

# Game of Pious Words

by A.W. Tozer

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*A.W. Tozer warns against the superficiality of playing at religion, emphasizing the need for genuine spiritual growth and a transformed life.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 15:8

**Topics:** "Authenticity in Faith", "The Danger of Superficial Religion"

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## Description

A.W. Tozer emphasizes that many people engage in religion as if it were a game, participating in the 'game of pious words' without genuine transformation or moral commitment. He critiques the Church for having its own 'fields' and 'rules' that allow individuals to play at religion, often leading to a superficial experience devoid of real change in character or life. Tozer warns that, like athletes skillfully handling a ball, many use religious language to gain applause rather than to foster true spiritual growth. Ultimately, he laments that such activities do not lead to any lasting impact on individuals' lives, leaving them unchanged after the experience. The sermon calls for a deeper, more authentic engagement with faith that transcends mere words.

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## Transcript

Do you realize that most men play at religion as they play at games? Religion itself being of all games the one most universally played. The Church has its "fields" and its "rules" and its equipment for playing the game of pious words. It has its devotees, both laymen and professionals, who support the game with their money and encourage it with their presence, but who are no different in life or character from many who take no interest in religion at all. As an athlete uses a ball so do many of us use words: words spoken and words sung, words written and words uttered in prayer. We throw them swiftly across the field; we learn to handle them with dexterity and grace-and gain as our reward the applause of those who have enjoyed the game.

In the games men play there are no moral roots.

It is a pleasant activity which changes nothing and settles nothing, at last. Sadly, in the religious game of pious words, after the pleasant meeting no one is basically any different from what he had been before!

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/aw-tozer/game-of-pious-words/>

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