

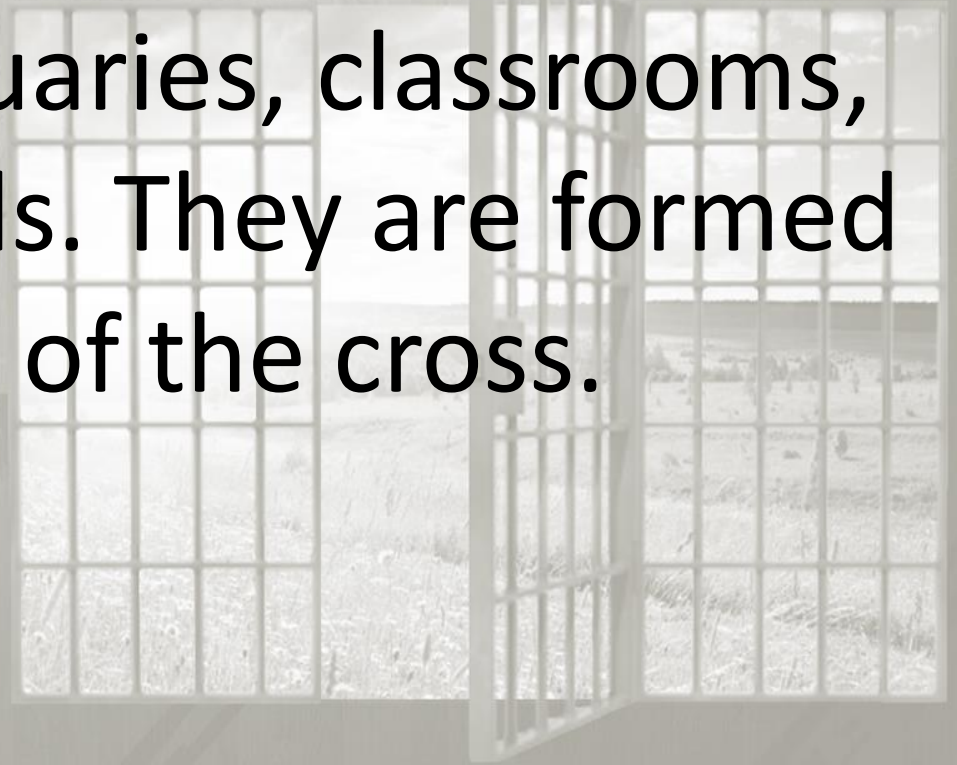
A cityscape at sunset with a glowing cross in the sky. The background is a dense urban area with many buildings, bathed in the warm, golden light of the setting sun. In the upper right corner, a bright, glowing cross is visible in the sky, with rays of light emanating from it. The overall color palette is dominated by warm yellows, oranges, and reds, with a blue sky above.

The **T** R A N S F O R M I N G  
**P** O W E R <sup>o</sup>f **t** h e **C** r o s s

T H E C O M M U N I T Y O F T H E C R O S S

# Introduction:

True Christian communities aren't formed in sanctuaries, classrooms, or fellowship halls. They are formed at the foot of the cross.





Text: 1 John 3:16-20

**This is how we know what love is:  
Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.**

**And we ought to lay down our lives  
for our brothers.**

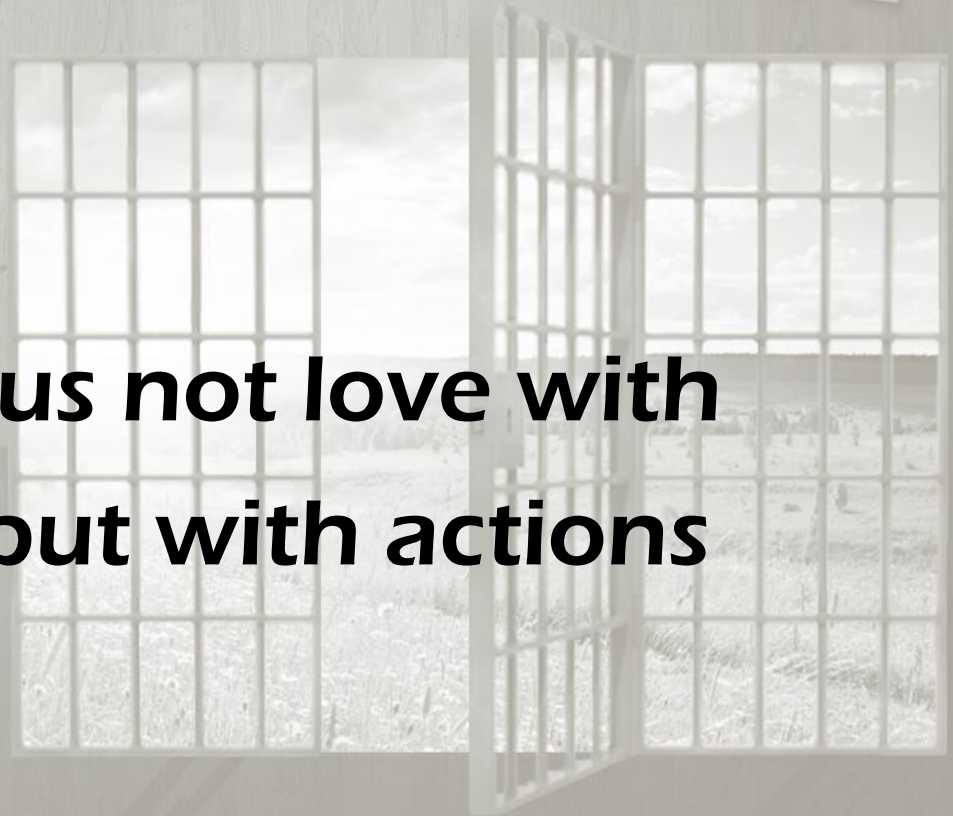
A PRISON



**If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?**

**BECAUSE PRIDE IS**

**Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.**



**This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us.**

BECAUSE PRIDE IS

**For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.**

1 John 3:16-20



True communities are formed when people discover that they share a common

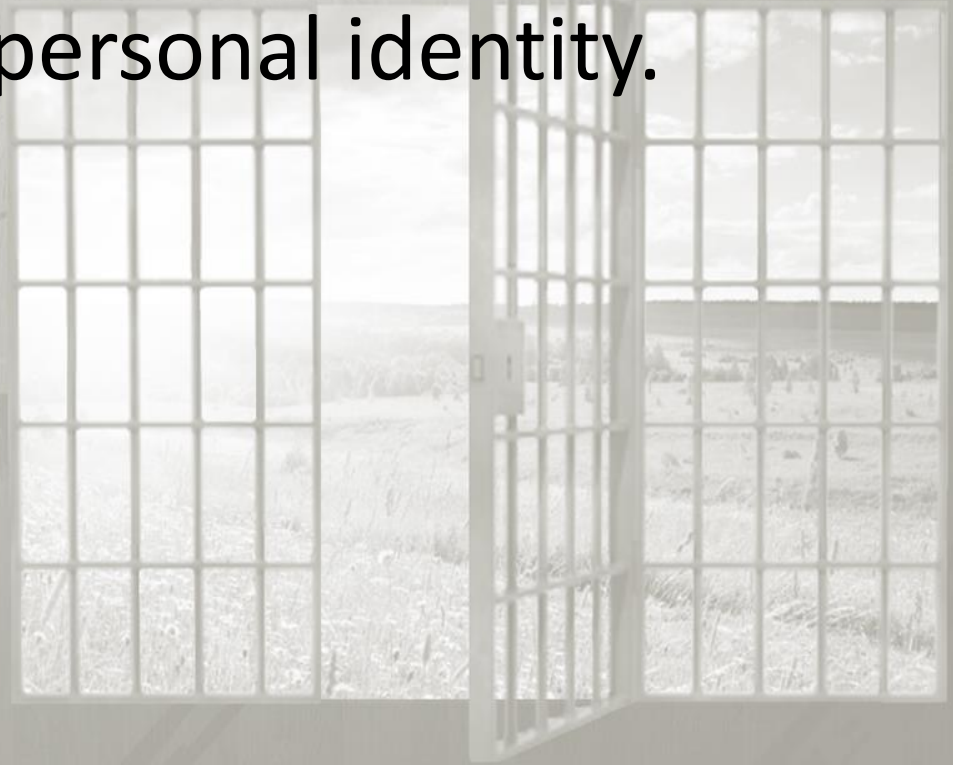
**IDENTITY.**

BECAUSE PRIDE IS  
A PRISON



A **SOCIOLOGICAL** approach to building churches focuses on language, ethnicity, and socio-economic status as the keys to our sense of personal identity.

BECAUSE PRIDE IS  
A PRISON



A **THEOLOGICAL** approach to building churches focuses on shared **BELIEF** systems and **LIFESTYLE** commitments as the keys to our sense of personal identity.

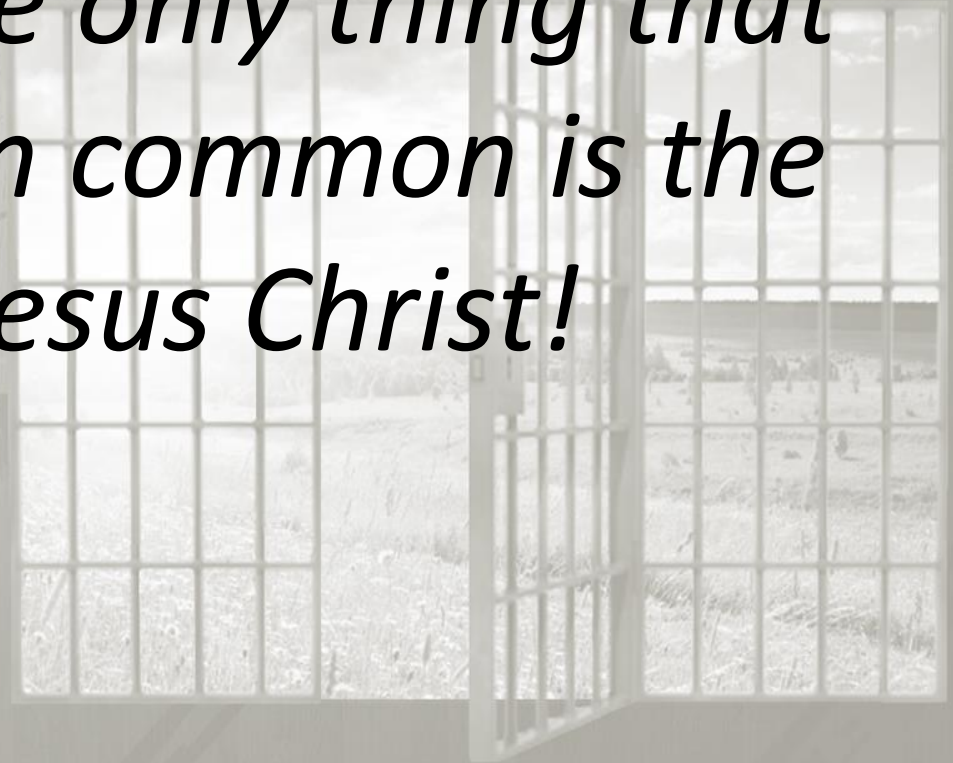
A PRISON





*When we get to Heaven, we will realize that the only thing that we ALL have in common is the cross of Jesus Christ!*

BECAUSE PRIDE IS  
A PRISON



We all:

Have **SINNED**.

"...for all have sinned and fall short of the  
glory of God."

Romans 3:23



We all:

Have received the same opportunity to

**BELIEVE** in Jesus Christ.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

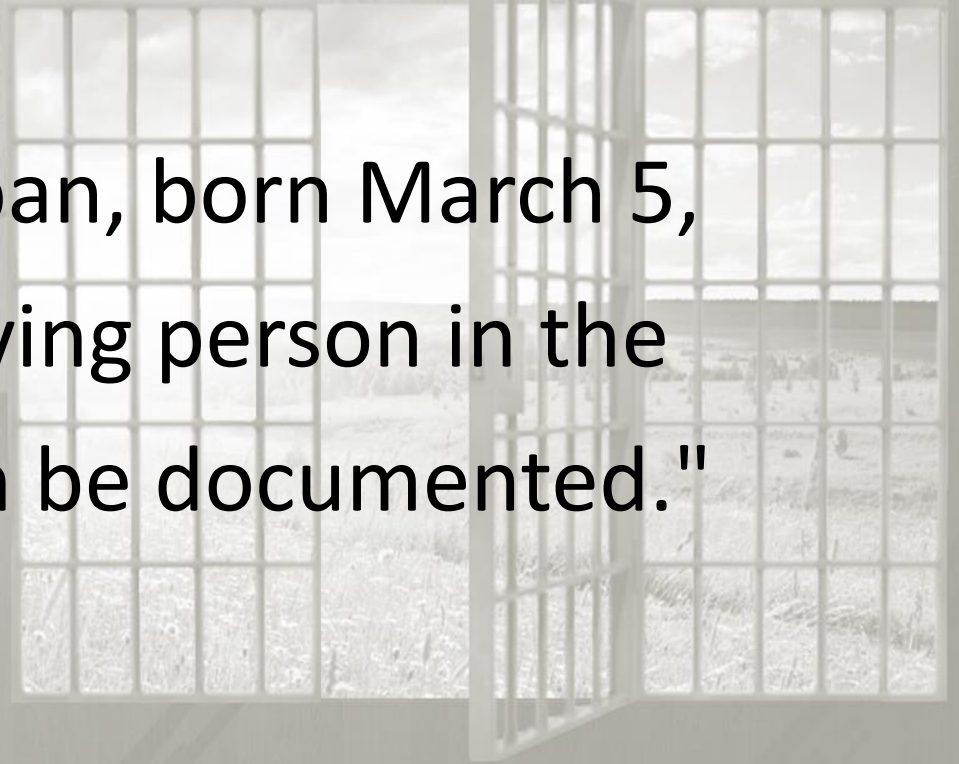
John 3:16



We all:

Will someday **DIE**.

"Misao Okawa of Japan, born March 5, 1898, is the oldest living person in the world whose age can be documented."



We all:

Will someday stand before God to be

**JUDGED.**

"By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly."

2 Peter 3:7

We all:

Have been given the same opportunity,  
through Christ alone, to stand in

**CONFIDENCE** on the Day of  
Judgment.



A PRISON



"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus."

1 John 4:16-17

We all:

Have been given the same opportunity to  
**RECEIVE** Jesus Christ.

BECAUSE PRIDE IS  
A PRISON



"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God --- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

John 1:12-13

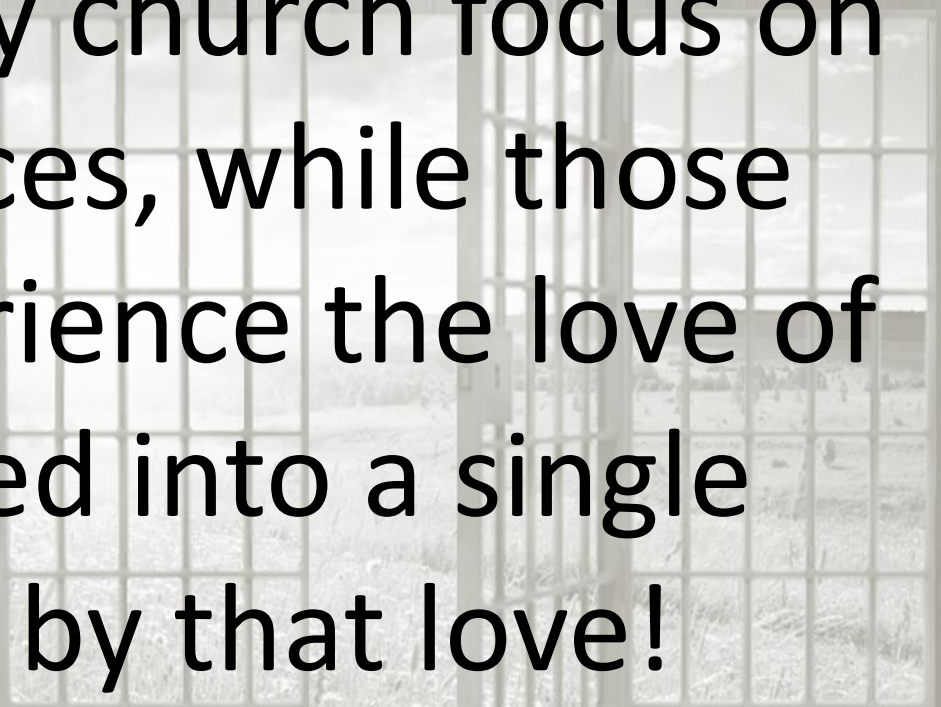


# JAIL BREAK

## **Conclusion:**

People who play church focus on their differences, while those who truly experience the love of God are forged into a single community by that love!

BECAUSE PRIDE IS  
A PRISON



The background of the image is a panoramic view of a city, likely San Francisco, during sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. A bright, glowing cross is visible in the upper right quadrant of the sky, with light rays emanating from it. The city buildings are silhouetted against the bright sky. The text is overlaid on this scene.

The **T** R A N S F O R M I N G  
P O W E R <sup>o</sup>f t h e **C** r o s s

T H E C O M M U N I T Y O F T H E C R O S S