Scrip: Matthew 7:15-20. 1
Text: Mt. 7:15a ... "Beware of false prophets.

Theme: False prophets.

Proposition: Christians must live distinctively good lives as outward signs of their faith, else they are "false prophets."

Date written: 11 July 1953.

Places & dates preached:

Frack Sen., Co. "Z" 135 Regt, Gp. Rucker, Ald n July 53

CHAPLAIN'S INFORMATION CARD PAYTON & Chase co. K : Bn. 13. Name . Catholic ; Jewish Protestant (Check Which) If Protestant—What Denomination? Bastash State below your interest or experience in: CHURCH ACTIVITIES: Bible study ; Bible Teaching _____; MUSIC: Choir?_____; Lead Singing?_____; Solo Work?_____ What Instrument do you play? ATHLETICS: ENTERTAINMENT: Name and Home Address of Parents or Next of Kin:___

Introduction:

l. Recent Matthews article
in American Mercury labelling
many (7000) Protestant ministers
"communist." Protest from cleggy
& others, including president.
Illustrates Scripture theme well.
Communism opposed to all Chirstianity stands for, and such minis
ters certainly would be "false
prophets."

2. Text & summary of circumstances of Scripture:

a. Text (read).

b. Mk. 13:5,6,22 quotes similar words of Christ.

c. Mothing like this in
Luke. After Jesus' death
(& Luke wrote from earlier
experience, probably) that term
"false prophets" used for some
among Christians. When struggle
began between Christians who
would convert any and those who
would first have converts made
Jews, term was applied to latter

- d. Consensus of judgment of early church that form & legalistic ritual not necessary to become Christian in heart.
- e. "False prophets" was label of those who loudly profess Christianity, but whose lives are out of harmony with i
- f. As a wolf might try to hide in sheepskin in order to sneak up on a sheep to eat it, so such false prophets are among the Christian fellowship, destroying it by their falseness

3. Chief lesson taught:

a. Only by their distinctive lives can Christians, amongh fellows-or to world, be known.

- b. Comparing their faith to a tree and their acts to fruit is Jesus' way of pointing differ ence between false prophets and sincere Christians.
- c. Task here is to consider sincere Christian distinctivenews as opposed to false pro-

Name flam 6, Jehwars Co./tat/te; Bn.				
Protestant; Catholic; Jewish				
(Check Which)				
If Protestant—What Denomination? Lulleran				
State below your interest or experience in:				
CHURCH ACTIVITIES: Bible study; Bible Teaching				
MUSIC: Choir?; Lead Singing?; Solo Work?				
What Instrument do you play?				
ATHLETICS: Baskel hall, tootball softball				
ENTERTAINMENT:				
Name and Home Address of Parents or Next of Kin:				
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Mrs. Harold C. Ask vara Mapleton Minn.				

phecy, using our Scripture as a guide.

- I. Acts of faith must be the Christian's chief effort, becoming almost his reason for being.
- 1. Fruit is that for which a tree exerts itself wholly.
- 2. If for some reason tree regularly fails to bear fruit, it is destroyed (v.19).
- 3. So a Christian must exert self fully and constantly to do God's work. Failure to try to do God's work is obvious to self & others, and ixxx results in destruction of faith.
- II. Acts of faith, a distinctive life, that for which Christian is known.
- 1. Many different kinds of fruit trees.
- a. Peach, apple, pecan, orang all useful & edible fruits.
 - b. Also ones like mimosa, blackjack oak, persimmon & hemlock.

Name FAW	4ht L. HArter	Co. Hatta; Bn.
Protestant	, Catholic	; Jewish
	(Check Which)	
If Protestant—Wh	nat Denomination? Baple	ot .
State below your i	nterest or experience in:	
CHURCH ACTIV	ITIES: Bible study; B	ible Teaching
MUSIC: Choir?	, Lead Singing?	; Solo Work?
What In	astrument do you play?	
ATHLETICS:		
ENTERTAINMEN	T:	1
Name and Home	Address of Parents or Next of Kin:	gar and gars
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(1) Mimosa, though beautiful, can spread rapidly, ruin land, and mess up yard and stree

(2) Blackjack, though sometimes helping hold land from corrosion, does not grow to lumber size, and acorn not edible.

- (3) Persimmon at short stage produces edible fruit & useful wood (in pipes or golf clubs), but not for long (fruit) or in large amount (wood).
 - (4) Hemlock may produce lumber, but it is also a poison if fruit juice is drunk.

2. Christian must produce good fruit, as 1st class above.

3. Yet, variety is allowed. Need not all be alike in conversion, worship, growth, acts of kindness, so long as fruits of life are consistently Christian in spirit and useful.

Name Richard E Sanders	Co. Hg; Bn. 135 Rg
Protestant, Catholic(Check Which)	; Jewish
If Protestant—What Denomination? Lulhern	
State below your interest or experience in:	
CHURCH ACTIVITIES: Bible study, Bil	ble Teaching
MUSIC Choir?, Lead Singing?	, Solo Work?
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ATHLETICS: Soccer	
ENTERTAINMENT: M6 V/ es	
Name and Home Address of Parents or Next of Kin:	
Mrs Pauline Sanders	
Mcc. Lure. Pa	

4: A sound faith will always bear good fruit in consistent action (v.17-18).

III. Acts of Christian faith are

attractive.

1. Good apple or peach is pretty to see. Even if one does not benefit by it, may be attracted to admire it (v. 16b).

2. Christian fruit in living is likewise beautiful, attractive, inspiring, desirable.

3. Turkish Christian asked to explain John's gospel. Then to le to sign statement that he endorses gospel's views & would be responsible for them, for they are so timelythat someone must be responsible for them today.

4. Christianity does produce and own attractiveness in him who is willing to live it.

IV. Maturing and ripening in acts of Christian faith are gradual processes.

1. Fruit takes time to mature

Name ROSER L. HANSON CO. H.G; Bn. 157
Protestant; Catholic; Jewish
If Protestant—What Denomination? METHODIST
State below your interest or experience in:
CHURCH ACTIVITIES: Bible study, Bible Teaching
MUSIC: Choir?, Lead Singing?, Solo Work?
What Instrument do you play?
ATHLETICS: BASKET BALL
ENTERTAINMENT.
Name and Home Address of Parents or Next of Kin: MRS Ghadys Hays on 1314 Specific St.
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and ripen. Rainfall, drought, storms, fair weather, affect it.

- 2. Higher reaches of character affacts attained only by long patience and resolute perseverance through all of life.
- 3. Where fruit becomes wormy, diseased or rots before ripening, it drops off tree or is cast off. Sometimes a disease starting in fruit kills the tree.
- 4. Failure to produce Christian acts, to let Christ change your life and make it different, can and often does kill the tree of Christian faith, or indicate it was nevere there. Such neglect to live distinctively brands a person a "false prophet."

 Conclusion: Christians must live distinctively good lives as outstard signs of their faith, else they are "false prophets."

Name James D. Corter Jr. Co. D; Bn.
Protestant / F 5 , Catholic ; Jewish (Check Which)
If Protestant—What Denomination? NONE
State below your interest or experience in:
CHURCH ACTIVITIES: Bible study YES; Bible Teaching
MUSIC: Choir?; Lead Singing?; Solo Work?
What Instrument do you play?
ATHLETICS: NONE
ENTERTAINMENT: NONE
Name and Home Address of Parents or Next of Kin:
KIEL AVE BKINNELON
BUTHER NEW JERSEY