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The Presentation Imperative

Romans 6.12-14

Series: The Pure Gospel

Rev. Andrew Hawkins, Ph.D.

The Village Church

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I. **The Pure Gospel and Its Objections**

- A. A few weeks ago I indicated that coming to Christ was like being pregnant
 - 1. I even told you, that in a spiritual sense, even men can get pregnant
 - a. But I warned you not to misunderstand
 - b. I wasn't speaking in biological terms – I don't in any way want to be associated with the gender insanity that is taking place these days
 - 2. No – it was a metaphor, a simile
 - a. That coming to Christ was *like* being pregnant
 - 3. And I meant it in this sense
 - a. Something has happened to you
 - b. But not everything that is going to
 - 4. That is, being pregnant is not the end of the matter
 - a. Only the beginning
- B. I used that illustration to try and capture the essence of what Romans 6 was teaching
 - 1. That if you believe in Jesus Christ
 - a. And according to Romans, if you believe in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation
 - b. Not believing in anything in yourself
 - c. Then you are saved, justified, declared righteous in the sight of God
 - 2. And if justified, you have peace with God
 - a. No longer is He your enemy; He is your friend
 - b. And you're saved from the wrath of God (propitiation!)
 - c. And you have hope of the glory of God
- C. But Romans 6 raises the important objection
 - 1. **Romans 6:1** (ESV) — 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?
 - a. In other words, if that's the great benefit of believing, why don't we just sin like crazy?
 - 2. But Paul says,
 - a. **Romans 6:2** (ESV) — 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?
 - 3. In other words, when you believe in Jesus, something has happened

- a. You have died to sin!
- 4. Now, that's not the end of the matter – just the beginning
- D. **Romans 6:4** (ESV) —
 - 1. 4 We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.
- E. There is this sense that it's not really that we've died in every respect
 - 1. No – **we've died to sin**
 - 2. But there are other dimensions of our lives in which we are very much alive
 - a. We are new creatures in Christ – new creations
 - b. We can walk “in newness of life”
 - c. We can live in a way that we were never able to before
 - 3. **Ephesians 2:10** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- F. And the illustration of its like our being pregnant is an echo of what Jesus said to Nicodemus
 - 1. **John 3:3** (ESV) —
 - a. 3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”
 - 2. You need to be born again
 - a. And if you believe, trust in Jesus alone for your salvation – you have been born again
 - 3. The Spirit of God has conceived in you the very life of Christ
 - a. New life in you
- G. But, again – that's not the end of the matter
 - 1. When you're born again – you're just a babe
 - a. Just a little, tiny, dependent, whiny, helpless, infant
 - 2. Or as one cynical obstetrician put it, “a newborn baby is an alimentary canal with a loud noise at one end and no sense of responsibility at the other!”
 - 3. But that's not how we end up
 - a. Look around at these people!
 - b. We all used to be those little, helpless, whiny babies
 - c. But we grew up
 - 4. It seems like yesterday when our daughter, who was the first of our children to have children – our grandson, Andrew – when she first told us she was pregnant
 - a. And then he was born
 - 5. But now look at him – 9+ years later
 - a. (I had to include Andrew this week because I included Ethan last week – equal time, you know)
 - b. But goodness! He's almost as tall as Jean

- c. And he wasn't anywhere near that tall in November when they were with us for Thanksgiving!
 - 6. He's growing!
 - 7. And spiritually speaking, that's what happens when we come to Christ
 - a. We're born again – new life in us
 - b. We've died to sin – so that we might walk in that new life
 - c. But we're just babes; just infants
 - d. And so, spiritually, we grow up
- H. And wouldn't you know it, theologians have cooked up a word for that
 - 1. We've already been introduced to some significant theological words in our study of Romans
 - 2. **Justification**
 - a. By grace through faith, that means we have been declared not guilty in God's courtroom
 - b. That our sin has been imputed to Christ, that is, accounted to Christ, having died in our place on the cross
 - c. That Christ's righteousness has been imputed to our account
 - 3. **Propitiation**
 - a. The death of Christ is a wrath-removing sacrifice, saving us from the just penalty of our sin
 - b. By the application of the blood of Christ on the mercy seat – which is where we get the word for propitiation
 - 4. But now we get a new word
 - a. A word for what takes place after we've been justified, been declared righteous
 - 5. **Sanctification**
 - a. The process by which we grow from those feeble, whiny, helpless, babies into full-fledged mature believers
 - b. And more and more into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ
 - c. Whose life was implanted in us when we were born again
- I. Now I need to correct something I said
 - 1. I said, theologians have cooked up these words
 - 2. But actually, they are biblical words
 - a. Real, honest-to-goodness biblical words
 - 3. **Justification = dikaios (Gk)**
 - 4. **Propitiation = hilasterion (Gk)**
 - 5. **Sanctification = hagiozo (Gk)**
- J. So you can't blame the theologians
 - 1. These are words you should all know and understand
- K. Now there is a word that theologians have invented – not a biblical word, but certainly a biblical concept
 - 1. We learned about that word last week
 - a. **Antinomianism**
 - b. "Against-the-law-ism"
 - c. Anti = against

- d. Nomos = law
- 2. That's the objection to the gospel that Paul deals with first in Romans
- 3. **Romans 6:1** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?
- 4. And the answer Paul gives is “No!”
 - a. Because of sanctification
- 5. Sanctification is the reason why Paul answers, not just “No”
 - a. But “By no means!”
 - b. Or “Certainly not!”
 - c. Or “Are you crazy?”
 - d. Or “You can't be serious!”

II. **Antinomianism Annihilated**

- A. In our last message, Paul essentially annihilated antinomianism
 - 1. He got a start on it in 6.1-4
 - 2. But then he pretty much dismembered antinomianism in vv 5-11 which we studied last week
- B. **United with Christ in His Death**
 - 1. First, he established that we can't continue in our lifestyle of sin any longer because we are united with Christ
 - a. It's like we're Siamese twins with Christ – attached so unalterably that we can no longer think of going our own way without Him
 - 2. He said, first, that we are united with Christ in His death
 - a. Our “old self” was crucified with Him
 - b. That old way of life, as far as we are concerned, is no longer who we are
 - c. We – that is, our old self, has died
 - d. Not just mostly dead – but all dead
- C. **United with Christ in His Resurrection**
 - 1. But then Paul says our union goes beyond our having died with Him
 - 2. We are united with Him in His resurrection
 - a. **Romans 6:8** (ESV) — 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.
 - 3. And he goes even farther in his demolition of antinomianism
 - a. **Romans 6:9–10** (ESV) — 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God.
 - 4. Christ so perfectly demolished death by His resurrection, that our union with Him carries us with Him
- D. **Freed from Sin**
 - 1. So what that means is that we are freed from sin
 - a. We've died to sin – our old self has been crucified with Christ
 - 2. But that doesn't mean that we no longer struggle with sin

- a. The death of our old self means that while sin used to dominated our lives, it no longer needs to do that
 - b. We've been freed from its clutches
 - c. We've been broken out of its jail
 - 3. **Romans 6:6** (ESV) — 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.
 - 4. Paul's point is that sin can still play a role in our lives
 - a. We can still have it dominated our lives
 - b. But it doesn't have to any longer!
 - c. We can say "no" to sin!
 - d. We don't have to obey its beck and call
- E. **The Body of Sin**
 - 1. And the final thing he does in those verses is that he helps us to begin to understand how sin still functions in our lives – our lives that have been born again, regenerated
 - a. Our lives that are new creations in Christ
 - 2. He says that sin continues to reside in our bodies
 - a. "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing"
 - b. "The body of sin"
 - 3. We are physical being; God created us with bodies
 - a. And even as new creatures in Christ, sin continues to exist as remnants
 - b. And its base of operations is our bodies
- F. So that's how Paul annihilates antinomianism
 - 1. We're united with Christ in His death
 - a. Our old self, our old self-centered lifestyle, has been crucified with Christ
 - 2. We're united with Christ in His resurrection
 - a. Having been born again, we are new creations in Christ
 - b. The very life of Christ has been born in us
 - 3. As a result, we're freed from sin
 - a. We no longer have to obey its commands
 - 4. And sin continues as a vestigial organ, with residues in our physical bodies

III. **Compelling Imperatives**

- A. Now, none of us did anything to be born
 - 1. We didn't conceive ourselves
 - a. We didn't crawl into our mother's womb
 - 2. And it's the same with us spiritually
 - a. We didn't do anything to be born again
 - b. Oh, yes, we believed
 - c. But we couldn't have done even that if the Spirit of God didn't move in our hearts and give us the desire and longing for Christ

- d. And then, yes, we believed
- 3. But once we were born, it's been a different story
 - a. In order to grow physically, we have to eat
 - b. And, presumably, our parents made sure we had what we needed
 - c. But as you know – you can lead a horse to water...
 - d. So we had to eat and drink
- 4. And we had to eat and drink the right stuff, more or less
 - a. And again – our parents most likely provided for that
 - b. We ate protein, and carbohydrates, and vegetables, and carbohydrates, and vitamins, and carbohydrates, and minerals, and carbohydrates
 - c. Ok, so we probably all had a few too many carbs
 - d. But we had to eat to grow
- 5. But not only that, in order to grow behaviorally, we had to learn
 - a. We had to learn what kinds of behaviors would contribute to our well-being, and what kinds of behaviors didn't
 - b. We had to learn to multiply the good behaviors and avoid the bad behaviors
 - c. And those things weren't not learned by osmosis
 - d. Mostly, our parents, and others, told us what to do and not do
 - e. And they reinforced some behaviors, discouraged or even punished others
- 6. And not only physical growth and behavioral growth, there was intellectual growth
 - a. Our parents read to us; then they helped us learn to read
 - b. They sent us to school
 - c. We learned to read and write and do arithmetic
 - d. We studied math and science
 - e. We took English and language arts
 - f. We studied history and social studies
- 7. In other words, we did things
 - a. Mostly, things we were told we should do
 - b. Now our inclinations as human beings was to do things like that
 - c. But our parents and our teachers – and even our friends and families – helped us along the way
- 8. And sanctification is like that
 - a. We are new creatures in Christ
 - b. The life of Christ now dwells in us from the moment we believed
 - c. But we bring something to the table as well
 - d. We study the scriptures
 - e. We worship with the body of Christ
 - f. We listen to sermons
 - g. We go to Bible studies
 - h. And, by golly, we grow!

- i. Grow – little by little, from those whiny, tiny, helpless spiritual babies into more mature believers
- j. Resembling, little by little, our older brother – Jesus Christ
- 9. So it shouldn't be surprising that, knowing what we now know about believing in Jesus, that Paul would begin to tell us things
 - a. That he would give us things to do
 - b. That he would command us
 - c. And show us how we participate in this process called sanctification
- 10. Last week we learned the first of those imperatives
 - a. We've been majoring in the indicatives up til now – what is true about who we are as humans, who God is, who Jesus is, what He has done, and what the gospel is
 - b. But now – in v 11 – we get our first imperative – our first instruction, our first command

B. **Consider yourselves...**

- 1. **Romans 6:11** (ESV) —
 - a. 11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.
- 2. Consider – count on it (accounting term)
 - a. In other words, you and I need to affirm who we are in our union with Jesus Christ
 - b. That we are dead to sin and alive to God
 - c. Dead to sin – we no longer have to sin; we are no longer enslaved by sin
 - d. But we are alive to God; we are new creatures in Christ
 - e. The very life of Christ now dwells in us
- 3. So lesson number one for us babes in Christ is to come to grips with who we are
 - a. And act like who we are!
- 4. That's the first imperative
 - a. The first imperative in this section on sanctification
 - b. But the first imperative in all of Romans!
- 5. But what, then, does this look like?
 - a. What does a life that considers ourselves dead to sin and alive to God look like?
 - b. Let's get more specific – what are we supposed to actually do?
- 6. **Romans 6:12–14** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.
 - b. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness,
 - c. but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life,
 - d. and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

- e. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

C. **Let not sin reign...**

1. So the first thing Paul says is, “Let not sin reign”
 - a. In other words, do not let sin, which operates in your bodies, to have its way
2. It’s possible, then, for sin to have its way
 - a. We’ve all had years of practicing sin
 - b. And the habits of sin have rooted themselves in our bodily appetites and routines
 - c. And our bodies seem to want to continue in those practices
3. But as new creatures in Christ, we no longer have to let sin do that do us or in us
 - a. So do not act as though sin were in charge of you
 - b. It’s not in charge of you!
 - c. It’s been dethroned
 - d. There has been a coup d’etat; an overthrow of the old government
 - e. Oh, the old government still hangs around, seeking ways to do what it used to do
 - f. But you can tell it to get lost
 - g. And don’t let sin reign

D. **Do not present members to sin...**

1. And then it says “Don’t present your members to sin as instruments of unrighteousness”
2. So now we learn something about our bodies as new creatures united with Christ
 - a. Our bodies have become instruments
 - b. Instruments which can be used
 - c. Used for either good things or bad
3. It’s kind of like technology
 - a. Technology can be a wonderful thing
 - b. But it can be used to destroy what God has created
 - c. Nuclear power can create energy that we all need to live
 - d. Or it can destroy civilization
 - e. It’s an instrument
4. And so here’s one of the don’ts of new life in Christ
 - a. One of the, “if you do this, it will derail your progress in your growth in holiness”
 - b. Don’t present your members – that is, the members of your bodies – as instruments for sin
 - c. When we do that, and use our members to do what God has declared to be off limits, we continue habits and practices that are destructive
 - d. So, “Stop it!”
5. So those are the two negatives of sanctification

- a. The two “Don’ts”
 - 6. So, those are the don’ts
 - a. What are the do’s?
- E. **Present yourselves to God**
 - 1. **Romans 6:13** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 ... but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life...
 - 2. Here the imperative, the command, the instruction goes beyond our physical bodies
 - a. “Present *yourselves*...”
 - b. That is, all that you are – you’re whole personality
 - c. Your mind, your will, your emotions – and your bodies!
 - 3. You need to be all in for God
 - a. No reservations
 - b. Nothing held back
 - 4. In athletics, I had to learn that the hard way
 - a. I was a very good high school basketball player on a very bad basketball team
 - b. I think we won, like, 7 games my senior year
 - c. I was the leading scorer by a significant margin
 - d. But, I had a problem
 - e. I played like I needed to hold something in reserve; needed to conserve my energy for later in the game
 - f. So I started, and then in about 2 minutes into the game, when there was a stopped clock, the coach would sub me out
 - g. And I had this puzzled look on my face when I came over to the bench
 - h. And he would say, more than once I’m afraid, “Not playing hard in the 1st quarter”
 - i. He wanted me to go as hard as I could from the opening tip
 - j. He wanted me to be all in from the get-go
 - 5. That’s what God is saying
 - a. “Present *yourselves* to God” – your all
 - b. Leave it all on the court
 - c. “... as those who have been brought from death to life”
 - d. If that calls for anything less than our entire being, I don’t know what does
 - 6. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** (ESV) —
 - a. 23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 7. “Present *yourselves* to God as those who have been brought from death to life”
 - a. Present – all of you
- F. **Present members to God**

1. **Romans 6:13** (ESV) —
 - a. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.
 2. Your members
 - a. What's that about?
 - b. The members of your body
 - c. That's right – your head, your neck, your arms, your legs, your heart, your kidneys, your hands, your feet, your brain – whatever
 - d. Present your members – your individual body parts – as instruments for righteousness
 3. Putting them together
 - a. Take your whole and give it all to God
 - b. And take each individual part and give them all to God
 - c. The whole and the part
- G. Let's think about the members for a moment
1. **Mind**
 - a. The mind is not the same as the brain; but with us humans, you can't think, reason, contemplate, imagine – without the brain
 2. **Romans 12:1–2** (ESV) —
 - a. 1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God,
 - b. **to present your bodies** as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.
 - c. 2 Do not be conformed to this world,
 - d. **but be transformed by the renewal of your mind,**
 - e. that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.
 3. We are sanctified by presenting ourselves
 - a. Specifically, our bodies
 - b. But the transformation comes by the renewal of our minds
 4. How do we occupy our minds?
 - a. What do you read?
 - b. Do the things your read lead you to contemplate the ways of God?
 - c. When you are doing nothing else, what do you think about?
 - d. Do your thoughts echo the world's?
 - e. Or when you hear the world's thoughts, do you see through the paltry, arrogant facades, and see them for the vacuous intellectual dead-ends they are?
 5. Harry Blamires: There is no longer a Christian mind. There is still, of course, a Christian ethic, a Christian practice, and a Christian spirituality. ... but as a thinking being, the modern Christian has succumbed to secularization... Except over a very narrow field of thinking, chiefly touching questions of strictly personal conduct, we Christians in the modern world accept, for the purpose of mental activity, a frame of

reference constructed by the secular mind and a set of criteria reflecting secular evaluations.

6. Boice: If we lack a Christian mind in our day... is it any wonder that so many Christians today are for the most part indistinguishable from the non-Christians around them?
7. **Eyes and ears**
 - a. What kinds of media do we consume?
8. Are you enticed by gratuitous images?
 - a. Turn them off!
9. Are you depressed by the news
 - a. Change the channel
10. Are you growing in your walk with Christ?
 - a. Feed your minds with the scriptures and with the faithful and rich exposition of the Word of God
11. Are you susceptible to advertising – does it fuel your covetous desires?
 - a. Skip the commercials
12. **Tongues**
 - a. Do we present our tongues – our words that we say to one another – as instruments for righteousness?
13. **James 3:5–6 (ESV) —**
 - a. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.
 - b. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!
 - c. 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.
 - d. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.
14. Boice: You do not need to be a Hitler and plunge the world into armed conflict to do evil with your tongue. A little bit of gossip will do. A casual lie or slander will suffice.
15. How do you use your tongue in our community?
 - a. Do you use it to criticize and tear down or to build up and edify?
 - b. When you find the conversation headed in a destructive direction, do you use your tongue to correct or redirect it?
 - c. Do you think about what the impact might be of the words you use?
 - d. We joke about people in our generation losing our filters – get the filter back!
 - e. You don't have to say everything you think!
16. The quality of this community over the next three years will hinge on how Christians, in our neighborhoods, use our tongues
 - a. And you know exactly what I'm talking about
 - b. Present your members to God as instruments of righteousness
17. **Hands and feet**
 - a. What about our actions?

- b. We're building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
- c. This is about purpose?
- d. What are you doing with your time and talents?
- e. If you're able, are you volunteering in the community?
- f. Are you engaged in a ministry?
- g. And if you're not able to do what you used to, can you use your hands to call your friends who are suffering?
- h. Can you use your voice to pray for them?
- i. What can you do with your bodies?
- j. It was hard, but even Jean's mother – at 98 and bound to a chair and bed, found that she was able to be an instrument of righteousness for some of the people who were there to serve her

H. **Romans 6:12–13** (ESV) —

- 1. 12 **Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body,**
 - a. **to make you obey its passions.**
- 2. 13 **Do not present your members to sin**
 - a. **as instruments for unrighteousness,**
- 3. **but present yourselves to God**
 - a. **as those who have been brought from death to life,**
- 4. **and your members to God**
 - a. **as instruments for righteousness.**

IV. **Dominion Discipline**

- A. After all these compelling imperatives, the text ends in the indicative – as a statement of truth, of fact
- B. **Romans 6:14** (ESV) —
 - 1. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.
- C. Can you really do this?
 - 1. Can you really fulfill the presentation imperatives
 - 2. Presenting yourselves to God
 - 3. Presenting your members to God
- D. Yes, you can
 - 1. Because sin will have no dominion over you
 - a. Sin is not in charge here
 - b. Sin is no longer your boss
 - c. Sin carries no weight in the heart of the believer
 - 2. And that's because you're not under the law, but under grace
- E. Under grace
 - 1. Because you've died to sin and are alive to God in union with Christ Jesus
- F. We are under the dominion of grace
 - 1. Grace is now in charge
 - 2. Grace – not as license for sin
 - 3. Grace as a power principle of living the Christian life

- a. Grace because we are dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus