



## How Do I Get In?

"How do I get in?" I heard a worship guest ask this question as we approached a church I was visiting two weeks ago. The question came after looking at three doors that face the parking lot with no exterior signs directing people from the parking lot. This experience makes me ponder; can a parking lot sign really be an evangelism tool?

What do outdoor church signs say to visitors? These signs are part of the experience. They help to welcome, direct and provide a feeling of comfort when visiting a church for the very first time. Sometimes a sign serves as the only indicator that the sanctuary door is in the rear. Other times the outdoor signs are the first point of contact that moves someone to feel welcomed. We are not completely sure what a sign will do to convince someone to stay but we do know that not having outdoor signs may be frustrating enough to cause someone not to stay or come back.

As Christmas approaches and congregations prepare to celebrate, are we really ready to welcome? Sometimes we spend lots of times and even money bringing out the wreaths, the ribbons, lights and holly but we forget the simple task of preparing hearts and minds to truly welcome others.

Now may be a good time to take an inventory of your welcoming signs. Walk around your church. What may keep someone from coming inside? Will guests have to ask someone how to get to the sanctuary? Is it obvious where the parking lot is located? Let me know what you think. Are outdoor church signs a reason people may not come back?