

The Pharisees

Pharisees were a group of Jews who were very well respected at the time of Jesus.

Pharisees showed they were committed to God by living strictly to the rules that God have given Jewish people to follow. Some of the things they had to do were:

- Give 10% of their income to the temple
- Care for poor people
- Fast (go without food) two days a week

The Pharisees believed they were doing what God wanted them to do, and that they were setting a good example of how to live your life.

Remember that Jesus was a Jew too. Christianity was started later by the people that followed Jesus. Some Jews became Christians, as well as non-Jewish people.

- 1) Why did the Pharisees follow these rules?
- 2) Which of these rules do you think would be hard to follow?
- 3) From this description, do the Pharisees sound like good or bad people? Why?



The Tax Collectors

Jesus spent his life in Israel, which had been the home of Jewish people for hundreds of years. However, during the time that Jesus was alive, the Roman Empire had conquered Israel.

The Romans collected taxes from the people who lived in their empire, to pay for the empire. Usually, they would get local people to collect the taxes for them.

In Israel, some Jews became tax collectors for the Roman Empire. Ordinary people saw the tax collectors as cheats and traitors because they were working for the Romans.

- 1) Why did people dislike the tax collectors?
- 2) Why do you think some Jews agreed to become tax collectors?
- 3) From this description, do the tax collectors sound like good or bad people? Why?

