

Clowney on the 2nd Commandment

Introduction

Clowney begins with a quotation of the second commandment: ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments (Ex. 20.4-6).

1. What does Clowney assume about 20.4-6 *in relation to* 20.3 in contrast to the Roman Catholic position indicated in the following quote regarding the 1st commandment: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them"? We will tackle this major difference later.
2. How does Clowney answer (on p. 28) the striking claim of a "Christian" minister (Fosdick) that we break the 2nd when we worship Christ as the image of God (23)?
3. What does it mean for man to be the image of God (24-25)?
4. Clowney speaks to the danger of breaking the 2nd by worshipping images of the body of Jesus (cf. creating a mood for worship by means of a crucifix, 29). He notes that the NT does not give us a vivid physical description of Jesus that could yield a new form of idolatry (29). He suggests that attempts at realistic portrayals of the gospel story in film "may have gone overboard" (29). What good point do these misguided attempts contain over against the Docetic heresy (30)?
5. How does Clowney explain a good use of image when it comes to portraying Jesus (to children in SS and to adults through artistic painting, 31-32)?
6. How is a literal form of idolatry becoming more and more a contemporary phenomena (34)?
7. Without falling into literal forms of idolatry, how might we be idolaters and what is the answer to "Christian" forms of remnant idolatry (35-36)?

Conclusion

Do you have any further questions or comments on this chapter in Clowney?