

# My Beef with Doors

I have a beef with church doors.

Here's a common scenario for me. I am scheduled to lead a Bible study conference at a church. I usually arrive the afternoon before to set up and get prepared. It hits me when I first turn into the parking lot: I have no idea what door to enter. I choose the door with the most cars near it, and even that's a 50/50 call on getting it right—especially if the church runs a daycare or school.

I encounter a lot of wrong doors.

Churches are not good at marking their doors. If you smugly disagree—My church doesn't have this problem—ask a first-time guest. Or pull into the church parking lot and look at the building as someone who's never been there before. Trust me; visitors see it differently.

I took photos at one church. It wasn't even a large church plant, but it had 11 doors. I showed the pictures to the Bible study leaders and asked, "Which is the correct door to enter?" They chose one door on the back side of the building. The prominent, visible door in the front of the church wasn't mentioned—which means guests will almost always choose the wrong door.

I have an even greater beef with religious doors.

When people start looking for purpose, meaning, or something to protect them from the foul weather of life, they start opening doors. They encounter three doors.

**1. A heavy door.** Many religions are too stringent, too hard, too demanding. The door is too hard to open. For those who manage to pry the door open long enough to enter, they too become stringent, hard, and demanding. An uneasy question continually hangs over those who managed to get in: Have I done enough? Have I missed something else I'm supposed to do?

**2. A door to nothing.** I've had the opportunity to visit Paramount Studios twice. It's interesting to walk the streets on their back lot. A lot of styles of buildings, but none of the buildings are real. All of them are just a facade. A film crew shooting exteriors doesn't need a whole building; they just need a front. When you open the front door, nothing's there. This is descriptive of the majority of religions. Go through the door and you'll find nothing. You're still outside, still exposed to the foul weather of life.

**3. Jesus.** Jesus said, "I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance" (John 10:9-10).

I'm concerned too many people get frustrated because they keep trying doors #1 and #2, and they give up. They quit before they come to Jesus, the only real door. Jesus also said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).

Jesus is the door—the open door—to life, purpose, and forgiveness. All I've got to do is enter.

## ***A note for church leaders.***

***Station a greeter at every door into your building. Every door. You've got one shot to make a good first impression with a guest, and if they encounter an empty hallway or locked door, their first impression is right up there with the way fathers see carnival tattoo artists who want to date their daughters.***

Photo by [Joseph Pearson](#) on [Unsplash](#)