

It's the Fourth Quarter!

Do I have any football fans in the house? Yes! Isn't this a great time of the year? We get the best of so many worlds. Cooler weather, baseball playoffs AND football! Do we live in a great country or what?

Have you ever watched a football game and seen players at the start of the 4th quarter raise four fingers in the air? I know some of you might think that is as high as football players can count but that is not why they lift four fingers. The players are reminding themselves and one another that they have one last quarter to bring home a victory. It is a reminder for the team to not let up but to give it their all until the final gun sounds.

Many a game is won or lost in the fourth quarter. Sometimes games are won in the last two minutes or seconds. That is why college and professional teams practice over and over what is called their two-minute drill. It is designed to give them the winning score in the last two minutes of the game.

Has your favorite team ever lost a game after leading entering the fourth quarter? Ask the Atlanta Falcons how hard it is to deal with losing a game you had all but won except for the fourth quarter. In last year's Super Bowl, the Falcons were ahead of the Patriots 28 to 9 at the start of the fourth quarter but lost in overtime! They basically imploded in the fourth quarter. I bet every player thinks about that last quarter every day of their lives.

As crazy as it might seem today starts the fourth quarter of the year. Where did the time go? Like it or not we are in the final stretch of the year. This is true for we here at YOUR CHURCH NAME. Our fourth quarter is typically one of our strongest in terms of giving. Your generosity helps fuel all the missions and ministry work we do here and around the world. We so appreciate your gifts and we use them to extend God's love to our community.

Yet just as a football team raises four fingers in the air to denote the start of the fourth quarter we need to stay faithful in our giving in this our fourth quarter. We still have work to do. We still must fund our ministries and work. We are not playing for some trophy that will ultimately tarnish or be trashed. We are about the Kingdom work of our heavenly Father. Our work has eternal consequences and we cannot slack off or rest from our calling.

It might be the fourth quarter of the year but we are not done yet! We need you to stay generous to help us continue our life changing work. So, let's raise four fingers in the air to remind ourselves of the importance of our work and giving as I pray over this offering. **(Lift one hand up like football players as you prayer!)**