Sermon Screens for January 31, 2016

1. **“Growing Mature in the Lord”** by Pastor Gary London Colossians 1:25 & 28, “God has given me the responsibility of serving His church by proclaiming His message to you…So I tell you about Christ, warning and teaching you from His wisdom (the Word). I want to present you to God, perfect (mature) in your relationship to Christ.”
2. Ephesians 4:1, 13-16, “Live a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God…be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then you will no longer be immature like children. You will not be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. You will not be influenced when people try to trick you with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, you will (know and ) speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ…so that the whole body is healthy and growing (mature) in love.”
3. **The cycle of spiritual growth & maturity:** \*God calls us \*We answer “yes” \*God shines His light on an area of our life that needs to change \*We choose to obey and apply self-discipline \*God tests our decision (refines and purifies us in the fire of His love) \*Our heart changes (growth and maturity are happening) \*And the cycle starts over with God shining His light on another area of our life
4. 1Peter 1:6-7, “There’s wonderful joy ahead even though you have to endure many trials for a while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It’s being tested as fire tests and purifies gold.”

James 1:2-3, “Dear Brothers and Sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, it has a chance to grow. So let it grow for when your faith is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete (mature in the Lord).”

1. Lie: **A strong relationship with God should come easy.**

1Corinthians 9:24-27, “Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So run with purpose in every step…Discipline your body (and mind) like an athlete, training it to do what it should.”

1. Lie: **My faith in God should make me feel good.**

1Peter 4:1-2 & 12-13, “Since Christ suffered physical pain, you must arm yourselves with the same attitude He had, and be ready to suffer too. For if you’ve suffered physically for Christ, you have finished with sin. You won’t spend the rest of your lives chasing your own desires, but you will be eager to do the will of God…Don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad for these trials make you (worthy) partners with Christ in His suffering.”

1. Lie: **If Jesus is my Lord, I shouldn’t have to wait or go without.**

Philippians 3:7-8 & 13-14, “I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I’ve discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with Him…I focus on this one thing: forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on (to maturity) to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.”

1. 1Peter 1:14-15 & 2:1-2, “You must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do…So get rid of all evil behavior…You must crave pure spiritual nourishment so that you will grow (mature) into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment.”