

Coach 'Prime' Letting Nation Know How Big His God Is

When Deion Sanders was hired as the head football coach at the University of Colorado last December, he made sure he let everyone watching the press conference know how big his God is.

"Don't you ever tell me what God ain't. Don't you ever tell me His limits," Sanders said then. "Don't you ever tell me what you are up against and what you can't do. Of all the persons in the world, God chose me [to coach at Colorado]. And for that I thank Him. For that, I magnify Him. For that, I glorify Him. For that, I praise Him. For that, I owe Him. Each and every day, I'm trying to please Him."

Fast forward nine months and those same words are apropos for Sanders, otherwise known as "Prime Time." In his first game as the Buffaloes' head coach, with an almost entirely new roster from Colorado's previous season in which it went 1-11, his underdog team shocked the college football world last Saturday when it defeated 2022 national runner-up and No. 17-ranked TCU, 45-42, in front of a national television audience.

While Sanders, a devoted believer of Jesus Christ, enjoyed success at his previous coaching job at Jackson State University, it wasn't supposed to come this quickly at Colorado, a program he took over in turmoil and molded into a team that knocked off a contender right from the start in 2023.

His team's roster in 2023 has an unprecedented 87 new players who had never worked together prior to spring and fall workouts. Colorado was picked to finish 11th in the Pac-12 Conference this season.

The Buffaloes were a underdog against TCU last Saturday and

many college football experts said they had “no chance” in defeating the Horned Frogs.

But God had other plans. Led by Sanders’ son’s 510-yard, four-touchdown effort, Colorado prevailed on TCU’s home field.

“Thank you Jesus for this,” Sanders said on the field following the victory. “This is a blessing. God, this is good. ... Lord, I thank you for giving me strength and energy.”

But the victory came as no surprise to Sanders or his team.

“God did it,” Shedeur Sanders said. “Nobody believed it, but we did and God did.”

Deion Sanders’ faith follows the path of another Colorado coach, Bill McCartney, who won a national championship in Boulder in 1990. McCartney founded the national Christian men’s movement, Promise Keepers, and was one of the most successful coaches in school history.

And like McCartney, who was sharply criticized by the media during his tenure at Colorado for his spiritual influence on his players, Sanders has been faced with the same spiritual warfare.

Get your FREE CHARISMA NEWSLETTERS today! Stay up-to-date with current issues, Holy Spirit news, Christian teachings, Charisma videos & more!

Almost immediately after he took over the program, Sanders was attacked by the Freedom From Religion Foundation, who sent a letter to University of Colorado officials stating “constitutional concerns” with the coach’s faith and his spiritual relationship with his players. Sanders was criticized for inviting staff members and coaches to pray before team meetings. His first team meeting prayer went like this:

“Lord, we thank you for this day. Father, for this opportunity

as a group. Father, we thank you for the movement that God has put us in place to be in charge of. We thank you for each player here, each coach, each family. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."

The FRFF's letter alleges that Coach Sanders was "coercing' or "imposing religion' on students because of the short prayer before meetings.

That litigation is ongoing, but the First Liberty Institute is defending Sanders' religious speech, specifically his praise and glory to God after accepting the job.

"The FRFF's argument fails to acknowledge the difference between public and private speech," First Liberty Institute said in a statement. "It is a highly important distinction the Supreme Court considers regarding public employee religious speech."

As was discovered in the case of Washington High School football coach Joe Kennedy, who won his Supreme Court case allowing him to pray on the field after games.

Onward and Upward

On Saturday, Colorado plays former Big 12 rival Nebraska. But this time, the Buffaloes are a favorite. And, he has a message for those who didn't believe in him or his team.

"We told you we are coming. You thought we were joking," Sanders said. "We keep receipts. God bless you, America. God is good." {eo}

Join Charisma Magazine Online to follow everything the Holy Spirit is doing around the world!

Shawn A. Akers is the online editor at Charisma Media.