

## **Preparing the Heart for God's Service**

2 Chronicles 12:14; “and he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.

Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, who reigned after his father, had spoken evil to Israel about the burdens he would place upon them. This verse says, “He did evil”. It is rather amazing that so many of the leaders of Israel led Israel to do evil, being evil themselves. It seems that Rehoboam would have walked with God, having been brought up to see all the wonderful things God did for Israel during his father’s (Solomon) day, and hearing all the things God did during his grandfather’s (David) day. We might ask ourselves the question why he did not.

The scripture says; “The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord” (Proverbs 16:1). First the heart must be made good by God, and it is His sovereign work alone. For the scripture says the heart in natural man is evil. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? (Jeremiah 17:9). Before man can begin to prepare his heart to serve God, his heart must be made good by God. After it is made good then man must begin the work of preparing his heart for the work. It is said of Rehoboam that “he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord”. The first thing a person must do if he would serve God is to prepare his heart. How does a man prepare his heart? David says in Psalm 119:11; “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.” There must first be a receiving of the word of God. There is no other way to prepare the heart. If a person does not accept the Scriptures as the Word of God, he has no standard by which he can determine what is acceptable service to God. If the Bible is not the standard, then one man’s opinion is as good as another.

Rehoboam accepted the advice of men whose lives were not based on the Word of God. Therefore, they did evil. By what standard are you living? Do you know the Bible well enough to be sure that you are living by the Word of God and not by the opinions of men? Sometimes when the scripture addresses an area of our lives that needs change, we can rationalize it away and not make the necessary change. If this happens, it reduces the effectiveness of our service to God. May God help each of us to receive the Word of God in our heart and to let it guide and control our life!

**Elder Bobby Poe**