It was late on Wednesday night. You had just got back from a night class. The phone rings and its Pete, your close friend from high school, calling. Even though you are both attending the same university, you haven’t talked to him since high school graduation that previous spring.

He starts out, “Steve, how have you been? I saw you the other day in the union but was running to class. I hope you don’t mind my leaning on an old friend but I am having a problem I need help coping with. Could we meet some time?”

You respond, “Sure. Let’s have lunch at the union tomorrow.”

He quickly replies, “Great. See you then.”

It was super to hear Pete again. Your friendship goes back to middle school when both of you played football together. Pete was a great offensive lineman even back then. Not only did he have the size but was also great on his feet and a quick learner. Your friendship really took off when you both started going to the high school FCA huddle when you were sophomores. There is no question, as dedicated believers, you were a minority on the team but that didn’t slow down how you both encouraged each other in your growing faith. While you come from a strong Christian home, Pete’s family were not believers. You had become his go-to guy for support in his Christian walk. However, it was not a one-way street. You fed off his enthusiasm for the Lord.

Unfortunately, that close contact could not last after graduating from high school. Pete was recruited to play football at the university. You decided to major in engineering which also took a significant time obligation. These time commitments and just the size of the university put an end to the friendship you had before graduation. As you thought about Pete’s call, you hope that he is still practicing the faith that you remembered.

Not long after you both sat down with your lunch the next day, Pete comes straight to the point, “Steve, you remember how we felt like outsiders on the football team last year. Remember how we talked with your pastor about what was expected of us as believers in a largely unbelieving world? That was nothing compared to what I face every day on the university football team. Each thing is not that big. The jokes, the outright use of the Lord’s name in vain, or just crude talk. These are times when my faith is really tested. I find this happens most when we are traveling to away games. Not only does this stuff go on all the time but I also can’t find any time to read the word and pray.”
He continues, “I just don’t know what to do. On one level, it just wears on me. All this stuff is actually causing me to wonder if I made the right choice to play collegiate football. Do I just let all this go and not say anything? If so, am I saying it’s OK? The real sad thing is that the coaches let much of this go on without comment. Even if they don’t personally approve, they appear to feel that it’s not worth putting someone down because they may weaken the team attitude.”

“On another level, shouldn’t I as a believer, call these guys out? Is just not doing it myself enough? You have been a believer a lot longer than I. What should I do?”

This has caught you off guard. You can see that Pete is really hurting and needs an answer.

“Pete, I feel bad that I cannot give you an answer just off the top of my head. Let me take a few days and study the Bible to see what I can learn. I want to be here for you but I want to be sure that what I say is from the scriptures. Can we meet again when you get back in town from the game this weekend?”

Pete replies, “I really appreciate your help. There is no one I feel I can go to who appreciates that what might be a little thing to others is really hurting me. I actually feel that my faith may be being tested.”

As you head back to your room, the thought sticks with you that God may be providing an opportunity for you to grow as well.