

# Defining 'Church'

by A.W. Tozer

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*This sermon challenges listeners to reconsider their understanding of the church and its value, encouraging them to search the Scriptures and seek light from heaven.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 5:25

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Understanding the Church"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer challenges the conventional understanding of the church, urging believers to reconsider its true significance beyond mere social acceptance. He highlights that many Christians support the church as a societal norm without deeply questioning its purpose or seeking biblical understanding. Tozer emphasizes the need for earnest prayer and study of Scripture to grasp the church's role in God's plan, contrasting this with the meticulous attention people give to mundane tasks like tax preparation. He calls for a serious exploration of Jesus' declaration about the church and its enduring power against evil.

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## Transcript

It is time for us to reconsider this matter of the church. Most people think of the church as a familiar social fact. Their attitude toward Protestantism generally is that of a matter of course, and people, even average Christians, think they are in favor of the church. They favor the church much the same as they support motherhood, decency and sanitation. It is as accepted as a convention that we never question or doubt. If anybody does question or doubt, they are considered communists or atheists.

People will even pour out their money to support social convention. But I wonder how many ever sit down and say, "What is this? Maybe the church is just something that is here; it doesn't have any value and doesn't have any reason for being here." How many present-day Christians have ever searched the Scripture with a serious burden on their hearts to know what the church is? Is it simply a convention that is carried on? How many Christians have ever prayed earnestly for light from heaven about it?

It seems that the average person spends more time and intellectual labor each year filling out income tax forms than he or she spends in a lifetime trying to learn from the Scriptures and from the light of the Spirit what the church is and what he or she ought to do about it. Why is it in the world? What did Jesus mean when He said, "On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18b)? If people were to chew their pencils and walk the floor and go out for a walk and come back and work on it and search and think and discern and divide and go through all that they have to go through to make out their income taxes every year, I believe that they could come up with some wonderful answers.

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