

NFL QB Stops to Pray for Injured Opponent During Tense Game

Moments like this can help explain why, amid unexpected and prolonged adversity, a young man stays on the right track.

In the fourth quarter of a tight game against the Philadelphia Eagles on Sunday, second-year quarterback Bryce Young of the Carolina Panthers paused to pray for an injured opponent, thereby modeling one of the New Testament's most important instructions.

"Pray without ceasing," Paul the Apostle wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

A clip posted to the social media platform X showed injured Eagles safety C.J. Gardner-Johnson on the ground in pain.

!!BREAKING !!

Panthers QB Bryce Young stopped mid-game and STARTED PRAYING TO GOD for an injured opponent who was down on the field in pain.

 

– Dr. Malachi – (Dr. Run) (@malachiobrien) December 8, 2024

With the Panthers trailing the Eagles, 22-16, and less than 10 minutes remaining in the game, Young paused, stepped outside the offensive huddle and bowed his head in prayer for Gardner-Johnson.

Young's prayer at that moment, according to one X user, "says

a metric ton about him.”

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According to sports and faith focused Sports Spectrum, as a high school quarterback with the powerhouse Mater Dei Monarchs of Chula Vista, California, a calm and confident Young once led his team to a dramatic, come-from-behind victory over nationally top-ranked IMG Academy of Bradenton, Florida.

“That’s him,” Mater Dei head coach Bruce Rollinson said of Young pointing to heaven after the game-winning score. “He knows that confidence comes from his Savior. That’s what he believes. I’ve talked to him about it and his faith is very deep. He doesn’t preach it, he permeates it. He exemplifies it.”

In other words, even in a football game’s biggest moment, Young has always turned to Jesus.

Moreover, we never know when God might call us to praise Him in the middle of a personal redemption story.

The first overall pick in the 2023 NFL Draft, Young suffered through a disastrous rookie year. Carolina finished 2-14, the worst record in the NFL.

Then, amid an ugly 0-2 start to the 2024 season, Young looked like one of the biggest disappointments in NFL Draft history. He retreated to the bench and did not regain his starting job for several months.

Since the beginning of November, however, the second-year quarterback has orchestrated a shocking resurgence in Carolina.

First, he guided his team to narrow wins over the New Orleans Saints and New York Giants.

Then, even more impressively, he kept the Panthers competitive during a narrow 30-27 loss to the two-time defending Super Bowl Champion Kansas City Chiefs. An overtime loss to the division-leading Tampa Bay Buccaneers followed a week later.

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Finally, on Dec. 8, Young's 3-10 Panthers put a scare into the 11-2 Eagles before falling, 22-16.

Meanwhile, football fans have taken notice. A string of close calls against playoff-caliber teams have Young's Panthers, once regarded as the NFL's worst team, earning respect.

In fact, according to WCNC-TV in Charlotte, North Carolina, oddsmakers have responded to Young's recent performance by making Carolina a favorite over the visiting Dallas Cowboys this coming Sunday—the first time all season the Panthers have entered a game favored to win.

Of course, in light of Sunday's prayer, Young would have earned Christians' appreciation regardless of wins and losses.

On the other hand, can there be any doubt that God has used Young's unexpected struggles and even more unexpected resurgence as a way of showcasing what it means to glorify Him in all circumstances?

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