

## 2. Lost Keys

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Can a story from Islamic Sufi tradition help Christians rediscover the hidden treasures of surrender and transformation? This short reflection invites you into a deeper silence, where the ego lets go and the Spirit begins to move. Come and see what the wind might whisper to you.

When we engage with the wisdom stories of another tradition, something unexpected can happen. If we approach with humility and openness, they may illuminate forgotten corners of our own faith, or startle us into hearing the Gospel anew.

For Christians drawn to contemplative depth, Sufi stories can feel surprisingly familiar. They often expose the folly of ego, the limits of conventional wisdom, and the need to descend into mystery. Perhaps they stir in us a longing—not to explain, but to surrender.

In this second reflection, we meet Nasruddin searching for lost keys under the light of a streetlamp, even though he dropped them elsewhere. A playful story—but one with the potential to unmask our spiritual habits.



## 1. The Man Who Lost His Key

Nasruddin was on his knees searching frantically in the dust under a streetlamp.

A passerby asked, “What have you lost?”

“My keys,” said Nasruddin.

After a few minutes of searching together, the man asked, “Are you sure you lost them here?”

“No,” said Nasruddin, “I lost them in the house.”

“Then why are we looking here?”

“Because this is where the light is.”

*Source: Adapted from a traditional Sufi story*

Reflection: We often seek answers in the familiar or comfortable places—the “well-lit” zones of our mind or tradition—rather than where the real loss or longing lies. True seekers must dare to go into the darkness.

## 2. Discussion Questions

- Are you looking for spiritual answers where it is easy, or where it is true?
- What areas of your inner life remain ‘in the dark’?
- What would it take to turn inward, even when it’s uncomfortable?

## 3. Scripture and Contemplative Echoes

### Old Testament

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. — *Psalms 139:23*

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and our children forever... — *Deuteronomy 29:29*

For wisdom is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God. — *Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 (NRSVCE)*

## New Testament

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. — *Matthew 7:7*

Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? — *Luke 6:46*

If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. — *Matthew 6:22*

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. — *John 1:5*

## Contemplative Christian Writers

Do not look for God only where it is obvious, beautiful, or emotionally lit. God may be waiting for you where you fear to go—in your doubts, your pain, or the places you've been avoiding. The spiritual path demands honesty. To seek in the light is easy; to step into the darkness takes courage. — *Thomas Keating, Intimacy with God, p. 58*

To enter into the heart is to leave behind the noise of surface religion. The light you are looking for may be hidden in your shadow. But do not be afraid. The Spirit meets you there—not to shame you, but to heal you. — *Martin Laird, A Sunlit Absence, p. 47*

The journey into God is the journey into your own soul. But the entrance is not where you usually look. It is through a small, hidden door called surrender. God is not found by effort, but by allowing yourself to be found in the dark. — *James Finley, Christian Meditation, p. 112*

When you search only where it is bright, you risk mistaking clarity for truth. God often draws us into silence not to remove the answer, but to ask a better question. The real key may be hidden in the place you refuse to look. — *Cynthia Bourgeault, Eye of the Heart, p. 65*

True seekers stop demanding that God appear in familiar forms. They let the false light fade. They begin to trust the hidden God—not the one they imagined, but the One who actually is. It is in that surrender to the not-known that wisdom is born. — *Richard Rohr, The Naked Now, p. 88*

## In Verse

### Notice to blind and sighted drivers

to all of us sighted drivers,  
the user's manual says  
check your mirrored windows  
and sunshades, for if  
they are turned outside-in

then what you see is the menu  
of self-set stories, a mint  
of counterfeit coins  
for limited happiness —  
imitations of joy

to all of us drivers who are blind,  
the manual says: beware!  
be aware, for you cannot see  
what's in front of your face,  
as that thickening fog  
is not outside  
but you never ask why  
your doors never open,  
your windows stay closed

important notice to all drivers:  
why fiddle with the controls?  
for more fun than you ever had  
just sit back and enjoy —  
you may not understand  
the technology, for now,  
but this vehicle  
runs all by wireless  
from Central Station  
deep  
in the ground.