

# Under Pressure

The stands are crowded with fans, a sold-out crowd. The final game is in the final two minutes and the pressure is intense. You knew this was going to be a close match, but had no idea it was going to be back and forth until the very final moments. The level of tension charging the air gives evidence that the outcome is far from over as each second ticks off the board. The starting players are still in the game, fatigued from the mental and physical exertion they have poured out. Time out is called. The team gathers around the Coach on the sideline.

From the stands, you feel unsettled. Can the players focus with the deafening noise all around? Do they have the energy to finish the game? Can they play under all that pressure?

**and protect you** from the evil one.” (II Thess. 3:3)



All of us have experienced that feeling in the events we care most about—we know someone facing decisions that will have lasting consequences and there is tremendous pressure and loud noise all around them. I think this is what Paul felt for the believers that he had cared for and built up in their faith. Although he left them when he traveled to the next place, they were deeply on his heart. He shares that “besides everything else, I face **the daily pressure of my concern** for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?” (II Cor. 1:28-29) Paul wanted the believers to win their game, and he was pulling for them from the sideline. But he could not play the game for them, and Paul’s confidence for the believers was ultimately rooted in trusting the Coach. “But the Lord is faithful, and He will **strengthen**

Are you concerned for someone under great pressure?

*You can’t go into the world where they live—but Jesus can.*

*You aren’t with them to give direction—but Jesus is.*

*You haven’t gone through what they have gone through—but Jesus has.*

*You don’t know what they need—but Jesus does.*

...and He is Enough to meet all their needs and keep them from stumbling.