

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES / *Matthew 3*

The Pharisees and Sadducees were the two major religious groups in Israel at the time of Christ. The Pharisees were more religiously minded, while the Sadducees were more politically minded. Although the groups disliked and distrusted each other, they became allies in their common hatred for Jesus.

Name	Positive Characteristics	Negative Characteristics
Pharisees	Were committed to obeying all of God's commands	Behaved as though their own religious rules were just as important as God's rules for living
	Were admired by the common people for their apparent piety	Their piety was often hypocritical, and their efforts often forced others to try to live up to standards they themselves could not live up to
	Believed in a bodily resurrection and eternal life	Believed that salvation came from perfect obedience to the law and was not based on forgiveness of sins
	Believed in angels and demons	Became so obsessed with obeying their legal interpretations in every detail that they completely ignored God's message of mercy and grace
Sadducees		Were more concerned with appearing to be good than obeying God
	Believed strongly in the Mosaic law and in Levitical purity	Relied on logic while placing little importance on faith
	Were more practically minded than the Pharisees	Did not believe all the Old Testament was God's Word
	Did not believe in a bodily resurrection or eternal life	Did not believe in angels or demons
		Were often willing to compromise their values with the Romans and others in order to maintain their status and influential positions