

3rd August 2023

Keys

**"I got a brand new pair of roller skates, you got a brand new key;
I think that we should get together and try them out, to see ..."**

Melanie, *Brand New Key*

I misplaced some keys. I hadn't *lost* them, because you don't actually lose things when they've been misplaced. You just can't remember where you put them. That's why my wife tells me, "You'll find them in the last place you look," helpful woman that she is. Thankfully, I found the keys – in the last place I looked, in fact – and all was well. But the searching got me thinking about how important keys are to the development of our faith and knowledge about spiritual things.

According to Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is reported to have said:

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

That is true for me. For in the life, teaching and example of our Lord we are given keys to an awareness of God, a right way of living, an understanding of who we are and the "why" and "how" of that. But such keys to faith and understanding are not, I believe, confined to the life of Jesus. For are we not given keys from other religions, from the lives of people who have no faith, from the insights of philosophers and thinkers from all ages? And are keys to unlock the mysteries of life and death not offered through art, and music, and beauty, and the wonder of creation? The keys to the kingdom ... How dare we chose to ignore some keys and accept others as it suits us.

According to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus, when he was teaching his friends about the deepening of their spiritual life, is reputed to have said:

Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering.

Woe to you and me, who believe *we* are the experts, but who have deprived people of keys can that unlock new doors, thus stopping them from finding what may be "a brand new key" to an understanding of the wonder and mystery of God. Let's be open to recognising those keys, and, as Melanie suggests, "let's get together and try them out, to see ..."

A prayer for today

Keys to unlock a mystery? What wonders I might find ... Amen