

These words the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans in the first century can still be meaningful for you today. He spoke to persons who separated that which is spiritual from that which is human. Do you find it easy to do that also? You may say that Christ makes a difference in your spiritual life, but what about in your everyday walking, talking, living experiences? Paul urges us to offer our whole selves to God and to allow God to change our way of thinking from the way the rest of the world thinks.

OFFER YOURSELVES AS LIVING SACRIFICES

List five activities of your life that take up most of your time or that seem to be the areas of most concern to you.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How do you think each of these activities helps you to love God? your neighbor? yourself? If they do not, how could your involvement or the nature of the activity be changed to be pleasing to God?

CONFORMITY QUIZ

See how much you conform to the standards of the world. Beside each statement give yourself points for the answer that most closely fits the way you feel: Usually—3 points, Sometimes—2 points, Never—1 point.

- 1. My major decisions are made prayerfully based on my Christian beliefs.
- 2. I critically question ideas or situations presented in the movies I see.
- 3. Most of my close friends are Christians or hold similar values to mine.
- 4. I just listen to music; I don't pay attention to the words.

- 5. I go along with the crowd who may make fun of the person who is different—the outcast, the lonely, the unlovely, and so on.
- 6. When challenged, I speak up for my beliefs. I am a witness for Christ.
- 7. I do my best. I believe in doing more than just enough to get by.
- 8. I buy clothes based on reasons other than the brand and what is popular.

Add up the numbers. What is your score?

8—13 High conformity to the standards of the world.

14—18 Think about your life and decisions. Try a little harder.

19—24 You're making a real effort to live life God's way.

THE STANDARDS OF THE WORLD

The behavior and ideas that the world accepts and those that God accepts for God's people are sometimes at odds with each other. On what specific issues do you as a Christian feel that you are going against the standards of the world? Where do you take a stand as a Christian that seems to go against the rest of the world?

LET GOD TRANSFORM YOU INWARDLY

How can you allow God to change your mind? Here are some ways that may help. Which are easiest for you to do? Check the one that is hardest or the one that you most need to work on.

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bible study | <input type="checkbox"/> Worship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest self-examination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discussions with other Christians | <input type="checkbox"/> Listening to Christian music |

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Lord, I offer as much of myself to you as I possibly know how. It is hard to live by your standards. Forgive me when I take the easy way out by following the standards set by the world. May the Spirit of Christ renew my mind and help me to see things the way I ought to see them. Give me courage to act in a way that would be pleasing to you. Amen.