

# Who Is the Church?

by A.W. Tozer

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*The church is an assembly of individuals, and improving it starts with personal growth and change.*

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 12:12

**Topics:** "The Nature of the Church", "Personal Responsibility"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes that the church is not merely a building but an assembly of individuals, highlighting the importance of personal responsibility in the health of the church. He warns against the dangers of becoming stagnant, where the church falls into a cycle of rote, rut, and ultimately rot, due to self-righteousness, judgment, and complacency among its members. Tozer asserts that the character of the church reflects the individuals within it, and true improvement must start with personal introspection rather than pointing fingers at others. He calls for a return to recognizing the church as a community of real people, urging members to take ownership of their roles in fostering a vibrant church life.

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## Transcript

For clarification, what is the church? When I say that a church gets into the rote and then onto the rut and finally to the rot, what am I talking about? For one thing, the church is not the building. A church is an assembly of individuals. There is a lot of meaningless dialogue these days about the church. It is meaningless because those engaged in the dialogue forget that a church has no separate existence. A church is not an entity in itself, but rather is composed of individual persons. It is the same error made about the state. Politicians sometimes talk about the state as though it were an entity in itself. Social workers talk about society, but society is people. So is the church.

The church is made up of real people, and when they come together we have the church.

Whatever the people are who make up the church, that is the kind of church it is--no worse and no better, no wiser, no holier, no more ardent and no more worshipful. To improve or change the church you must begin with individuals. When people in the church only point to others for improvement and not to themselves, it is sure evidence that the church has come to dry rot. It is proof of three sins: the sin of self-righteousness, the sin of judgment and the sin of complacency.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/who-is-the-church/>

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