



# BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



## The Pressure of the Olympics

**W**e were reminded of the extreme pressures serious athletes face in competition when Naomi Osaka withdrew from the French Open this year. She indicated her mental anguish was too much, and we were shocked that she would forgo her great opportunity to become a champion.

Then Simone Biles, who had captured the hearts of Americans in the 2016 Olympics, decided to drop out of the 2021 Olympics due to mental pressures. She was expected to do nothing less than bring home gold medals. Talk about pressure!

Caeleb Dressel, who won 5 gold medals in the swimming competitions and set one record in the 100-meter butterfly competition, told USA Today about the mental pressures of the Olympics, "It does mean something different, an event that happens every four years, for a race that happens 40-something seconds or 20-something seconds, you have to be so perfect in that moment. Especially you add an extra year; it's a five-year buildup to be perfect."

"There's so much pressure in one moment. Your whole life boils down to a moment that can take 20, 40 seconds. How crazy is that? For an event that happens every four years. I wouldn't tell myself this during the meet; but after the meet, looking back, I mean, it's terrifying."

Most of us cannot imagine the intensity of these pressures. Whether athletes come home with or without a medal, the entire world will know of their success or failure. That's pressure! How crazy is that?

But no matter what we do in our brief stay on this earth, we, too, can be overwhelmed by the

pressures and stresses that come with life.

As believers, 100% of our time is spent preparing for the big event that comes when we stand before our Lord. There will be no Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medals awarded. Instead, we hope to hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matthew 25:21)

Soon many will forget Dressel's name, his Gold Medals, and the record he set in the 2021 Olympics. If the Lord should tarry His return, others will come after Dressel who will break his record.

During his preparation for ministry, Paul said, "Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified." (1 Corinthians 9:25-27)

When we compare preparation for the 2021 Olympics to our preparation for the Race of Life, it can be a little scary. Fortunately for us, our race is not run with speed, but patience. It is not won by the swift, but by those who hold out and endure to the end. (Hebrews 12:1b)

The thought of undertaking such a competition on our own can be downright frightening. The good news is, Jesus promised to give us a Comforter in this contest. (John 14:16) This Comforter will come alongside us during the race and help us when we fall short or reach stressful points that would tempt us to quit. He will give us the strength necessary to make it to the end of the race. . . .

[Full Article](#)

# Silent, Never Still

*I waited patiently for the LORD, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. Psalm 40:1-4*

Is God present in the deafening silence that sometimes occurs while we wait? Dina, a young Muslim girl who became a Christian, could testify from her own experience that even when God is silent, He is never still. Not when Dina's mother forced her out of the house because of her faith in Jesus. Not when Muslim extremists detonated a bomb at Dina's church. Not when a second bomb exploded near her and caused her permanent hearing damage. Not when police interrogated and then assaulted her after she reported the incident. Not when the university she attended banned her from campus because of her Christian faith. Through it all, Dina remained faithful to God.

God seemed silent when Dina's pastor husband, Ali, faced imprisonment several times for his ministry work. Police often threatened Ali and pressured him to leave the country. After returning from a conference in a nearby country, Ali was caught crossing the national border with a bag full of Bibles. Interrogations and an overnight prison stay followed. Ali returned home the next evening and died overnight of a sudden heart attack, possibly due to being drugged at the border. Had Dina waited so patiently . . . for this?

Without a husband and father in their family, Dina and her children could have abandoned their faith. At every turn, God seemed to be challenging them, as if daring them to continue trusting in Him while He detonated their hopes and left them to pick up the broken and smoldering pieces, like the debris in the church explosions years before. Were they waiting on God for naught?

The suffering continued. Dina and her children had to move often when their neighbors discovered they were Christians. In one neighborhood, the kids beat her children and called them infidels. Six months into her job as a Russian teacher at a university, Dina's employer forced her to choose between her church membership and her position. She decided to resign from this job.

For years, Dina's Muslim relatives had blamed all of her misfortunes on her Christian faith. But then an uncle surprised her with these words: "You are some woman. You are not broken in spite of this problem. You are pure and not spoiled. I can see that God is doing something in your heart."

Suddenly Dina's suffering pulsed with purpose. Her waiting had been worthwhile. God was using the shattered pieces of her life to create a beautiful mosaic — one which proclaimed His power, glory and goodness to all who beheld it.

Are you carrying a heavy burden today? Do you feel your season of waiting will never pay off? Before you give in to the temptation to give up, pray for a fresh perspective of your pain. Remember God sees the whole mosaic when you can only see one piece. Trust His artisanship — He has yet to ruin a canvas.



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