

# Spiritual Enigmas

**Introduction.** Off the coast of Bimini, an island in the Bahamas, lies an ancient stone formation submerged a mere 20 feet down beneath crystal blue waters. Researchers, geologists, archaeologists, and scientists alike have visited and studied the huge, flat stones cut at right angles, seemingly set purposefully in straight lines, known as the Bimini Road. This impressive formation stretches half a mile along, with a pronounced hook at one end. The stones can measure up to 13 feet across. People have tried for years to discern whether the limestone blocks are a natural phenomenon, or evidence of an ancient lost civilization. They are truly one of the great unsolved enigmas of humanity.

An enigma is something mysterious, puzzling, or difficult to understand. And just like there are physical enigmas in our world, there are also spiritual enigmas too. While the gospel can be understood, people's behaviors sometimes cannot. These enigmas that puzzle and trouble our lives deserve to be studied. As we get started, it needs to be said that I am not declaring that I have made the best decisions in each one of these.

## ***I. Why Is It Easy To See Others' Mistakes But Hard To See Our Own?***

- A. Advice is more fun to give than accept. It seems like it is always simpler to stand in a corner or sit in an armchair and identify all the faults, shortcomings, and blemishes on someone else than to take a hard look in the mirror and recognize one's own weaknesses.
  - 1. We can raise the other fellow's children perfectly.
  - 2. We can tell another person how to deal with his wife or her husband.
- B. James spoke of a man who looked in the mirror but afterward forgot exactly what he looked like (1:23-25). His fading and convenient memory allowed him to forget his wrinkles and scars and recall only his pretty eyes and perfect nose.
- C. We have all of the answers to others' problems, but none for our own. Jesus teaches us to correct our own faults before we go out "helping" others find theirs (Matthew 7:1-6).
  - 1. When we correct our own problems, we can see clearly to help others (Luke 22:31-34).
  - 2. Sometimes we may be asked for our advice, but it is best to concentrate on solving our own problems (1 Thessalonians 4:9-12).

## ***II. Why Is It Easy To Find Time For Recreation But Hard To Attend Assemblies And Classes?***

- A. Many are fighting the endless battle against the clock: struggling to find time for work, sleep, leisure, and religion.
- B. Many, however, are only pretending to struggle, having worked out their schedule with enough room to "fool" the brethren.
  - 1. Many Christians who complain about how hard it is to get here at 9:00 Sunday morning find it quite easy to stay out until midnight Saturday night.
  - 2. Many who complain about giving four hours to the Lord on Sundays and Wednesday find it quite easy to give three hours to the Cowboys on the couch Sunday afternoon. Maybe Dez and Dak can get you to Heaven!

3. Why does it seem like a sacrifice to spend an hour worshipping the Lord, but easy to spend an hour or three watching television (Psalm 95:1-2; 100:1-5)?
  - a) No doubt, worship lacks the chills, thrills, and flesh of television, but does not this attitude reveal more to God about our faith than we might like?
  - b) If we choose to spend Sundays worshipping the television, this is simply a case of failing to put God first (Colossians 3:1-3) and being in love with the world (James 4:4).
- C. How many souls will be lost because of an addiction to the world? Will yours (1 Corinthians 6:12)?

### ***III. Why Is It Easy To Spend Hours Reading Online But Hard To Spend A Few Minutes In The Bible?***

- A. Every one of us spends time reading every day, yet we claim to have no time to read the Bible, not even 15 minutes for the greatest of all books.
- B. We need to heed Paul's admonition to Timothy (1 Timothy 4:13-16).
  1. Make it a routine like eating dinner or taking a shower.
  2. Don't neglect the only literature that can save your soul (Joshua 1:8; Jeremiah 15:16).

### ***IV. Why Is It Easy To Encourage Our Children In Their School Lessons But Not Their Bible Lessons?***

- A. Why is it easy to encourage our children to work on their lessons for school (and punish them if they don't), but hard to motivate them to do their Bible lessons (and fail to discipline them when they don't)?
- B. We need not only to encourage our children, but also to set a good example in preparing for our own Bible classes and work with them in preparing theirs.
- C. It gets back to priorities: when we put more emphasis on school work than Bible class work, we have taught our children a lesson they will never forget — worldly ambition outweighs heavenly ambition (Philippians 3:20-21; 4:8).

### ***V. Why Is It Easy To Spend \$50 Frivolously But Hard To Contribute It To The Church?***

- A. Why is it easy to spend \$50 at a nice restaurant and see a movie, but hard to place the same amount in the collection plate to support the work of the church?
- B. We esteem recreation and fleshly pleasures more worthy than evangelism, our own spiritual edification, and the benevolent needs of our brethren. Sparing sowers are sparing reapers (1 Chronicles 29:6-9; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

### ***VI. Why Is It Easy To Talk About Any Subject But Hard To Talk About Faith?***

- A. Why is it easier to talk to your friends about your views on world affairs, sports, and the weather than to speak about your faith in Christ?
  1. We might fear the stigma of being labeled a fanatic or a troublemaker.
  2. But it is our duty as well as our privilege to "proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).
- B. When our zeal for the Lord is full, there will be no way to stop us from proclaiming His name.

1. Politics, sports, and the weather can be good lead-ins to a discussion of faith.
2. Look for real opportunities to teach, like Christ (John 4:6-10).

***VII. Why is It Easy To Talk/Text On The Phone For Hours But Hard To Pray For A Few Minutes?***

- A. How is it that we can stay on our phones for hours, but it feels like such a chore to talk to God in prayer for a few minutes each day?
- B. Genuine love for God, as opposed to love for the world, is what we need (Philemon 5; 1 Peter 1:8). God wants to hear from us (James 4:4-10). He wants to know our trials (Matthew 26:39, 42) . He knows we need help in expressing what we need (Romans 8:26-27).

**Conclusion.** These enigmas are discussed in hopes of helping us sort them out. Apply yourself and work to balance your life spiritually with its physical components and better please God.

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