

Faith Over Football: D1 Athlete Leaves the Field for God's Calling on His Life

Read time: 2 minutes 34 seconds

Cam Lamanuzzi may have started his time at Fresno State as a linebacker, but he later realized that God had placed a different calling on his life.

Being a native of Fresno, California, going to the college in his hometown was an easy choice, but hanging up the cleats in obedience to the Lord was something out of the blue.

Instead of lining up opposite the other team's offense, Lamanuzzi is now an assistant chaplain for the Fresno State Bulldogs football team.

"I didn't expect to be going this route," Lamanuzzi told ABC30 in an interview. "Same thing like a pastor does with a church, we offer that to the players and coaches.

"I knew it was by no coincidence that I was there for a reason bigger than football."

While a player under former head coach Kalen DeBoer, Lamanuzzi got the permission of his coaches to hold Bible studies with his teammates.

This would be the catalyst God would use to spark a fire in his heart to enter the ministry instead of lacing up his cleats.

Realizing the call God had for him, Lamanuzzi stepped away from the game that had taken him so far in life for a much greater calling.

“There was a point where I knew it was the direction I was going to but I didn’t want to go in that direction if that makes sense,” Lamanuzzi says.

After discussing the dilemma he was having to his coach, the two came up with a God-inspired idea: to have Lamanuzzi remain with the team as a chaplain.

“A blessing to be such a recent part of the team because I have a friendship with a lot of the guys,” said Lamanuzzi. “I mean I still go to some of their houses, we still go and grab food, we’re all still in a good relationship.”

Having a background as a football player, Lamanuzzi believes God has uniquely suited him to be able to share the gospel with his fellow athletes since he knows the hard work and dedication it takes to succeed in the sport.

“I know where they’ve been, I know where they’re at. I know how to speak into their situations. I know what it’s like to be an athlete for that to be the most important thing for you at the moment and how heavy that can be.”

But Lamanuzzi is not limiting himself to just sharing his faith with his football team. He preaches at the Garage Church in Fresno while also spending time at the Youth for Christ ministry located in Fresno and Madera.

Lamanuzzi has done what so many people yearn to discover: he took the step of faith to find the role that God specifically suited him for in life.

“I’m exactly where I want to be at the moment. I’m happy to be a part of Fresno State as a chaplain, I’m loving serving the team and I want to do it as long as I can.” {eo}

 Bring *Charisma* magazine home with a subscription today!

James Lasher is Staff Writer for *Charisma Media*.