

Dear fellow pilgrims,

Last week we got an inside peek at some of the doings of the N.I.C.E. and how its supporters might be getting a bit more than they bargained for. This week, we will get further insight into the N.I.C.E. and its practice of double-speak and media propaganda, as well as into the workings of the Community of St. Anne's.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone for class tomorrow evening at 7 p.m. in the St. Philip's Parish Hall!

Below is the link for distance learners for class tomorrow:

The class will livestream at 7 p.m. EDT as a Zoom Webinar (slightly different format than before). Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85371569825>

At the end of this email is an outline of what we covered last time, along with links to video and audio recordings of the class, the PowerPoint, and the handouts.

Hope you can be with us tomorrow evening--come and bring a friend!

Further up and further in,

Brian+

Video class link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8pMMI-TOSk>

Music link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0qQyW0W0Rw>

Podcast link: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/episode-15/id1587350461?i=1000549971024>

Church website link: <https://www.stphilipchurchsc.org/not-as-unwise-but-as-wise/episode/2022-02-02/episode-15>

**Episode 15: Not as Unwise but as Wise: Reflections from C.S. Lewis's *The Abolition of Man* and *That Hideous Strength***

**Chapter 4 summary**

**SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 4, THE LIQUIDATION OF ANACHRONISMS**

Adapted from Rudy Rentzel

When Mother Dimble arrives at Jane's, she relates how a construction crew under orders from the N.I.C.E. appeared without notice at their cottage, cut down all the trees around their house, and began to rip up their yard, saying they had to be out of the cottage by 8 o'clock the next morning. Big trucks arrived along with tractor engines and a huge crane. Neither the Dimbles nor Ivy Maggs know what to do now that they have been turned out. Jane assures Mother Dimble she can stay as long as she likes. At night, Jane awakes Mother Dimble with shouting while dreaming. In her dream, Jane is horrified to see a man being killed by three others who beat him to death in a cruel manner.

At Belbury, Mark meets a clergyman, Rev. Straik (called the Mad Parson). Straik believes the N.I.C.E. program must be carried out with violence, which shocks Mark. Straik repudiates the after-life, as well as all organized religion. Instead, he interprets the gospel to mean Jesus wants us to bring about the Kingdom of God in the here and now, through the instrument of science as enforced by the N.I.C.E., to whom "every knee shall bow." Straik believes himself to be a prophet and says Mark has no choice about being used by the N.I.C.E. for "no one goes out of the N.I.C.E. Those who try to turn back will perish in the wilderness." Mark notices his wallet has gone missing.

At a N.I.C.E. committee meeting, Deputy Director Wither announces that William Hingest had been murdered, beaten to death and left lying near his car about 4 a.m. The N.I.C.E. police, led by Miss Hardcastle, were the first on the scene, and the local police and Scotland Yard were allowing them to take the lead in the case, and cooperating wonderfully. A subdued round of applause followed. After expressing regrets about Hingest's resolution to withdraw from the N.I.C.E., Withers delivered an obituary about his life. Jane enjoys spending the morning with Mrs. Dimble and tries to convince herself that since she "had it all out" with Miss Ironwood, the dreams would stop. Mother Dimble tells her that Ivy Maggs' (Jane's "char") has left Edgestow for St. Anne's, because the N.I.C.E. turned her out of her home as well. Later in the day, Jane runs into Sub-Warden Curry from Bracton College, and he tells her that Bill Hingest has been murdered in the middle of the night, with his body found badly beaten about the head. Jane escapes into a coffee shop, shattered and sickened by this news, which confirmed that her dreams had not ended. She believes she actually saw the murder of Hingest in her dream. She feels despair at her powerlessness to stop these visions, and she feels no desire to go back to the company at St. Anne's, believing that they were somehow mixed up in all this.

Meanwhile, at the N.I.C.E. in Belbury, Cosser tells Mark they have a job to do, which is to prepare a report on a village, Cure Hardy. The N.I.C.E. is planning to redirect the Wynd River (which presently goes through Edgestow) through the village of Cure Hardy, which will wipe out the quaint village which is famed for its beauty. The N.I.C.E. will build a new model village four miles away. Mark is told that the report must list all the reasons this beauty spot must be got rid of, focusing on poor sanitary practices, undesirable inhabitants, and out of date agriculture. They will write the report first and then go see the village afterwards.

When they go to Cure Hardy, Mark is moved by its beauty, something his love for Jane has awakened in him. The beauty of it reminds Mark of being on holiday and recalls the pleasure of earlier visits to charming English villages. Though he tried to look disdainfully at the village as a sociologist, he can't help but like the village. Lunching in a pub, Mark tries to convey his sense of the beauty of the village, which Cosser dismisses out of hand and says is not

their department. Suddenly, Mark is struck by a sense that Cosser is a bore and a sense of feeling sick about the N.I.C.E. He thinks he might 'chuck it' and return to Bracton. Mark returns home to Edgestow to see Jane, but they have a very guarded conversation where Jane feels that Mark isn't telling her everything about the N.I.C.E. and Belbury, though he speaks confidently about them. She worries whether he gave up his fellowship at Bracton, and he reassures he hasn't.

Meanwhile, the Fellows of Bracton College meet that evening over wine and dessert in their beautiful quarters. They can hear the very noisy work of the N.I.C.E. at Bragdon Wood outside the window so that it's difficult to carry on a conversation. Lord Feverstone attends and informs Curry (the Sub-Warden) that Mark is not returning to Bracton, but he's not sure when he'll send a formal resignation. Feverstone regards this as good, since it means they can have someone lined up when the formal resignation comes through, and Feverstone already has someone in mind. The noise outside gets louder, the floor starts shaking, they hear shots and wonder if someone is being murdered, and finally, the magnificent ancient window of the hall shatters as a shower of stones falls on the floor.

#### KEY PASSAGES IN CHAPTER 4

"Without a doubt," thought Mark, "this must be the Mad Parson that Bill the Blizzard was talking of" ... He had been walking with the Reverend Straik in the garden "Do not imagine," said Mr. Straik, "that I indulge in any dreams of carrying out our programme without violence. There will be resistance. They will gnaw their tongues and not repent. We are not to be deterred... It is no part of our witness to preserve that organisation of ordered sin which is called Society. To that organisation the message which we have to deliver is a message of absolute despair." .... "With every thought and vibration of my heart, with every drop of my blood," said Mr. Straik, "I repudiate that damnable doctrine [the hope of heaven and eternal life]. That is precisely the subterfuge by which the world, the organization and body of Death, has sidetracked and emasculated the teaching of Jesus, and turned into priest-craft and mysticism the plain demand of the Lord for righteousness and judgment here and now. The Kingdom of God is to be realised here — in this world. And it will be. At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow."—*false gospel, violence, overthrow of society, denial of eternal Kingdom*

"In that name I dissociate myself completely from all the organized religion that has yet been seen in the world." And at the name of Jesus, Mark, who would have lectured on abortion or perversion to an audience of young women without a qualm, felt himself so embarrassed that he knew his cheeks were slightly reddening... "For, mark my words, this thing is going to happen. The Kingdom is going to arrive: in this world: in this country. The powers of science are an instrument. An irresistible instrument, as all of us in the N.I.C.E. know. ... I have come to stand alone: the only prophet left. I knew that He was coming in power. And therefore, where we see power, we see the sign of His coming. And that is why I find myself joining with communists and materialists and anyone else who is really ready to expedite the coming. The feeblest of these people here has the tragic sense of life, the ruthlessness, the total commitment, the readiness to sacrifice all merely human values, which I could not find amid all the nauseating cant of the organised religions."—*Scientism, rejection of Church*

"You have no choice whether you will be used or not. There is no turning back once you have set your hand to the plough. No one goes out of the N.I.C.E. Those who try to turn back will perish in the wilderness. But the question is, whether you are content to be one of the instruments which is thrown aside when it has served His turn — one which having executed judgment on others, is reserved for judgment itself or will you be among those who enter on the inheritance? For it's all true, you know. It is the Saints who are going to inherit the Earth — here in England, perhaps within the next twelve " Then, suddenly lowering his voice, Straik added: "The real resurrection is even now taking place. The real life everlasting. Here in this world. You will see it."—*Slavery to cause, seduction of Inner Ring, false gospel*

"Oh yes, there are dozens of what look like policemen all over the place, and I didn't like the look of them either. Swinging some kind of truncheon things, like what you'd see in an American film. Do you know Jane, Cecil and I both thought the same thing: we thought, it's almost as if we'd lost the war."---*evil and why vigilance matters*

"Jane found Mother Dimble an embarrassing person to share a room with because she said prayers. It was quite extraordinary, Jane thought, how this put one out. One didn't know where to look, and it was so difficult to talk naturally again for several minutes after Mrs. Dimble had risen from her knees. "Are you awake now?" said Mrs. Dimble's voice, quietly, in the middle of the night. "Yes," said Jane. "I'm sorry. Did I wake you up? Was I shouting?" "Yes. You were shouting out about someone being hit on the head." "I saw them killing a man — a man in a big car driving along a country road... No thanks, I'm all right. It was horrid, of course, but I'm not really frightened — not the way I would have been before. I'm more sorry for the old man..."---*power of prayer, importance of gifts*

"The certainty that she herself in her dream had witnessed a real murder shattered at one blow all the consoling pretences with which she had begun the morning. It came over her with sickening clarity that the affair of her dreams, far from being ended, was only beginning. The bright, narrow little life which she had proposed to live was being irremediably broken into. It would drive her mad, she thought, to face it alone... She didn't want to get drawn in. It was unfair. It wasn't as if she had asked much of life. All she wanted was to be left alone. And the thing was so preposterous! The sort of thing which, according to all the authorities she had hitherto accepted, could not really happen."—*free agency and who is in control*

"It's about the village of Cure Hardy," said Cosser when they were seated. "You see, all that land at Bragdon Wood is going to be little better than a swamp once they get to work. Why the hell we wanted to go there I don't know. Anyway, the latest plan is to divert the Wynd: block up the old channel through Edgestow altogether... The point is that the new Wynd must come right through Cure Hardy. "But what happens to Cure Hardy?" "That's another advantage. We build a new model village (it's to be called Jules Hardy or Wither Hardy) four miles away. Over here, on the railway." "I say, you know, there'll be the devil of a stink about this. Cure Hardy is famous. It's a beauty spot. There are the sixteenth-century almshouses, and a Norman church, and all that." "Exactly. That's where you and I come in. We've got to make a report on Cure Hardy. We'll run out and have a look round tomorrow, but we can write most of the report today. It ought to be pretty easy. If it's a beauty spot, you can bet it's insanitary. — That's the first point to stress. Then we've got to get out some facts about the population. I think you'll find it consists almost entirely of the two most undesirable elements — small rentiers — and agricultural labourers."—*utilitarianism and efficiency, remaking the world*

“It took them the rest of the day, so that Cosser and he came into dinner late and without dressing. This gave Mark a most agreeable sensation. And he enjoyed the meal too. Although he was among men he had not met before, he seemed to know everyone within the first five minutes and to be joining naturally in the conversation. He was learning how to talk their shop.”—*lure of Inner Ring*

“How nice it is!” said Mark to himself next morning as the car...began descending the bumpy little lane into the long valley where Cure Hardy lay. Mark was not as a rule very sensitive to beauty, but Jane and his love for Jane had already awakened him a little in this respect. Perhaps, the winter morning sunlight affected him all the more because he had never been taught to regard it as specially beautiful and it therefore worked on his senses without interference. The earth and sky had the look of things recently washed. The brown fields looked as if they would be good to eat, and those in grass set off the curves of the little hills as close clipped hair sets off the body of a horse. The sky looked further away than usual, but also clearer, so that the long slender streaks of cloud (dark slate colour against the pale blue, had edges as clear as if they were cut out of cardboard. Every little copse was black and bristling as a hairbrush, and when the car stopped in Cure Hardy itself the silence that followed the turning off of the engine was filled with the noise of rooks that seemed to be calling “Wake! Wake!”

“Bloody awful noise those birds make,” said Cosser. “Got your map? Now...” “He plunged at once into business.—*being awake to Beauty and its importance to Life*

“All at once it came over Mark what a terrible bore this little man was, and in the same moment he felt utterly sick of the N.I.C.E. But he reminded himself that one could not expect to be in the interesting set at once; there would be better things later on. Anyway, he had not burnt his boats. Perhaps he would chuck up the whole thing and go back to Bracton in a day or two. But not at once. It would be only sensible to hang on for a bit and see how things shaped.—*Flee temptation, danger of doublemindedness*

“Someone ring up the police!” “I shouldn’t go out if I were you,” said Feverstone who had remained seated and was pouring himself out another glass of wine. “It sounds as if the police, or something, was there already.” “What do you mean?” “Listen. There!” “I thought that was their infernal drill.” “Listen!” “My God... you really think it’s a machine gun?” “Look out! Look out!” said a dozen voices at once as a splintering of glass became audible and a shower of stones fell onto the Common Room floor. A moment later several of the Fellows had made a rush for the windows and put up the shutters; and then they were all standing staring at one another, and silent but for the noise of their heavy breathing. Glossop had a cut on the forehead, and on the floor lay the fragments of that famous east window on which Henrietta Maria had once cut her name with a diamond.”—*“progress” and the destruction of the irreplaceable, the danger of complacency, “all that is necessary for Evil to triumph”*

#### THEMES IN CHAPTER FOUR

- false gospel
- violence, overthrow of society, denial of eternal Kingdom
- Scientism
- rejection of the Church
- slavery to cause, seduction of Inner Ring
- Evil and why vigilance matters
- power of prayer, importance of gifts
- free agency and who is in control
- utilitarianism and efficiency, remaking the world with Man in charge
- being awake to Beauty and its importance to Life
- fleeing temptation, danger of doublemindedness
- “Progress” and the destruction of the irreplaceable, the danger of complacency
- “all that is necessary for Evil to triumph”

#### Practices of Hope and of Wisdom

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.—Philippians 4:8-9*

1. **Cling to sound doctrine and right teaching.** *Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.* (2 Timothy 4:2-4)
2. **Reject any movement grounded on the premise that the ends justify the means.** *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”* (1 Peter 1:13-16)
3. **Use your gifts and participate fully in the Church, the Body of Christ.** *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.* (1 Peter 4:10-11)
4. **Be awake to Beauty on a daily basis and cultivate Wonder based on Who God is.** *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.* (Phil 4:8)
5. **Be alert to the dangers of complacency and inaction and regularly and prayerfully examine your life and commitments.** *For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them* (Proverbs 1:32) *But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.* (Luke 21:34)

## FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH

For the beauty of the earth, For the beauty of the skies  
For the love which from our birth Over and around us lies  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night  
Hill and vale and tree and flower sun and moon and stars of light  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise

For the joy of human love-- brother, sister, parent, child;  
Friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn of praise

For each perfect gift of thine to our race so freely given  
Graces human and divine, flow'rs of earth and buds of heav'n  
Lord of all, to thee we raise this our joyful hymn.

--Folliott Sandford Pierpoint (1835-1917)

*One spring afternoon in 1863, at the age of 28, Folliott S. Pierpoint sat on a hilltop outside his native city of Bath, England, admiring the country view and the winding Avon River. Inspired by the view to think about God's gifts in creation and in the church, Pierpont wrote this text.*