

From Failure to Faith: The Spirituality of Super Bowl Stars

Super bowl Sunday is right around the corner, an event that might be viewed by over 100 million Americans. While fame and money send some athletes into self-destructive behavior, many athletes have found the peace that surpasses everything, a relationship with Jesus Christ. Here are five football players who have professed faith in Jesus Christ and are playing in the Super bowl.

*Please note: The players below are not a comprehensive representation of the faiths of the entire team, but rather, are just a highlight of a few players who discuss Jesus in public. Feel free to comment if you know any other Christians who'll be on the field that evening.

1. **Duron Harmon:** New England Patriots

Defensive back Duron Harmon said during a press conference a few years ago, "A lot of people get [their priorities] mixed up; they try to put football first," he continued, "But you gotta remember that football is nothing more than a game. It's a game that God blesses us with to use ... for His glory and His work." In addition playing in the NFL, Harmon uses his platform in athletics to raise awareness for autism. Harmon recently celebrated his 28th birthday alongside his wife Christine and two children.

2. **Brandin Cooks:** Los Angeles Rams

Twenty-five-year-old Brandin Cooks is a wide receiver for the Los Angeles Rams. Originally from northern California, Cooks played collegiate football at Oregon State University. As fans and football aficionados alike scroll through Cooks' social

media, they'll find he's not ashamed of the gospel and often tweets prayers to the Lord.

3. **Matthew Slater:** New England Patriots

No. 18 wide receiver Matthew Slater joined the Patriots after playing college ball at UCLA. As a *Boston Globe* article highlights, Slater came to faith as a child. "Even though I was 7 years old, I think I was old enough to understand and grasp it on a broad spectrum, so I started walking with the Lord at 7," Slater said. Growing up with a foundation in Christ was the genesis to his understanding of living with an eternal mindset. In an interview with Baptist Press, Slater pointed out, "Football is temporary," he said. "It's going to be over for all of us at some point. But I think when you look at a relationship with Jesus, you understand you're living for eternity, and if you can't get excited about that, I don't know what you can get excited about."

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