

WORSHIP RESTORED

“In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he (Hezekiah) opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them. Then he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them in the East Square, and said to them: “Hear me, Levites! Now sanctify yourselves, sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry out the rubbish from the holy place.” 2 Chronicles 29:3-5

Upon becoming king, Hezekiah’s first order of business was to get God’s house cleansed and restored for worship once again. His father Ahaz had shut up the doors, but now Hezekiah was on a mission to restore true worship in Judah. For this to happen he called the priests and Levites together instructing them to cleanse themselves and the house of the Lord by carrying out the rubbish within it.

A leader’s first responsibility is to assess the status of God’s house - that is, God’s people in whom He dwells, but beginning with himself. We must ask, “What is keeping us, as God’s people, from entering into His presence?” How has satan closed the doors of our hearts? How has he distracted us, God’s people, and turned us away from true worship? What “rubbish” is hindering the worship of God and must be gotten rid of for true worship to be restored?

It is not uncommon for people to slide into religion when their worship of God is corrupted; when their hearts have been turned from loving God to loving the world and all that it offers. The doors of intimacy with God close and the heart becomes cluttered with preoccupation with other things. They no longer worship the Lord in spirit and in truth, but merely in word and in form. As leaders we must call the people back to the presence of God, back to hearts that truly love Him. We must call them back to holiness through repentance. In doing so the ‘rubbish’ is removed and hearts are again prepared to seek the Lord.

Do the people you lead have merely a ‘form of godliness’? Do they know how to say all the right words, act spiritually, even pray, but lack the life of the Holy Spirit within? Are you as a leader regularly entering the presence of God, worshipping him in spirit and in truth with all your heart? What can you do to bring change?