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Jeremy Doku: Real Faith Is a Changed Heart, Not a Cross

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"I see more and more players speaking about Christ, more and more players coming to the end of themselves and realizing that Christ is the only way,"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Manchester City and Belgium winger Jeremy Doku has said that following Christ is about a transformed heart, not outward signs, in an Instagram video reported on 14 November 2026. "I see more and more players speaking about Christ, more and more players coming to the end of themselves and realizing that Christ is the only way," Doku said. "And I don't want it to be a hype. I want it to be really a genuine transformation."

It is a short video, but the line that has travelled furthest is the bluntest one. "You know, I can fool man. I can wear a cross, I can wear armbands, I can put [on] a tattoo and still be disconnected from Christ," Doku said. "I want people to be transformed from the inside, and then you will be transformed from the outside." In the caption he quoted 1 Samuel 16:7 - "For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" - and added, in capitals, "Faith is more than outward signs. I don't want it to be just a hype. I want it to be REAL."

Doku knows the world he is talking about from the inside. He is a winger for Manchester City and Belgium, a player whose every goal celebration is filmed, clipped, and shared within minutes. He has watched the dressing room change around him, with more and more players speaking about Christ in public. His warning is not aimed at the crowd. It is aimed at the players themselves - at the temptation to wear the symbols of faith while the heart stays untouched.

The video did not come out of nowhere. During the 2026 World Cup, Doku represented Belgium and spoke about his faith often, on camera and off it. In a video for Christhlete, he explained that he and other believers had prepared something big for the tournament. "The World Cup was something I really looked forward to, not just based on football, but we prepared something big for the World Cup with the body of Christ, multiple believers from different teams," he said. "I saw this as a great opportunity, a great platform to spread the word, to speak about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we were really excited for that to share our faith."

Jeremy Doku Faith: A Changed Heart, Not Outward Signs

Doku's main goal at the World Cup, by his own account, was not to score goals. It was to win souls for Christ. "I feel like when I look back, a lot of people were very open about their faith and really showed that there is a King above all kings and that He must be glorified, even beyond football, and that winning or losing is not really what matters the most," he said. "So, when I look back, I've seen a lot of people pointed towards Jesus. So, I feel like the World Cup has been a success."

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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