



# CENTRAL SHELBY CHURCH OF CHRIST

working and worshipping together to serve the Lord



## A CONVENIENT RELIGION

Jeroboam, first king of Israel (after its division from the kingdom of Judah), was a leader who appealed to his people's desire for convenience. Afraid that the hearts of his subjects, upon traveling to Jerusalem to worship, would become disloyal, he set up idols in the northern and southern regions of his kingdom. He then told his people, *"It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt."* Jeroboam hoped that his people would jump at the opportunity to travel a shorter distance to worship. He was 'banking' his kingdom on it. Sadly, just as he had hoped, his plan appealed to the nation (1 Kings 12:25ff; 14:16).

If you had been a citizen of Israel in Jeroboam's day, what would you have done? Would you have succumbed to the temptation of 'convenient religion,' or would you have shown conviction of character by traveling the long journey to Jerusalem to worship the only true and living God?

More importantly, however -- what are you doing **today**? What is your attitude toward serving Christ? Are you willing to work for and worship the Lord only when it is convenient? Or are you convicted enough to serve God even when it proves difficult?

It's Wednesday, and it's been a hard day at work. And now you've got to rush home, eat supper, and get the kids ready for midweek Bible study. But you're tired, and your head aches a little. It would be easier to say, "I think it'd be best for us to stay home tonight." What will you do?

Your school friends are wearing clothes (some of which are immodest) that make yours look dull and boring. You're tired of looking like an 'oddball,' and you'd like to fit in with everyone. Your parents just might let you if you whine enough. What will you do?

You've "purposed in your heart" how much you'll contribute to the work of the local church, but now a few unexpected bills have come up. Decisions must be made. Eating at home more often and going golfing a few less times would help, but it'd be easier to say, "You know, we really don't need to contribute so much each week." What will you do?

Your brother is caught up in sin, and you know you need to talk to him. But you are afraid he will become angry with you if you try to restore him, even if you do so in a “spirit of gentleness.” It would be easier to say, “He’s the one who sinned, not me. He knows what he needs to do without me telling him. Let him dig himself out of the hole he’s dug himself into.” What will you do?

What was that again? Did you say you would have been among those who made that inconvenient journey to Jerusalem in Jeroboam’s day?

If our service to Christ is not activated by conviction of heart but only when things are convenient, can it truly be called “service”?

*“So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:33).*

--Mike Noble