



Simplicity AND PURITY

Setting the Scene



The church

Corinth: a wealthy, cosmopolitan port city that prized polished rhetoric and impressive public speakers.



The intruders

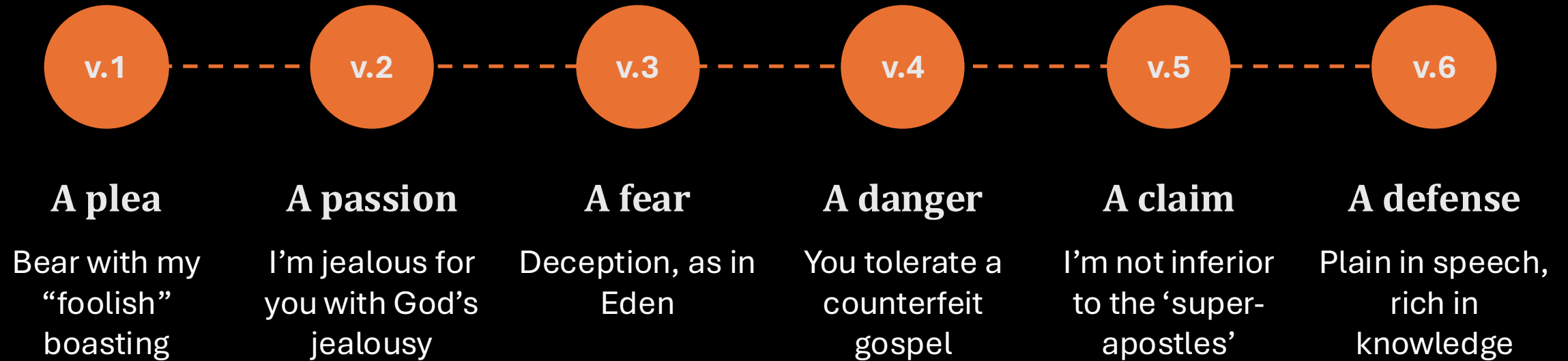
Traveling teachers had arrived with letters of recommendation, eloquence, and a low view of Paul.



The turn

Chapters 10–13 shift sharply in tone. Paul now defends his apostleship — not for his ego, but for their sake.

The Flow of Thought



2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6 NASB95

I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness; but indeed you are bearing with me.

² For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin.

Verse 1 — The Reluctant “Fool”



Paul puts on the costume of a boaster — only to expose the boasting of others.

The “Fool’s Speech” begins

Verses 11:1–12:13 are often called Paul’s Fool’s Speech. He hates boasting, but the Corinthians have left him no choice.

Irony as a teaching tool

By “boasting” in weakness, Paul shows how hollow the rivals’ self-promotion really is.

A gentle aside

He adds that they are, in fact, already putting up with him — a touch of warmth amid the tension.

Verse 2 — A Godly Jealousy



Betrothal

Through Paul's preaching, the Corinthians were pledged to Christ — a binding commitment.



The waiting

Between betrothal and wedding, the father guards his daughter's faithfulness.



Presentation

Christ's return: the church presented to her one Husband, pure and undivided.

Key point: This is not petty envy — it is God's own protective jealousy for an exclusive covenant love.

ISAIAH 54:5 NASB95

"For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6 NASB95

³ But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of *devotion* to Christ.

GENESIS 3:1–4 NASB95

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?"

GENESIS 3:1–4 NASB95

² The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!

Verse 3 — The Serpent's Old Strategy



In Eden

- The serpent used craftiness, not force
- He questioned and twisted God's word
- Eve was deceived and led away



In Corinth

- Smooth-talking teachers, not open enemies
- A gospel that sounded close — but wasn't
- Minds at risk of drifting from Christ

The target

Simplicity

single-minded, undivided

Purity

faithful, uncompromised

...of devotion to Christ

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6 NASB95

⁴ For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear *this* beautifully.

Verse 4 — Three Counterfeits



Another Jesus

Same name, different person — a Jesus of power and prestige rather than the crucified Lord.



A different spirit

Not the Spirit of freedom and humility, but one that breeds pride and bondage.



A different gospel

A message of merit and performance in place of grace received by faith.



The real shock

Paul's sharpest words aren't for the false teachers — they're for the church that puts up with them "beautifully."

2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–6 NASB95

⁵ For I consider myself not in the least inferior to the most eminent apostles. ⁶ But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not so in knowledge; in fact, in every way we have made *this* evident to you in all things.

Verses 5–6 — Style vs. Substance



The ‘super-apostles’

- Polished, professional rhetoric
- Impressive credentials and self-promotion
- Measured success by applause
- Paul mockingly calls them ‘super-apostles’



The apostle Paul

- Admits he is untrained as a speaker
- Not lacking at all in true knowledge
- Made the truth plain in every way
- Lived it openly among them

ROMANS 16:17–19 NASB95

Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

ROMANS 16:17–19 NASB95

¹⁸ For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. ¹⁹ For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

1 JOHN 4:1-3 NASB95

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

1 JOHN 4:1–3 NASB95

³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

1 JOHN 4:4-6 NASB95

You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; **because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.** ⁵ They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Key Takeaways



Christ wants all of you

His jealousy is love that refuses to share us with rivals.



Deception is usually subtle

The danger is rarely a new religion — it's a slightly different Jesus.



Test content, not charisma

Measure teaching by Scripture, not by polish or popularity.



Keep it simple

Guard an undivided, uncluttered devotion to Christ himself.