

# Unlock

*more than you think!*



**A pack of resources for  
Urban churches  
compiled by  
Jenny Richardson**



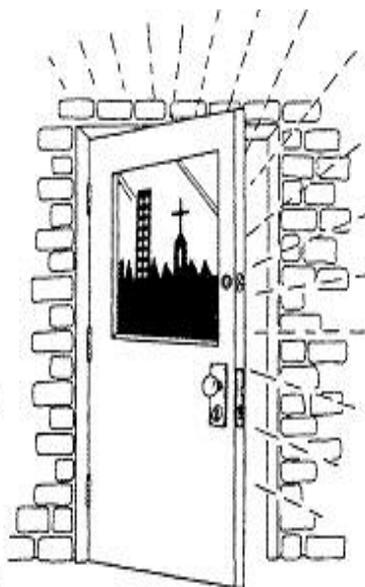
Unlock, Handsworth Parish Centre, Handsworth Road, Sheffield, S13 9BZ

# Unlock

## offers many images

- finding the right keys
- unlocking an old box and finding treasure
- unlocking the door and going in
- unlocking the door and going out

This pack aims to give you some things to help you get under the surface of these images, with many of the activities based on Unlock's mission statement:



**Unlocking real life stories of urban people.**  
**Revealing Good News of the down to Earth Christ.**  
**Releasing life changing skills and confidence.**

### How to use this pack

This is a pack of resources for you to use in the order that you feel suits your situation best.

It's something you can dip into, and use to help your group value their life experiences, discover fresh insights into the Bible - and choose to make changes in their own lives, affecting the lives of those around them. It is NOT a set course, where you start at the beginning, work through to the end, and expect everyone to learn the same thing!

The pack includes a game; some **Unlock** style Bible studies; some pages you could use as posters, discussion starters or place mats at a meal! You will need to think about your group, and make some decisions about what to do ... or think and plan with your group about their needs and priorities.

Page 3 gives you some examples and practical ideas, to get you started,

Page 4 outlines **Unlock's** Bible study method

Page 5 gives you some more detail about **Unlock's** theology and educational method.

Page 21 gives you some ideas of how you might continue, once you've tried the things in this pack. The rest of the pack is a "mixed bag" of resources. We hope you enjoy using them, and we'd love to hear from you what you've done - so we can pass on your good ideas to others.

### The keys to Unlock materials are:

- know your group, accept them as they are, and believe that everyone's experience and insights are valuable
- begin with everyday real life.
- be ready to listen and discover a new slant on familiar Bible passages.
- don't forget there are no "experts" - we are all learning together.
- be flexible!



## A few ideas to get you started:

### ***"I've never used an Unlock Bible study, and I want to have a go for the first time"***

- Read page 4, "Unlock's method of Bible study", to give you some understanding of the approach. Contact the Unlock office if you'd like some more help.
- Use page 6. "The key in our hands" questions, to encourage the group to tell their stories of lost and found keys. (You might want to copy the sheet for each person. or make a large copy that everyone can see?). Then read page 7 together - "The keys of the kingdom" Bible sheet. You might want to make copies for everyone, or you might prefer to have one or two volunteers read it and the rest listen. Ask people:

**"What do your stories and the Bible story have in common?"**

**"What do your stories help you to understand about the keys of the kingdom?"**

and then **"What difference will this make for you this week?"**

Try to avoid one person becoming the expert, saying "Mine is the right interpretation of this passage, this is what we are supposed to think"

- or you could use pages 13 and 15, the "Doors and gates" questions and Bible sheet in the same way. Page 14 gives some extra notes for group leaders.

### ***"I'd like us to think about life outside this group / church"***

- Then try the domino game. "Unlocking the links", on pages 8 and 9 (you'll need to copy the dominoes onto card, and cut them up) and you could then go on to think about doors and gates
- look at page 12, the "Open Doors" story together - you can copy it for everyone in the group
- talk about the doors of your own church - you might want to go outside, and look at the doors. trying to imagine what they'd be like for someone outside
- look at the questions about "church" on page 13, "Doors and gates"
- look together the Bible passage "The Gate", and think about the doors and gates of your church - are they like Jesus?
- You might like to go to different doors and gates in your church premises to pray - for those who come in and out, and for the possibilities through the door.
- Think together about whether there is anything practical you want to do.

### ***"What could we do with pages 16-20?"***

- photocopy them onto A3 sheets or larger, and use them as posters.
- photocopy them onto coloured paper, for table mats at a group or church meal.
- photocopy "Who will go through the Open Door" on white. and it's a colouring sheet for children.
- Use the questions as discussion starters in a group - or over a meal

### ***"It's all the same people who do everything. What stops the others?"***

Trespassers will not be prosecuted. pages 10 and 11, is a plan for an activity day (a different style church away day?) that encourages people to represent the barriers to their involvement in creative ways - and then break through..

Who is locked into this church and its activities? Who do we lock out?

What are the "right keys" for you to help grow in your faith?

....find the questions that will make sense for the group, and then make links with the Bible.



## The traditional method of Bible study

The majority of bible studies start with a text

"There was once a man.."



And move onto an analysis of the text and the deduction of general principles.

"The good Samaritan helped his neighbour..."

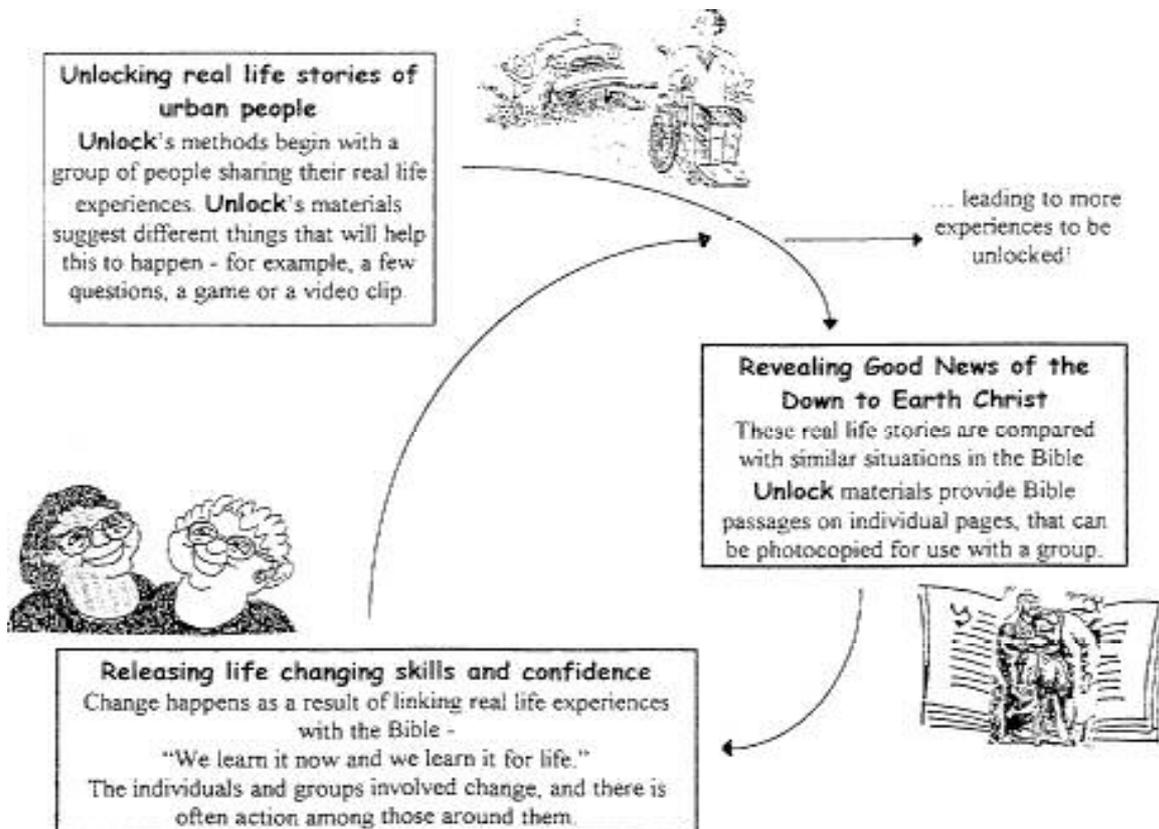


Finally, there is encouragement to apply this to life

"We must help others."

This style provides a framework, within which the person can store the information in his/her mind, in note form, or on disc, for retrieval when it is needed. This requires a way of thinking and communicating which is based on book and lecture methods of learning; it is not the appropriate method for a vast number of people.

## Unlock's method of Bible study



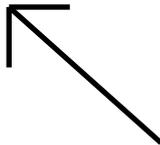


Unlock—more than you think page 5

## Unlocking real life stories of urban people

Find ways to unlock the experiences of the group. We've used cartoons, newspaper articles, TV soaps, video clips and things that happened on the way to the meeting!

- \* *"Has this ever happened to you?"*
- \* *"Does this ring any bells?"*



## People arrive with individual and group experiences

Releasing life changing skills and confidence  
Making links between our experiences and the Bible brings us a new understanding of God and a new understanding of God's activity in our world. It leads to transforming action, for ourselves and for those around us.

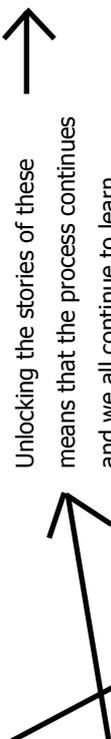
- \* *We have made links between our experiences and the Bible. What difference will this now make to us. individually and together?*
- \* *Are there any attitudes we need to change?*
- \* *What do we need to find out?*
- \* *What shall we do?*

Encourage people to share their stories.

Look for patterns, common themes:

- \* *"What have your stories got in common??"*

This leads to new experiences!  
Unlocking the stories of these means that the process continues and we all continue to learn.



## Revealing Good News of the down to Earth Christ

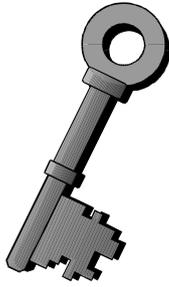
Help the group make links between their stories and the Bible.

- ~ *What stories in the Bible talk about the same things as your stories?*
- ~ *What is the same, and what is different?*
- ~ *What can we learn from the Bible about our experiences?*
- ~ *is there anything new we can see in the Bible, now we've looked at our own stories?*

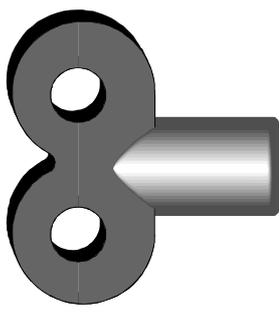
# THE KEY IN OUR HANDS

*Keys are important in our everyday lives. Use these questions to talk about things that have helped you.*

Have you ever been locked out?



Have you ever lost your keys?  
Did you find them?



Have you ever struggled, and then found the right key to gain access?

Have you ever been responsible for a "master key"?

Have you got a good key story?!





# THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM



When Jesus arrived in the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "What are people saying about who the Son of Man is?"

They replied, "Some think he is John the Baptizer, some say Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

He pressed them, "And how about you? Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter said, "You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

Jesus came back, "God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn't get that answer out of books or from teachers. My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am. And now I'm going to tell you who you are, *really* are. You are Peter, a rock. This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so

expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it Out."



And that's not all. **You will have complete and free access to God's kingdom, keys to open any and every door:** no

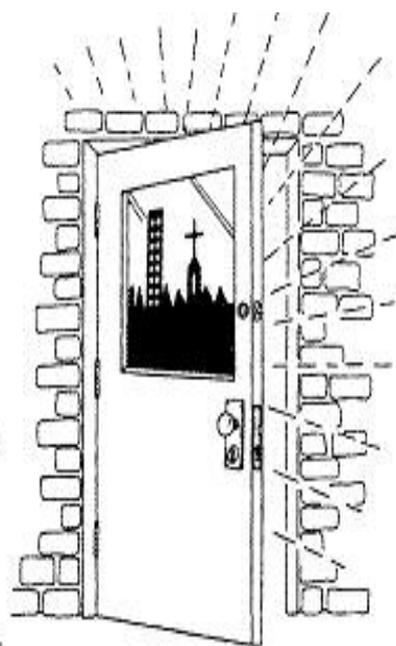
more barriers between heaven and earth, earth and heaven. A yes on earth is yes in heaven. A no on earth is no in heaven."



He swore the disciples to secrecy. He made them promise they would tell no one that he was the Messiah.

*Matthew 16:13-20*

*The Message*



# Unlocking the links

This game, based on dominoes, is to help a group - or a whole church - recognise the relationships that already exist between the church and people in the neighbourhood. It's been tried and tested in "all age" settings. and children are able to play it alongside adults.

You will need

- to make the dominoes, using the original in the pack. You could photocopy onto card, or coloured paper, and then cut them.
- Allow at least 2 dominoes per person.
- enough felt pens / pencils etc for everyone - plenty of colours if people like to enjoy the creative bit.
- to make a starter card a "Double church" or "Double home group" or whatever you are starting from.

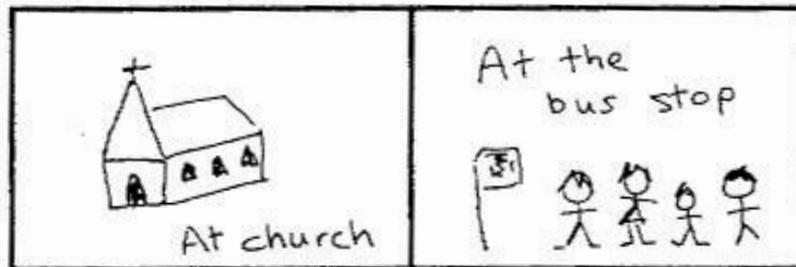
## Unlocking real life stories of urban people

Give out 2 dominoes per person

Ask members of the group to think about **"Where do you meet people?"**

Ask people to draw or write (1 or 2 words only) their responses, two per domino

For example



Begin with the double church, ask if anyone has church on one of their cards These cards are laid, and the domino game continues eg matching "shops", "bus stop" etc.

(If you need to, you can bend the domino rules, and have several cards meeting one.)

## Revealing Good News of the Down to Earth Christ

The idea of this part is that people in your group or church help each other remember Bible stories. Get your Bibles out if you must, to check details, but you may find it works best with people sharing what they remember.

**Where did Jesus meet people?**

**Who did Jesus meet? What sort of people were they?**

**What happened as a result of people meeting Jesus?**

(Don't forget to congratulate your group on the amount of shared Bible knowledge they have)

Now compare the dominoes with Jesus meeting with people

**What's the same? What's different?**

## Releasing life changing skills and confidence

**What shall we continue to do?**

**What shall we start doing?**

**What shall we stop doing?**

**What shall we do differently?**



This part is vital if the Christian learning from the game is to make a difference to the lives of those who take part.



Unlock

The word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood John 1v14 The Message



Unlock

The word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood John 1v14 The Message



Unlock

The word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood John 1v14 The Message

## TRESPASSERS WILL *NOT* BE PROSECUTED

An activity to use with your church or your group It's based on events created by Unlock workers in Hull. You'll need either a Saturday, or 2 evenings.

**What's the aim?** It's to help people explore what stops them gaining access to God's family, church leadership ... and God's presence!

**Where can we do this?** If you're in a church with a separate holy' area at the front, then get permission to use that. Otherwise you'll need to identify part of the church that is seen as inaccessible to the "rank and file" of church members.

**What will we need?** A large curtain, and a variety of creative stuff - paper, pens, pins etc.

### ***So, what do we do?***

Set up a "curtain" to represent the barrier that needs to be broken through.

The next part works best in small(ish) groups, so if you're more than about 6 people, you might want to divide into subgroups.

### ***Part 1: "What does the curtain mean?"***

Ask people what stops them

- being in God's presence?
- being part of God's family?
- doing things to help lead the church?

Ask them to think about the barriers in themselves and the barriers put up by others

Then, find ways to represent the barriers! Write or draw on paper ... or can you think of something else?!

Then pin or stick these to the curtain.

### ***Part 2: "Breaking through"***

Read "**Freak Earthquake Hits Jerusalem**" (from page 11). Then, again in small groups, think about what needs to happen to yourself and to the church to gain access through the barriers. Find a way to represent this:

- write a prayer, or a poem
- write a rap or a "football chant"
- create a mime or a drama
- create something 'visual' - a large scale cartoon, something 3D made from 'junk', patterns from ordinary objects on an OHP.
- your imagination is the limit!

The groups come back together, and present their "breakthrough". Then, pull the curtain down, and enjoy the fact that the barrier is removed. To add to the celebration. you may like to follow the example of the Hull group. Someone had secretly prepared a 'banquet table', and provided a feast of fish and chips, waiting for those who had come through the Curtain!

This activity requires a leader(s) with some flexibility and ability, to not only be creative themselves, but also draw out the creativity of others.

If you'd like to discuss using this with those who devised it, contact: Liz Dorton Tel 01482-821242 If you'd like some training for your own leaders, to give them the skills and confidence to offer this, or you'd like someone to come and lead it for you, then contact: Unlock, Handsworth Parish Centre, Handsworth Road, Sheffield, S13 9BZ



# IT IS FINISHED

## Great Adventure Ends In Death

The man who promised so much is dead. Jesus, the preacher who, only a few days ago, was being hailed by the crowd as the King of Israel was crucified at midday, dying three hours later.

The soldiers made a cruel parody of his claims – crowning him with brambles and dressing him like a King. They even nailed a sign over his head reading “The King of the Jews”. The man, who claimed to be God’s son, was taken *in* a rubbish dump on the edge of the city and killed. Some of the women who had followed his career were there with him, including, it is thought his mother.

“We can mock. but once again our hopes have been shattered,” said an onlooker. “We thought he was the one to save Israel. He couldn’t even save himself.” He has been taken to the grave of a wealthy supporter and buried in a private ceremony.

This is from “THE SCROLL -THE TABLOID BIBLE”

by Nick Page Published by Harper Collins, 1998

Available from bookshops

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Unlock—more than you think page 11

## Freak Earthquake Hits Jerusalem Temple Curtain Goes For A Burton

**Jerusalem was shaking yesterday as a freak earthquake and unusual atmospheric conditions plunged the city into darkness.**

“The ground shook and rocks split in half,” said the Chief Weather Prophet. “There were even reports of tombstones rolling away. It was a serious earth tremor.

### ***Curtain***

The ground shook So much that the huge curtain in the Temple was split in half. The curtain guards the most sacred place — the Holy of Holies — from ordinary, unholy people. I heard this enormous tearing sound.’ said one worshipper. “For a moment I thought my trousers had gone. but then I saw this curtain was ripped from top to bottom. There was chaos. The Priests were trying to stick the curtains hack up before anyone could get a look. Luckily somebody rushed in shouting, ‘let me through. I’m an interior Decorator!’ and the situation was saved.’

### ***Darkness***

Along with the earthquake. Jerusalem was plunged into darkness for three hours. “Clearly the earthquake cut the power supplies,” said an official. When it was pointed out to him that we didn’t actually have any power supplies, he said “Oh.” When asked what was causing these severe conditions, the Chief Weather Prophet said, “It’s probably just an area of high pressure. In the old days they would have attributed this to the wrath of God. Thank heavens we’re all a bit more sophisticated nowadays.”



# Open Doors! True Story

By Karely Haasz

## Maureens vision

A Café in a local parade of shops, to reach out with the Gospel and give practical help to the many young people living in the area.

Maureen saw other projects come and go. The café vision was a dream, a hop, a memory, for more than 10 years but seemed to be from God.

### **But the vision would not go away.**

Eventually Maureen asked friends from her multi cultural inner-city congregation to meet and pray and discuss the vision.

*How does God want to reach out from the church into the surrounding community?*



A small group met to pray and think about taking over an unused shop, on the main street....but we didn't! What was God saying to us? As our group grew larger we moved from a home to a room into a room at the church, located on the corner of a main road and a side street. And we realised we had a building of our own to use! We prayed and dreamed about what God might want to do! Lots of excitement and ideas but not much happened! What did God want us to do?

**A bridge** between church and community, for good news to go out, and for people to come in-bringing the neighbourhood into contact with our spiritual life!

## A piece of quiet for Christmas

As Christmas drew near, we thought how for some it is a painful time of year. We would provide space for people to drop in, or just be still. We offered a drink and a listening ear, on Monday mornings.

## Doors open!!

Then we set to work. The main doors to the church are large, forbidding and usually closed. And the church garden wasn't much better!! One Monday morning, we met to pray and then threw open the great doors onto a cold sunlit street and started gardening. We couldn't get on with the work as people came up and spoke to us.  
*"Is that a church? Is it open?"*  
*"I've never seen it open before, I thought it was closed."*  
*"I'm glad to see it open again."*  
I had more conversations about God on Monday, than I ever had going to church on a Sunday.



In the 15 months since that pilot project, we have seen other initiatives take root and grow. But it was our little quiet space that first unlocked the doors and made us visible.





# Doors and Gates

By Dave Rogers

based on John 10 v7 10

## Home

- You get home after a hard day, and you're glad to be indoors. You shut the door, put the kettle on, and sit down and relax. How do you feel?
- In what ways is your home a safe and secure place? Take a large piece of paper and write down or draw some ideas from the group.
- Has your safety ever been violated and you've felt threatened? e.g. unwanted callers at the door, a burglary, or maybe a member of your family who has frightened you

## Church

- Does church feel like a safe place? What feels safe about it?
- Write down or draw some ideas on how you have found the church to be a sanctuary from the world outside.



**Now read the bible story  
"THE GATE"**

- What links can you see between your stories about home and church and Jesus' picture of himself as the door?
- Where are you safe?
- Where do you go out to find what you need?
- Who are the doorkeepers in these places—who decides who is on the inside and who gets left out?
- What changes would you like to see—in your home, in your church, in yourself?

# Doors and gates- notes for group leaders

## Part A: Inside

1) Ask the group the questions about 'home'. This needs quite a lot of trust in the group. If your group is fairly new, you might like to leave this part until they know each other a bit more.

2) Ask the group the questions about 'church'. You might like to begin with an explanation: ***If you go to an old church you will find it usually has a very heavy solid wooden door that weighs a ton.. They were built like this deliberately to make them safe from thieves and bandits who might try to get in. And you could go and find sanctuary in a church - with the door firmly shut it was a place of safety from those who were out to get you.***

NB You can give group members the question sheet if you want to

3) Ask the group to look at their two lists

***What is the same?***

***What is different?***

***Why?***

## Part B: Outside

***"We've been thinking about what it's like on the inside with the door closed  
Now we're going to think about being on the outside."***

One member of the group needs to volunteer to be on the outside. The rest of the group get into a small tight circle and start a conversation, and make sure that the person on the outside can't get in. The person on the outside should try to interrupt and get a word in, but the group mustn't let them in.

Find out from the person on the outside what it felt like.

***Why do we close doors?***

***What helps us open them?***

***Have you ever been on the outside with the door closed?***

Finish by praying, either aloud or in silence, for each person in your group, and for the places you have been talking about, churches, homes, places of work.



# The Gate

So Jesus said again.

“I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

**I am the gate.**

Whoever comes in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life -life in all its fullness.”

John Chapter 10 v7-10  
Good News Bible

The sheepfold was a safe space, surrounded by a wall with a gap. The sheep could go in at night and be safe from the wolves, lions and thieves who might harm or steal them. The shepherd used to sleep across the doorway - ‘the gate’. The sheep had to go out of the fold during the day, because outside was where the food was - the grass that kept them alive.

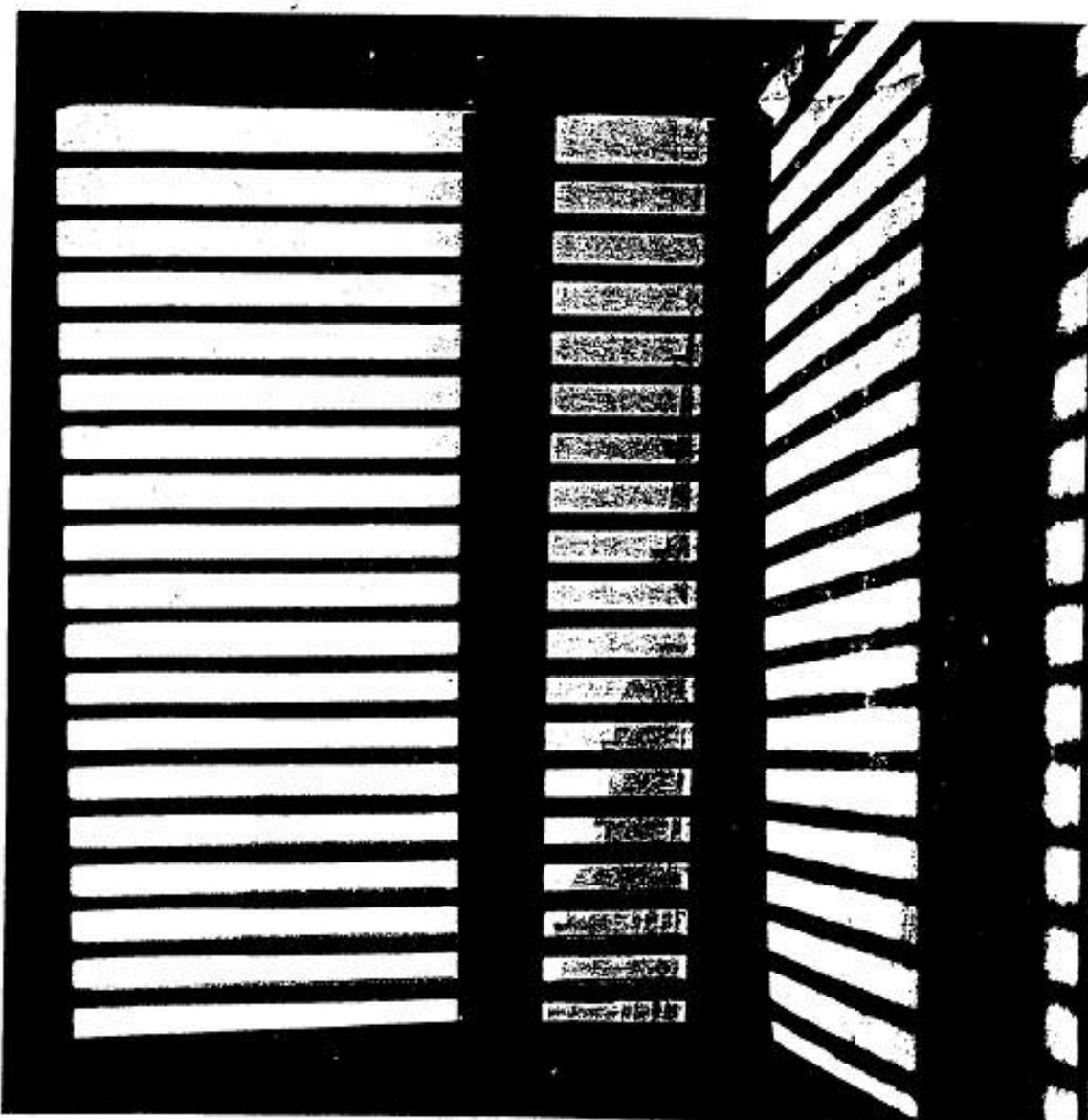


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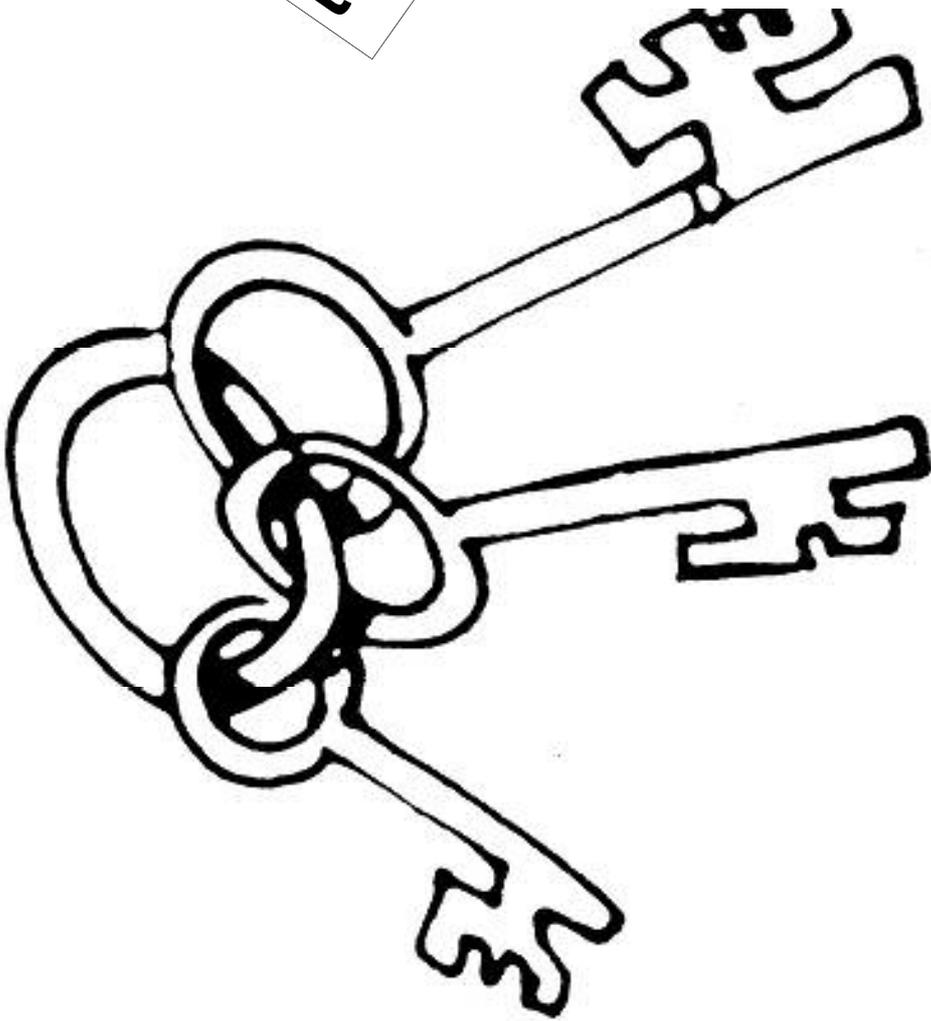


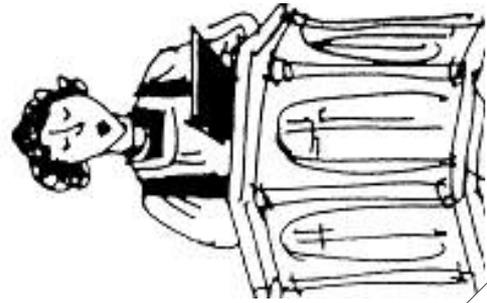
Who is  
locked  
in?

Who is  
locked  
out?



Can you find  
the right key?

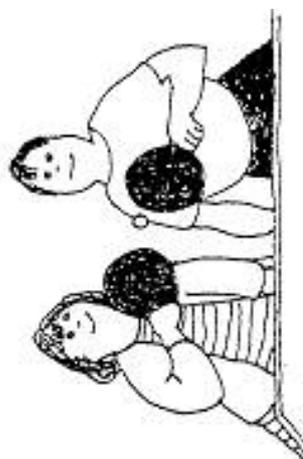


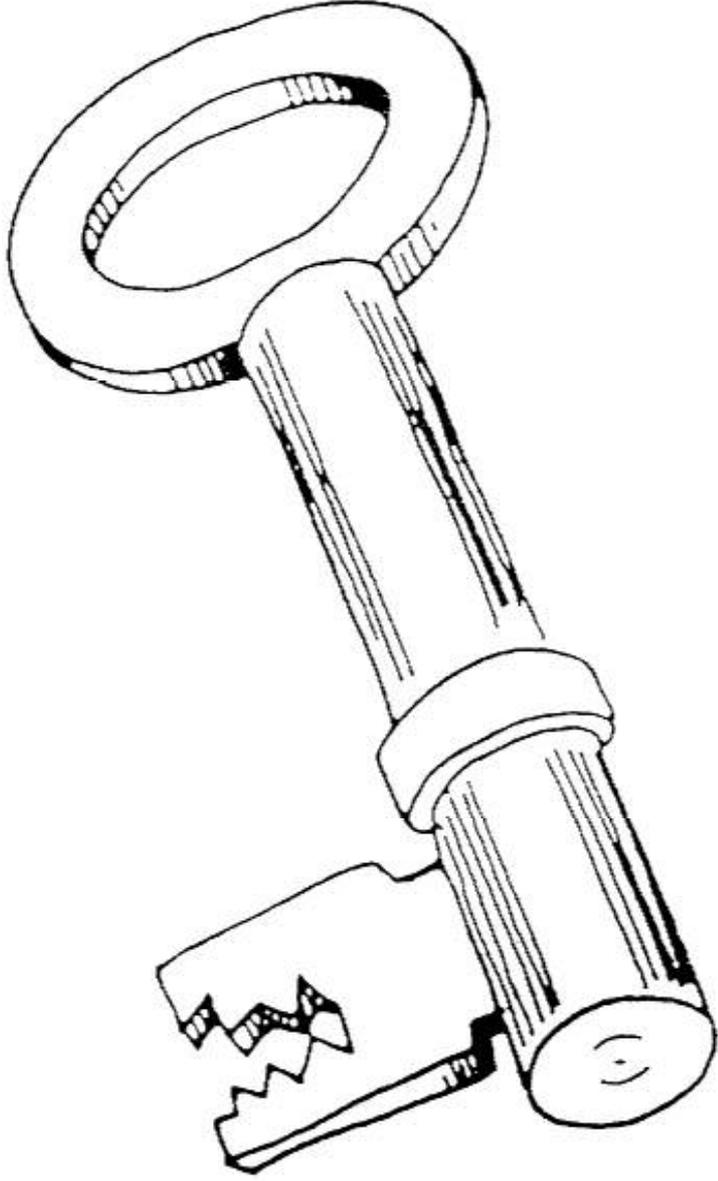


Where do you fit?



Who fits where?





Will you turn the key?



Unlock—more than you think page 19







## Unlock Materials

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- Acknowledge both the author and Unlock, including a contact address for Unlock.
- Inform Unlock if the material is to be distributed to a network wider than a local church or group.

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*Thank you for your co-operation in this.*

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