

THIS IS ONEIDA

“CAN WE KEEP ON HAVING REVIVAL?”

Written by Jonathan Barnes, OBI faculty and FCA sponsor

The newly (re)established OBI “huddle” of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) recently hosted a four-day rally/revival. The main speaker was Greg Locke, an experienced youth evangelist and revivalist from Nashville, Tennessee. The band was named “Uncaged Lion.”

The first night of revival was the beginning of breakthroughs for some students. The message Sunday night was about Zacchaeus and his desire to see Jesus. At the close of that service, many students went forward to pray and to respond to what God was doing in their lives.

Monday night the message was about Jonah and the need for all of us to throw the “Jonahs” (sins, idols and influences) in our lives overboard. At the altar one student placed dog tags that represented the things in life that he had placed before God. Other students wrote down the sins and hindrances in their lives that they were laying down so God could take their burdens and they could take His easy yoke. The evangelist stated that real revival would be when the students were ministering to each other in the dorms and that the community around Oneida would catch the fire of God as well.

On Tuesday night both students and adults were challenged to purge the sin in their lives and to give testimony to what God was doing. Students went to the front and made amends with each other. Personal conflicts were resolved. There were many who confessed sins and struggles with their families. There were members of Oneida’s adult ministry team who were also honest and repentant about struggles in their lives.

On the final night, more students testified about the power of God in their lives, the struggles of life and more family difficulties. It seemed that almost every student’s struggle was somehow rooted in problems in families: abuse, divorce, neglect, abandonment and the like. Finally, one team member went forward and apologized on behalf of all of the parents of the students. The team member shared how she had had a father who was not there for her as she grew up and how hurtful it was, until Jesus revealed to her that she was her Heavenly Father’s precious little girl. She said that she realized that her own father was a man broken by sin and she told the students that their parents are broken by sin and we have to forgive our earthly parents and embrace the Father who heals all hurts.

There were more student testimonies and the service went a little long into the night. Near the end, a student came to me and asked if we could just keep on having revival for more nights to come. That night, the formal revival services ended as the band had to minister at another engagement, as did the speakers, but my prayer is that the revival will continue in the hearts of all who were there, and as the speaker said, that it will be carried out into the dorms and the community.



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