

## HTPC

### Christianity in the Home

#### Week 2: God's Law Ruling over God's World (Cornelius Van Til)

1.A. Read Exodus 20:1-21. (esp. vv. 5-6; 12, 14, 17).

And God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 "You shall have no other gods before me. 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.** 7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. 8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. 12 **"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.** 13 "You shall not murder. 14 **"You shall not commit adultery.** 15 "You shall not steal. 16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17 **"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."** 18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off 19 and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." 20 Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." 21 The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

B. Read Genesis 1:26-28 (cf. 2:18-25; 1 Timothy 2:12-15).

C. **i)** What is the significance of marriage/family being a pre-fall institution? **ii)** What is the significance of God's moral law (Ten Commandments) being reflected in the pre-fall world? **iii)** Where have you seen the blessings and curses of Exodus 20:5-6 in your own family, whether past or present? Where do you see these realities more broadly in our culture? *Men especially, can we all sit up and take notice?!* **iv)** Where is the Gospel of God's free grace at least implicit even in the Ten Commandments (v. 2; recall Don's use of *indicative* and *imperative* in Sunday's sermon).

2. Fifth Commandment: **a)** What was your childhood like with respect to Van Til's comments on the 5th commandment (authority)? **b)** What sort of home are you cultivating presently in these regards? **c)** How do Van Til's comments help you better understand our culture?

3. Seventh Commandment: **a)** Was the equality and yet distinction between man and woman modeled well in your family when you were a child? **b)** Did you grow up with a proper sense of "the sacredness of marriage"? (How did your father speak of and treat your mother?) **c)** Were you taught positively that sexuality is a beautiful reality in its proper context? Were you taught about the corrupting reality of sin? **d)** What do you think of the family as an analogy of the Trinity? **e)** How does evolutionary theory militate against all of these truths? **f)** Assess our culture (and other historical cultures) in light of Van Til's commentary here?

4. Are you experiencing the "restorative" reality of the Gospel in your home? Be honest. If not, how can we help each other in these regards?

5. How do Van Til's comments on sexual purity assist us in our sex-saturated world? How might they help explain the stagnancy of the modern church?

1. These laws (along with the rest of the ten commandments) were sewn into the fabric of creation even before the Fall (ala Romans 2:15). Please also read Ephesians 5:21-6:4 and Colossians 3:18-21. God has ordered the institution of the family in a certain way which we have rebelled against in our sin. Thankfully, the Gospel of Jesus Christ restores us to live rightly in the world God created— to live by his standard and no longer our own.

The following (attached) is brief (and powerful!) commentary on the fifth and seventh commandments by a minister-theologian, Cornelius Van Til. Read with the big picture in view. He is incredibly perceptive about what happens in society when we disregard God's law. And read with personal application in view. Ask yourself: 1. What kind of family did I grow up in when assessed it by this biblical model? 2. What kind of home am I building presently? 3. How can I find hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ? We simply must measure our past and our present according to God's voice. That is the only safe place to live.