

After Sex Scandal, Ragin' Cajuns Get Baptized to Pledge Commitment to Christ

University of Louisiana-Lafayette senior linebacker LeMarcus Gibson doesn't want the actions of two former teammates, recently arrested for sexual assault, to taint the Ragin' Cajuns football program. He would much rather the team be recognized for its spiritual side and its reliance upon God.

Gibson was one of four Louisiana-Lafayette players who were recently baptized in a public ceremony, proclaiming their love for and faith in Jesus Christ.

Gibson has seen how such an incident, on a much larger scale, has affected the Penn State football program. Penn State suffered through a sex scandal last year with one of its former assistant coaches and was hit with probation and fined heavily by the NCAA for its involvement.

"The spirituality on the team is something big. It just says something about the team, and the character of the team, and how close we've grown together," Gibson told *The Lafayette Advertiser*. "We've all got a strong belief in God, so it was just something to show we really want to get on the right track."

Darrell Green and Eric Ferguson were arrested and charged with the alleged sexual battery of a woman in October. Another teammate was dismissed from the roster due to repeated violations of team rules.

Ragin' Cajun quarterback Terrance Broadway, senior cornerback Melvin White and senior safety Rodney Gillis were all baptized following a recent victory over Western Kentucky in a pool at the team hotel by Chi Alpha campus minister and UL football

team chaplain Eric Treuil. The entire team witnessed the baptisms.

One week prior, wide receiver Darryl Surgent and defensive lineman Christian Ringo were baptized by Treuil in the UL campus pool.

"An old church saying is, 'A family that prays together, stays together,'" Broadway told *The Advertiser*. "As a team, we've grown so much closer in the past four weeks with battling adversity. The only way we've really done that is through God."

Treuil believes the indiscretions of their former teammates prompted some of the UL players to make changes in their personal lives.

"I believe it played a bit into it, from the angle of the reality that anybody can get into trouble—easily," Treuil told *The Advertiser*. "And less you make some choices and decisions, it's easy for anybody to mess up. I do think it played a part. They stepped over and decided to make some good, strong decisions.

"It's saying, 'Hey, I'm telling everybody I'm living out the Christian life. Now, they've put themselves out there for some accountability."

Gibson had been baptized as a child. It didn't hold as much significance for him as his recent baptism.

"When I first got baptized, I was young. I didn't know the meaning of it," Gibson told *The Advertiser*. "Now, to go through it with guys I go through things with every day—every day we see each other and we're around each other, and they're the guys that I love—it made the experience even better."

The Ragin' Cajuns finish the regular season this Saturday at Florida Atlantic University. UL will play in the Dec. 22 New

Orleans Bowl against an undetermined opponent. It is the second consecutive year the Ragin' Cajuns will play in the New Orleans Bowl after defeating San Diego State 32-30 in 2011.