

MOTIVES OF THE HEART

Sabbath School Bible Studies

Five Questions for Life Change

Key Text: Romans 12:1-3

January 6th

The influence of Materialism

Open

- 1 Russell Brand, comedian, actor, and activist reflects on modern life:

"Humanity is (metaphorically), knocking on a brothel door, in that they are looking for fulfilment in things that will only leave them empty. And because instant, but quickly fleeting gratification is always at our fingertips - Amazon Prime, Instagram likes, pornography, text messages and other modern trappings - we have become addicted."

(Russell Brand)

<https://relevantmagazine.com/culture/the-second-coming-of-russell-brand/>

Is he exaggerating to make a point, or a common reality?

Dig

- 2 Paul's letter to the Romans explains the significance of the Gospel, particularly the mercy of God. It's a letter that contains some deep theology, but by Romans 12:1, Paul makes an appeal to connect God to everyday life. What does this mean?

- 3 "Don't be conformed to this world", says Paul in Romans 12:2.

Some other translations read:

"Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world..." (New Living Translation)

"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould..." (Philips New Testament)

"Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking..." (The Message)

Consider these words in the context of our relationship with the media (advertising, films, music).

- 4 *"Paul says, to worship and serve God, we must undergo a change, not of our outward form, but of our inward personality. What is this change?"*

(Question posed by William Barclay in his commentary on Romans 12:2)

(Discuss)

<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/dsb/romans-12.html>

Reflect

- 5 God first, or the influence of materialism?