

In in C.S. Lewis book *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, we learn that when "When Lucy cracks open the wardrobe door" she symbolically encounters a spiritual world. Through that door, she meets the King of the jungle the Lion, Aslan, who Lewis uses to represent Jesus, the King of kings.

In our culture, there are doors everywhere. There are doors to our houses, restaurants, factories and churches. And doors have a purpose – they're designed to keep good stuff in and bad stuff out. In fact, just to be sure the doors do what they're designed to do we put locks on them.

Jesus said "I AM THE DOOR. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture." John 10:9

In this passage Jesus identifies Himself as great shepherd and that those who have faith him are his sheep.

In Jesus' day, there were two kinds of sheepfolds. There was the communal sheepfold in the villages and towns. The shepherds keeping their sheep out in the fields by day would bring them back into the village at night, and they would be enfolded in that sheepfold. It was a well-contained place with a strong door, and that door had a doorkeeper. Only the doorkeeper had a key to the door, and no one could enter the sheepfold except a shepherd known by the doorkeeper. That's the kind of fold Jesus was talking about in the first part of our bible reading.

But there was a second kind of fold. During the warm season, the shepherds would take the sheep far, far away from the villages. They would stay gone for weeks at a time, and at night they would enclose the sheep in folds that were built out on the hillside. Those folds were simply walls enclosing a space, with an entrance. There was no door to that entrance, and once the shepherd had put his sheep in the fold for the night, he himself would lay down across the opening. So, the good shepherd was the door. And for the sheep to enter or depart from the sheepfold, they had to

pass over the shepherd's body. It was that kind of sheepfold that Jesus was talking about when he referred to himself as the door.

In the most literal sense, the shepherd was the door. For there was no access to the sheepfold except through him. Now, with that kind of image, the sermon is simple. The purpose of a door is to either shut something behind us or open something to us. Simple?

Jesus is the only door that can free us from sin. He says, "If any person enters by me, they will be saved." Through Jesus the door is shut to an old life of sin and guilt, pain and loss. ***We can't shut the door ourselves only Jesus can!***

Paul writes to Timothy. "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." (1 Timothy 1:15) And in romans. "God showed his love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Acknowledging we are sinners and accepting the grace and forgiveness of God in Jesus is the one experience that makes us a Christian. That is the core of the gospel. It is when we allow Jesus to be our door!

Sometimes we need to be reminded of this. "As far as the east is from the west, just that far will he remove our sins from us." Psalm 103:12 Jesus forgives when we repent, and He shut that door to our past.

Now when the door is shut to our past
Jesus opens the door to a new, abundant life

There's a quality of life that we will never know apart from Jesus Christ. We saved, delivered, and healed of past sin through Christ and the next part of the verse says, we will go in and out and find pasture. It's a beautiful image of being protected and sustained. It is a life with relationship with God through Jesus and loving service to Him.

Jesus said that "as the Good Shepherd, He was willing to lay down His life down for His sheep." What a great description of the Christian life. The going out is as important as the coming in. Let me illustrate.

This is a true story of someone entering through the door of Jesus.

After making great progress in the Hindu spiritual disciplines Krister Sairsingh, a former Hindu from Trinidad had something happen that unsettled him deeply. He wrote:

During my final year of high school, I had some bizarre and rather dreadful experiences in which it seemed that my mantras had failed me, and the Hindu deities were of no avail. For the first time I felt that the Hindu gods had disappointed me and that the power of my special mantra was not adequate to my present crisis . . .

One of my classmates, an East Indian who identified himself as a Christian, suggested that I consider Jesus after I shared my problem with him . . .

At the urging of my classmate (now a medical doctor), I began to read the New Testament to learn more about Jesus. He totally captivated me. Here was someone who struck me as different from anyone who ever lived . . .

In reading the gospels I was drawn to this man who said he had the power to forgive sins, to break the bondage of karma. Who really was this Jesus? I really wanted to know. I began a careful study of the gospels. During those two months I would go into the cane fields and cry aloud to the unknown God, hoping that the truth would be revealed to me. More than anything else I wanted the truth.

The weeks went by and still I could not get away from the attractive power of Jesus. As I read his sayings in the gospels, I thought he was speaking directly to me. It was as if he were telling me that he could actually come to me, lift the fear of death, break the bondage of karma, forgive my sins and make me truly alive . . .

One night, after meditation on the account in John's gospel of the death and resurrection of Jesus, I asked Jesus to forgive my sins, to set me free from the bondage of karma and to become the Lord of my life. I had come to believe that he was the only one who could do that . . . That night I poured out my heart to him in tears. I knew when I got up from my knees that something eventful, life-changing, had happened. Jesus the Lord had entered my life. Krister is now a university chaplain sharing Jesus with other students.

The second part is Jesus is the only door to a relationship with God.

Christ is the only door to a relationship with God that sees us not only through life, but through death as well. Jesus said, "I am the door. If anyone enter by me, they will be saved. They will come in and out and find pasture." I'll close the door behind you to past sin and guilt and failure and pain and loss. I'll open the door to a trustful relationship with God and a life of loving service to God and your neighbour.

How do I conclude with another true story: There is a small metal door painted white in the side of a tiny mission church in Johannesburg South Africa. This door is changing lives. On it are painted the words "door of hope." That is exactly what it is for various babies within the city. On average some forty to fifty babies were being abandoned on the streets to die of exposure or starvation a month. That was before the mission installed their door to a baby bin allowing mothers to anonymously deposit their unwanted babies and have someone love them and care for them. Now the mission is saving over 100 babies a year. What an incredible door.

Jesus is an incredible door that takes in the unwanted, saves lives and brings hope. Now this is what you need to remember. The obvious thing about a door is that it means absolutely nothing unless you use it. A door means absolutely nothing unless you use it. If you haven't asked Jesus to be in charge of your life take the time today to say Thankyou Jesus for dying for me, sorry that I have sinned, please come in and be the door in my life so I can have relationship with you. Amen

