

**Disciples and Hypocrites:
a comparison of Matthew 5:1-12 and Matthew 23:13- 33;**

A disciple (from discipline) is a learner, a follower, an imitator of someone. Famous people have their imitators. Why do sports figures and movie and TV stars get paid so much to advertise shoes, clothes, cereal, etc.? By our profession of Faith in Jesus Christ we are declaring ourselves to be imitators of Christ. Cf Acts 11:26, "And the disciples were first called Christians (little Christ's) at Antioch." This is said by some scholars to be a term of ridicule.

A **hypocrite** (literally: one who answers as in a play) is taken from the Greek and Roman actors who used false faces with mechanical devices for augmenting the force of the voice; hence the word hypocrite became used as a metaphor of a dissembler; an imitator, but a false one.

How may we know the difference between disciples and hypocrites when both are imitators? Jesus, of course, knew the difference and He gave us some characteristics of each kind of imitator; disciples are learners, hypocrites are play actors.

In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus is speaking to disciples as He taught them the blessedness of discipleship. "Blessed" means large, long, and lengthy; thus the nature of the blessed is the largest or longest GOOD. "And we know that all things work together for GOOD to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28

The eight "beatitudes" or blessed's in Matthew 5:1-12 each, in varying degrees, apply to every disciple. But in Matthew 23:13-33, in Christ's last public discourse, He pronounces eight "woes" on those who are hypocrites.

What hope is there for anyone whom Christ Himself condemns?

Compare the characteristics of disciples and hypocrites:

1	POOR IN SPIRIT Opposite of pride; Humbled before Christ; Theirs is the kingdom of heaven	Matthew 5:3	PRIDEFUL Self-righteous Keeps others from Christ; Shut out of heaven	Matthew 23:13
2.	MOURNFUL They mourn (for their sin); No pretense, agony of soul; They shall be comforted.	Matthew 5:4	PRETENDERS Take advantage of weakest victims; Pretends at long prayers; Greater damnation.	Matthew 23:14
3.	MEEK Teachable; Has a witness, not concerned with success; They shall inherit the earth.	Matthew 5:5	PROSELYTERS Use any trick to get numbers; Often the proselyte is more zealous; Twice as much a son of hell. (worthy of hell)	Matthew 23:15
4.	HUNGRY & THIRSTY Just desires what is right; No need to prove anything; They shall be filled (satisfied).	Matthew 5:6	SWEARERS All manner of embellishment Will lie, with fingers crossed; Fools and blind!	Matthew 23:16-22
5.	MERCIFUL Not quick to find fault Knows their own faults; They shall obtain mercy.	Matthew 5:7	LEGALIST Watches the little things; Misses the real issues of the heart; Neglects justice mercy, Faith.	Matthew 23:23-24
6.	PURE IN HEART New heart; Inwardly clean; 'They shall see God.	Matthew 5:8	SELF-IGNORANT Outwardly clean; Inwardly Filthy; Deceived and lost,	Matthew 23:25-26
7.	PEACEMAKERS Will not receive gossip; Heals disagreements Called children of God	Matthew 5:9	EXTERNALIST Very religious; Always correcting others; As dead as a graveyard.	Matthew 23:27-28
8.	PERSECUTED Motives are questioned; Suffers for Christ; Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	Matthew 5:10	LIVING IN THE PAST Honors preachers; Will do anything to destroy you; Headed for hell.	Matthew 23:29-33

Matthew 5 & 23

5:3 "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

23:13 "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

5:4 Blessed are those who **mourn**,
For they shall be comforted.

23:14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

5:5 Blessed are the **meek**,
For they shall inherit the earth.

23:15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves

5:6 Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst** for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.

23:16 "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' 17 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? 18 And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' 19 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20 Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. 21 He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22 And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

5:7 Blessed are the **merciful**,
For they shall obtain mercy.

23:23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. 24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

5:8 Blessed are the **pure in heart**,
For they shall see God.

23:25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. 26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

5:9 Blessed are the **peacemakers**,
For they shall be called sons of God.

23:27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

5:10 Blessed are those who are **persecuted** for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

23:29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, 30 and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'

31 "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.
32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. 33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?