team some grief, and darkness in this world causes us all grief. Many of our students come from dark situations and circumstances. Oneida is a place they can find light and get a fresh start. Even when our students find the light that is Jesus Christ, they will still be challenged by darkness as they progress through their journey in life.

As our senior class prepares to take a dark world head on, I often wonder if we have done a good enough job of preparing them. Like a father worries about his children, I worry about our students and what will become of them after they leave here. I probably worry about the kids who leave our campus before graduating a little more than those who make it to the finish line with us. In my short time back at Oneida, I have had multiple students ask me about staying on as a staff member after graduating. I encourage them to go meet this dark world head on, experience life, and then call me back down the road. I pray that all of our students will be a light in this dark world.



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