

That Hideous Strength: How the West Was Lost by Melvin Tinker, EP Books, Welwyn Garden City, UK (2018). (27 Quotes selected by Doug Nichols.)

1. Two Types of People in the World.

... one problem with the reaction against ‘culture war’ language is that theologically it’s at odds with a constant biblical theme from Genesis to Revelation which delineates a fundamental distinction between human beings, what theologians call ‘the antithesis.’ The second chapter of Colossians summarises this well when it talks about two, *and only two*, types of people: those have received Jesus Christ as Lord, rooted and built up in him, and those ‘not according to Christ’ who are captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depend on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces. [page 13]

2. Competing Worldviews.

Like it or not, Christians are engaged in a religious war, a war of competing worldviews—fundamentally different ways of interpreting the world which impact our lives now and with eternal consequences. [page 14]

3. Cultural Marxism.

The specific rebellious academic scribbles of those associated with the ideology called cultural Marxism have, and continue, to manipulate our culture and prey on its most vulnerable members. [page 15]

4. New Totalitarianism in Western Society.

In the course of this book I shall give some disturbing examples of the way a new totalitarianism is being introduced into Western society and the way the church has colluded with it—at times actively, by buying into cultural Marxism (theological liberalism), or passively, by not concerning itself with such matters so long as one can be left to preach the Word (evangelical pietism). [page 20]

5. A Variant of Naturalistic Materialism.

...Lewis, the ideology of his day, which he sought to expose and debunk, was naturalistic materialism. One of the main theologies of our day is a variant of this, namely, neo-Marxism, sometimes called cultural Marxism or libertarian Marxism. [page 45]

6. Full Autonomy.

As Andrew Sandlin writes:

Libertarian Marxism is all about liberating humanity from the social institutions and conditions (like the family and church and business and traditional views and habits and authorities) that prevent the individual from realizing his true self, his true desires and aspirations, from being anything he wants to be—full autonomy ... Libertarian Marxism is the Marxism of our culture, of our time. [page 46]

7. PC or not PC? That is the question ...

It is cultural Marxism which lies behind the all-pervading political correctness of our age. Those of both the political right and left acknowledge this. Pat Buchanan of the right wrote, “Political Correctness is cultural Marxism, a regime to punish dissent and to stigmatize social heresy as the Inquisition punished religious heresy. Its trademark is intolerance.” [pages 49-50]

8. Integration with Darwinism and Freudianism.

A key element of Critical Theory was the integration of Marxism with Darwinism and Freudianism. [page 52]

9. If You Don't Agree, It Is Because You Are a Fascist.

By a semantic slight of hand, those who appear critical of the neo-Marxist agenda are labelled fascist ... [page 55]

10. Media Magic.

One of the most successful TV series in recent years is *Sex in the City*, a programme about a group of chic single women, who, as the title suggests, engage in a fairly free and easy sexual lifestyle. More recently, the idea of cheating on your partner and not telling them about it has been taken up by another TV series, *Desperate Housewives*. Infidelity has become the order of the day in much mainstream entertainment. Lee Steigel has argued that it is not coincidental that the creators of both *Sex in the City* and *Desperate Housewives* are all gay men. He suggests that what is going on was, ‘an ingenious affirmation of a certain type of gay-male sexuality’ which is notoriously promiscuous. This was brought to the fore by a ground-breaking survey in *The New York Times* in 2010 which revealed that about half of gay couples in San Francisco who were in a permanent relationship held to sexual openness, which, far from harming gay unions, is said to enrich them. Referring to *Sex in the City*, Siegel called it, ‘the biggest hoax perpetrated on straight single women in the history of entertainment.’ Single women

who see themselves portrayed in these relationships are actually watching a justification for the gay men who produce the show. Therefore the portrayal of women behaving this way makes it easier to accept promiscuous homosexuality. In other words fiction is being used to perpetrate a fiction. [pages 67-68]

11. A Classless Mind and Genderless Body.

The goal is no longer a classless society but a classless mind and a genderless body—no longer just a fair deal for the worker but a transformation of the human psyche! At this point, such a powerful cosmology takes on an unmistakably religious character. [page 72]

12. Do What Feels Right for You.

Carl Trueman in pondering [Camille] Paglia's remarks asks, 'So why do Christians capitulate to such nonsense so easily?' He answers:

Here Paglia and I are on the same page: Because the Christian church is too often not satisfied with being the Christian church, with all of its austere dogma and demands, but prefers to be merely an insipid and derivative mouthpiece for modern emotivism. Liberal churches do what they always do: In an effort to remain credible they dutifully turn up to baptize whatever sentimental mush the world wants to promote on the trendy topic of the moment. Of course, it always does this a day or two late, but that's what happens when your ethics are simply a response to norms which the world has already embraced. No longer is it 'Thus saith the Lord!' so much as 'Now, now, poor dear, you just do what feels right for you. Oh, and please, whatever you do, don't feel guilty about it.' [page 83]

13. Creation Boundaries Have Been Wiped Away.

No longer is a transgender person someone who feels trapped in the wrong body, this a new variant of what it means to be human. The boundaries of creation have not simply been set aside, they have been wiped away.

This is fully in-line with the liberation desired by the cultural Marxists; if sexual identity is a social construct like everything else, then use technology to bring nature into line. But this is completely contrary to the biblical vision which is ably described by Professor Oliver O'Donovan:

One can express the Christian perspective like this: the either-or of biological maleness and femaleness to which the human race is bound is not a meaningless or oppressive condition of nature; it is a good gift of God, because it gives rise to possibilities of relationship in which the polarities of masculine and feminine,

more subtly nuanced than the biological differentiation, can play a decisive part.
[pages 84-85]

14. The Abolition of God and the Abolition of Man.

The end result of all neo-Marxist philosophies is not the liberation of human beings but their destruction—‘the abolition of man.’ Let us not be under any illusions as to what is at stake. Hannah Arendt showed in her reporting of the trial of Hitler’s chief architect of the Final Solution, Adolf Eichmann, that he and those like him were only able to carry out their atrocities by separating themselves from their victims by denying the common humanity which connected them both. In the words of Carl Trueman in his essay ‘The Banality of Evil’, ‘The possibility of the Final Solution was predicated on the abolition of common human nature.’ If there is no common human nature, it is difficult to see what basis there is for human rights. Why should this too be any less of a social construct, one which can be made and unmade by the dominant social class of the time? Indeed, for the cultural Marxist such rights need to be formulated and given legislative force to impose the new liberty. If it is a human right for those who are gay to marry, it will be unacceptable to have a society which refuses it. It will be forbidden to forbid. [pages 87-88]

15. This Has Happened Before.

The picture which has been painted seems rather bleak. But the church has had to face similar situations before. The Babel story repeats itself again and again throughout world history that, in the words of G. K. Chesterton, ‘At least five times ... the Faith has to all appearances gone to the dogs. In each of these five cases, it was the dog that died.’ [page 89]

16. We Are to Look Up to God.

Os Guinness strikes the right biblical note which lies at the centre of the Babel episode emphasizing *God’s* action:

Let it be clearly understood that our hope in the possibility of renewal is squarely grounded, not in ourselves, not in history and the fact that it has happened before, but in the power of God demonstrated by the truth of the resurrection of Jesus ... This is therefore no time to hang our heads or hide our lights under any bushel for fear that we may be picked on for our refusal to fit in. We are to have no fear. We are to look up. We are to take strength from the fact that we can, because he can. [pages 92-93]

17. Presenting Reality from Above.

The church of Christ should be in the business of presenting reality which comes from 'above' rather than trying to attempt with the world to reconstruct reality from 'below' with Babel hubris. [page 93]

18. Human Nature Is Divinely Given.

This man Jesus (yes, biologically male with X and Y chromosomes having a real human nature, which he still has in heaven seated at God's right hand) is the Son of Man, the Second Adam, showing us what it means to live the other-person centred life in complete delightful obedience to his Father. The model of Christ runs counter to the cultural Marxism in which human nature disappears together with human rights. Human nature, which the second person of the Trinity assumed, is divinely given, not humanly fabricated. The undermining of the one will invariably lead to an undermining of the other. [page 94]

19. The Church Feeling at Home in the World.

Reinhold Niebuhr [says], "The modern church regards this mundane interest as its social passion. But it is also the mark of its slavery to society. Whenever religion feels completely at home in the world, it is the salt which has lost its savour. If it sacrifices the strategy of renouncing the world it has no strategy by which it may convict the world of sin. [page 99]

20. Everyone Is Unaware.

... the all-pervading nature of cultural Marxism and the subversive methods it employs can take evangelicals unawares as much as anyone else. [page 99]

21. Living as Strangers in the World.

In his own inimitable way, G.K. Chesterton, writing in *The Everlasting Man*, pinpointed the issue. 'A dead thing can go with the stream, but only a living thing can go against it. This doesn't mean that we should simply remain close to theological orthodoxy without being culturally engaged to cause growth—patently that is not the case—but it does underscore the importance of maintaining Christian distinctiveness in belief and behavior as God' chosen people living, in the words of 1 Peter 1:1, as strangers (exiles) in the world. [page 103]

22. All Are Slaves ...

Unlike many of our politicians and educationalists today, as well as some of our church leaders, Wilberforce had a realistic, biblical view of human nature, a genuine understanding of the real problem and God's remedy. He saw that *all* men and women were in fact slaves. Their freedom was a delusion—they were slaves to sin and the devil (the 'hideous strength') which alone sufficiently explained the dreadful things in the world. As Jesus said in Matthew 15:18, 'what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.' Wilberforce saw clearly that this could only be changed by divine intervention.

Wilberforce used both hands, the right hand of proclaiming the gospel, and the left hand of refuting present day ideas and values, using all the means at his disposal to effect change. This took great courage. [page 106]

23. Ideas Embedded in Culture-Producing Institutions.

James Davison Hunter has argued that what ultimately makes the decisive difference in changing the world are not simply great men with great ideas, but ideas embedded in culture-producing institutions. It can hardly be said that the church in Britain, including the Church of England, qualifies. Hunter contends that the church should be less concerned with seizing power by political means and instead should seek to be 'faithfully present.' He writes, 'The vocation of the church is to bear witness to and be a faithful embodiment of the coming kingdom of God.' In other words, it is to proclaim and defend the central truth in Christ as we outlined earlier and to live them out. It will not do to surrender to the non-realities of cultural Marxism or any other ideology which sets itself over and against God's kingdom (including those theologies with use kingdom language to promote its anti-kingdom agenda, i.e. those of the anti-Christ). [page 111]

24. Living Our Theology.

Since in our present cultural climate Christians will feel the pressure to keep their heads down and mouths shut, as hoped for by the cultural Marxists, gospel integrity is crucial. This is a quality of life formed by the Holy Spirit enabling each church congregation to become a lived 'plausibility structure.' We certainly need to argue and assert our theology, but we also have to live it. [pages 111-112]

25. Educating Christians about What Is Happening in Society.

If pastors do not know the culture in which people 'live, move and have their being' they will not be able to minister to them effectively. And if this doesn't happen then there will be a disconnect between what is preached on Sunday and what is

encountered on Monday. One of the maxims of war is 'know your enemy,' and presumably if one is to engage effectively, one must also 'know the territory' in which the fight is to take place. Not educating Christians about what is taking place in their society, (exposing the influence of the 'hideous strength') will be like sending a soldier out with the 'sword of the Spirit' (we have 'preached the Word' after all), without instructing them how to wield it and against whom. [pages 114-115]

26. Survival of Civilization and Eternal Well-being of Souls.

The political will of the opponents of Christianity is strong and unrelenting. The church by in large appears confused and compromised. The stakes are high: nothing less than the survival of a civilization and the eternal well-being of countless souls. [page 116]

27. Time to Trust God.

As Os Guinness explains in *Renaissance*, 'The time has come to trust God, move out, sharing and demonstrating the good news, following his call and living out our callings in every area of our lives, and then leave the outcome to him.' [page 117]