



## The Future of Man

*Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*

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*The Future of Man* is a magnificent introduction to the thoughts and writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, one of the few figures in the history of the Catholic Church to achieve renown as both a scientist and a theologian. Trained as a paleontologist and ordained as a Jesuit priest, Teilhard de Chardin devoted himself to establishing the intimate, interdependent connection between science—particularly the theory of evolution—and the basic tenets of the Christian faith. At the center of his philosophy was the belief that the human species is evolving spiritually, progressing from a simple faith to higher and higher forms of consciousness, including a consciousness of God, and culminating in the ultimate understanding of humankind's place and purpose in the universe. The Church, which would not condone his philosophical writings, refused to allow their publication during his lifetime. Written over a period of thirty years and presented here in chronological order, the essays cover the wide-ranging interests and inquiries that engaged Teilhard de Chardin throughout his life: intellectual and social evolution; the coming of ultra-humanity; the integral place of faith in God in the advancement of science; and the impact of scientific discoveries on traditional religious dogma. Less formal than *The Phenomenon of Man* and *The Divine Milieu*, Teilhard de Chardin's most renowned works, *The Future of Man* offers a complete, fully accessible look at the genesis of ideas that continue to reverberate in both the scientific and the religious communities.

## The Future of Man Details

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### **Paul Adkin says**

Teilhard was trying to unite science and religion. Certainly Teilhard was able to develop a metaphysics that was far closer to physics than perhaps ever before, or at least since the Golden Age of Greek Philosophy. But after bringing science onto the stage of theosophy Teilhard does not make God more understandable scientifically, in fact he does the opposite. In his theories God is not essential, only helpful, as a unifying force for humanity. His thesis demands a purposeful Universe, but the *elan vital* that creates conscious life does not necessarily have to come from God. Teilhard's positivism resides in a Universe driven by purposeful evolution, of which humanity, the *homo sapiens*, is at the peak of the evolutionary process. If the evolutionary process is inspired and set going by God, it is not the same God as that of the Judeo-Christian tradition: there is no miracle here, God is subject to natural laws. Perhaps a God created those laws, but this is not the all omnipotent God that spoke to Abraham and Moses.

Of course Teilhard is not a Jew but a Christian-Catholic and his attempt to fuse Christianity and science comes out of the need for an ethical leap that will unite humanity peacefully in the process of globalisation that he saw to be inevitable. However, Christianity is too sullied by the power hierarchies that claim to represent it for it to ever be a viable motor ever again. Just as God is not needed to create the Universe, science also shows us that neither is God needed to provide a purposeful drive forward in the future. Such a drive can only come from "humanity" itself.

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### **John says**

nonfiction, theology, evolution, Jesuit, science, philosophy

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### **♥ Ibrahim ♥ says**

I find his books to be completely boring. I wish I had known about inter-library loan before buying those books, but off to our local library for donation!

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### **Neil Collins says**

A collection of essays by Christian Trans-humanist, Teilhard de Chardin. Essays are from the late 1940s to the early 1950s and introduce Chardin's concept of the 'noosphere', a developing layer of the earth which consists the minds of humanity... many have said that he was obviously predicting what we now know to be the internet. He also spells out some of the earliest visions of what is now known as the 'Singularity'.

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### **Mary Kennedy says**

Reading for my discussion group. Group of essays. Dense and very intellectual.

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### **Adam Ross says**

Teilhard de Chardin was a polymath writer and thinker, a priest and a respected paleontologist. In this collection of essays he ponders the future of mankind in the upward evolutionary progression of life on earth. It is here that his mystical-religious side shines through, as he ponders the big questions. The growth of material complexity in living organisms is paralleled by a growing psychological complexity of consciousness, and he takes this trend to ponder what the trajectory of the future might reveal. As individual humans interconnect more and more, he posits the arrival at what he calls the Omega Point, the Cosmic Christ point, or the "planetization of mankind," in which a kind of global consciousness is reached. While I suspect the arrival at this point may be a more difficult progress than he imagined in the 40s and 50s, I don't see any reason to doubt that something like it may be coming. The history of humanity has shown that as time and history progresses, we discover more and more what is healthy and what is damaging and harmful to human life in terms of culture and society. We perceive our time today as being horribly violent, but there has been an inexorable climb away from brutality, and we actually live in the least violent age in recorded human history. The book is a bracing challenge to those who refuse to admit to an inexorable growth of progress in the world, and may actually give you hope for the future.

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### **Olethros says**

-Uno de los trabajos centrales relativos a la gran obsesión del autor.-

Género. Ensayo.

Lo que nos cuenta. Recopilación de ensayos del autor reunidos tras su fallecimiento que, desde diferentes prismas, se aproximan a la evolución humana en lo físico, lo social y lo espiritual mientras trata de crear enlaces entre la religión cristiana y la ciencia.

¿Quiere saber más de este libro, sin spoilers? Visite:

<http://librosdeolethros.blogspot.com....>

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### **Jim George says**

Trippy spiritual reading, a bit dated.

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### **Martine says**

I have the 1964 edition translated by Norman Denny and published by Collins Fontana Books. Issued in 1969 by Fontana Religious Books.

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## Dan says

As the second thinker to use the term "noosphere," following V.I. Vernadsky, Teilhard overcasts a triumphant neoclassical view of mankind and places consciousness at center stage. IMO, Teilhard's two big contributions come in the following palettes: 1- Teilhard's complexity law: Roughly, matter and energy, have tendencies to merge into larger and more complex systems that have better evolutive advantages, and 2- These tendencies are composed within different stages of evolutionary time-Cosmic, Infinitesimal, and Human Consciousness; and the current stage of evolution is centered on the development of the noosphere (IE: global consciousness).

I love this book for 2 reasons. First, as a representative of the Catholic Church, Teilhard proposes an alternative to western dogmas involving the ideas of the apocalypse and the postmortem heaven and hell. More or less, faith in God is transposed into a faith in Man, and Man is not doomed to only fail in this life so as to succeed in the next. This broadens traditional Catholic sentiments and leads to possible panentheistic or pantheistic ideals. Second, Teilhard offers a contrast to the latent science-and-new atheism-based waning in Faith, simply by providing the proper lens of perspective: Instead of random (IE: godless) mutation and the inconsequential cosmic placing of Earth, complexity and consciousness are inherent properties of the Universe and placement is not arbitrary, it is precise. Thus, what has occurred must have occurred, and science can still be predicated on a faith-based analysis (perhaps God is not behind the curtain, "he" is the curtain). Certainly, since the advent of the information age and scientific reform, it has been hard to merge traditional religious fervor with objective rationalism. Teilhard turns this on its head. Today, we may have the power of being "in the know," but yesterday that power was still there, despite a noticeable hominid absence. Allow me to be blunt, we may be conscious, but our consciousness is the gift of a greater system-namely, the Universe.

My first appreciation here recognizes Teilhard's contribution to transposing Catholicism. My second recognizes that Teilhard allows Catholicism to still be viable in the age of postmodernism.

A few aesthetics: This book gets a little wordy and is sometimes redundant or hard to follow. Teilhard also seems to give undue attention to some particular Christian stances (perhaps to avoid complete censure)- it looks like he avoids some of his own conclusions and rationalizes certain Christian appeals. While some may complain that this book is dated in the fields of cosmology, paleontology, and evolutionary biology, and the book only begins to hint at true pantheistic approaches, I still recommend this piece as an excellent start into the forays of noospheric possibilities. Teilhard doesn't really come out and say it, but the logical implications of his ideas really highlight some exciting possibilities for the future. I'll be waiting.

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Enjoy.

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## Andrew says

traces the evolution of man through his earthly travels into the noosphere.

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## **David says**

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin was one of the most forward-looking thinkers of the early twentieth century. Trained as a paleontologist and ordained a Jesuit priest, foresaw the time when scientific knowledge and religious knowledge would join together in an ecstasy of sorts that he termed the "Omega Point". This is arguably one of the greatest single ideas of twentieth century thought. If the book were rated solely on this point, it would definitely be a 5-star work.

However, reading Teilhard's book is a test of patience. For one thing, his several chapters of scientific commentary are woefully out of date -- one would do much better to read a 21st century exposition. More importantly, Teilhard's writing style is so turgid, fluffy and filled with hyperbole that it is very hard to understand what he is really saying.

Indeed, it is a great pity that such a great idea was couched in such a murky exposition.

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## **Randall Secret says**

Are... "We moving! We are going forward!" Or... "Nothing changes, We are not moving at all." How can we Not believe we are moving forward? And, if indeed, we 'are' moving forward despite all appearances to the contrary Mankind is not only capable of living in peace but by its very structure CANNOT FAIL EVENTUALLY TO ACHIEVE PEACE. Erit in omnibus omnia Deus...

The three verses are I Corinthians XV, 26, 27 and 28:

The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.

And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all...

Pierre Teilhard Chardin is a fine theologian and an equally noted author. Find the book, discover the Cosmos - Cosmogenesis, Biogenesis, Noogenesis, Christogenesis. Also discover; 1. The Universe is centrated - Evolatively, Upward and Forward of Christ is the Centre - The Christian Phenomena and Noogenesis, Christogenesis, Paul.

Find the book...

Randall

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