

A Church Cemented in the Routine

A.W. Tozer:

What is the worst enemy the church faces today? This is where a lot of unreality and unconscious hypocrisy enters. Many are ready to say, "The liberals are our worst enemy." But the simple fact is that the average evangelical church does not have too much trouble with liberalism. Nobody gets up in our churches and claims that the first five books of Moses are just myths. Nobody says that the story of creation is simply religious mythology. Nobody denies that Christ walked on the water or that He rose from the grave. Nobody gets up in our churches and claims that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God or that He isn't coming back again. Nobody denies the validity of the Scriptures. We just cannot hide behind liberalism and say that it is our worst enemy. We believe that evangelical Christians are trying to hold on to the truth given to us, the faith of our fathers, so the liberals are not our worst enemy. Neither do we have a problem with the government. People in our country can do just about whatever they please and the government pays no attention. We can hold prayer meetings all night if we want, and the government would never bother us or question us. There is no secret police breathing down our backs watching our every move. We live in a free land, and we ought to thank God every day for that privilege. The treacherous enemy facing the church of Jesus Christ today is the dictatorship of the routine, when the routine becomes "lord" in the life of the church. Programs are organized and the prevailing conditions are accepted as normal. Anyone can predict next Sunday's service and what will happen. This seems to be the most deadly threat in the church today. When we come to the place where everything can be predicted and nobody expects anything unusual from God, we are in a rut. The routine dictates, and we can tell not only what will happen next Sunday, but what will occur next month and, if things do not improve, what will take place next year. Then we have reached the place where what has been determines what is, and what is determines what will be.