**2 Corinthians 11:1-6**

I. Introduction

A. Paul calls us to a “sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (v. 3)

= purity + simplicity/singleness of focus

B. We live in a very complex world where many things threaten that simplicity and purity of devotion

 C. The point of this series on Jesus is that we would have a sincere and pure devotion

II. The image of betrothal (v. 2)

A. “I promised/betrothed you”

- Christ is our husband. This life is the betrothal/engagement phase, and in the next life we get to enjoy the relationship in its fullness

B. To “one husband”

 - our affections are not to be divided among various lovers

 C. “So that I might present you as a pure virgin to him”

- When Christ returns we want to be able to say: “I have kept myself for you and have not given my heart to anything else.”

 D. Paul plays the role of friend of the groom who introduced the Corinthians to Christ.

III. Paul’s two emotions

A. Jealousy (v. 2)

1. A husband should have a jealousy for his wife in the sense of not wanting to share her with any other man

2. God is a jealous God who longs for the single-minded devotion of his people

a. “You shall have no other gods besides me.”

b. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength”

3. Paul shares in God’s jealousy for his people, desiring the purity of their devotion to Christ

B. Fear (v. 3)

1. Afraid that your minds would be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ

2. This happens the same way it happened for Eve = through cunning and deception. It doesn’t happen because we intend for it to happen; it happens subtly, without us even realizing it is happening.

IV. The issue: The Corinthians had lost sight of who Christ truly is

 A. They were accepting and believing in “another Jesus” (v. 4)

 B. Historical background

1. Paul preached the true Jesus: the suffering servant who came to serve and die for his people. Accordingly, life with Jesus in this age still involves suffering and it involves experiencing his power in the midst of our weaknesses.

2. After he left, other preachers came who had impressive credentials and were gifted orators. They preached a more triumphant Jesus who comes into our lives to bring triumph and remove obstacles to such triumph.

3. The Corinthians were impressed by these speakers, and they began to accept a Jesus who was different from the historical Jesus of the gospels

V. Some modern-day examples of “another Jesus” that people have accepted

 A. The Consumer’s Jesus

B. The No-Judging Jesus

C. Jesus, the moral teacher (not God)

 D. The almost human Jesus

E. The stoic Jesus

VI. Who Jesus truly is according to the four gospels

A. Let’s enjoy the mystery of who Jesus is and appreciate him for who he is, rather than trying to reshape him into an image that is more manageable or attractive to our immediate sensibilities

 B. Fully God and fully man

 C. Our master and our servant

D. Full of grace and truth

E. Joyful and serious

F. Carefree and resolute

G. Cosmic and personal

H. Let’s continue reading and studying the gospels in order to allow Jesus to be who he is (even if that is confusing or challenging at times)

VII. Jesus wants to be in the center of our lives

 A. See Revelation 3:14-20

B. In its self-sufficiency, the church of Laodicea had gradually pushed Jesus out to the edges of their lives

 C. He is knocking, asking to be let back in to the center

D. He promises fellowship to anyone who will let him back in to his rightful place at the center of their lives

**Discussion Questions**

1. Consider the metaphor of marriage as it relates to our relationship with Jesus and consider Paul’s phrase in v. 3: “a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.” How does that phrase connect with the reality of your life at this time?

2. What are the biggest threats or barriers that pull you away from a pure and simple devotion to Jesus?

3. Consider the examples of “another Jesus” given on Sunday. Were there any mentioned that you are tempted to accept at times? Were there any examples left out that you think would be important to mention?

4. As you consider this Jesus series as a whole, what is something new you have learned about Jesus, or what aspect of him have you come to appreciate in deeper way?