

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

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I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



On Saturday, 17th May 2025, the Favourite Manchester City and the underdog Crystal Palace FC (nicknamed 'The Eagles') emerged onto the Wembley Stadium for the finals of the FA Cup. A prestigious and much-sought trophy. Manchester City has

won it seven times, while Crystal Palace has never won a major trophy. After playing 90 minutes of football, Referee Stuart Attwell blew the whistle to mark a historic triumph as Crystal Palace clinched their first major trophy by defeating Manchester City 1–0. It was what many defined as a David and Goliath-sequel.

Manchester City had the opportunity to equal the match but was denied by Goalkeeper Dean Henderson. Henderson delivered a standout performance, the zenith of which was a first-half penalty save from Omar Marmoush. A controversial moment arose when Henderson handled the ball outside the penalty area; however, no red card was issued after a VAR review.

Manager Oliver Glasner, who took charge in February 2024, led the team to this monumental victory, marking a significant turnaround from a challenging start to the season. The win also secured Palace a spot in the 2025–26 UEFA Europa League.

What was unique about the teacher and this victory was that beyond their on-field achievements, Crystal Palace is recognised for the strong

Christian faith among several players. Veteran defender Joel Ward is notably open about his beliefs, often seen praying before matches. This spiritual unity has fostered a distinctive culture within the team, where faith and football intertwine as they meet regularly to pray.

The club's journey to FA Cup glory, underpinned by tactical discipline and a shared sense of purpose, is a testament to their resilience and unity.

This victory ends a 164-year wait for silverware and heralds a new era for the Eagles. Following their epic victory and the ensuing celebrations, there was uniformity in their tribute and honour unto God. Joel Ward has been at Crystal Palace for 13 years, and, aptly, the FA Cup win marks the end of his time at the club.

At the club's victory celebration, he wore the words of Ephesians 3:20 on his wrist: “Now to him who can do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us”.

This is a reminder that if we can serve, believe, and trust in God at all stages of our lives, he will enable us, like Eagles, to glorify his name. It is His power that is at work with us that makes us not ashamed of his holy name.