

Lecture 11

EVOLUTION

Now we come to this key concept which is extremely important for understanding the religious outlook of contemporary man -- the whole outlook, both religious and secular. This idea is an extremely complex one and here we can give only a sketchy outline of the problems involved in this question.

Since the time of Darwin and his *Origin of the Species* -- which came out in 1859 and was instantly accepted by many people and soon became very popular, especially with people such as T. H. Huxley, Herbert Spencer, in Germany -- there was [Ernst] Haeckel [1834-1919] who wrote *The Riddle of the Universe* and others who popularized the ideas of Darwin and made evolution the very center of their whole philosophy. It seems to explain everything. Of course, people like Nietzsche picked it up and used it for his so-called "spiritual prophecies." So that the people who are in the main school of Western thought -- this rationalism carried as far as you can take it -- accepted evolution. And to the present day one can say that it is a central dogma of advanced thinkers, of people who are in harmony with the times. But from the very beginning there were people who were arguing about this. There was a Catholic thinker who believed in evolution but not in natural selection which reduced Darwin to despair because the latter discovered that his idea cannot be proved. But especially in the last ten to thirty years there have come out many critical accounts of evolution from the more objective point of view. Most of the books supporting evolution begin already with a certain premise which they assume, the naturalistic outlook and so forth.

But now there is even a whole society in San Diego called the Scientific Creationism Institute which has come out with several good books. They themselves are religious, but they have several books which discuss evolution quite objectively, not at all from any religious standpoint. They say there are two models for understanding the universe: one is the evolution model and one is the creation model. They take the evidence, the history of the earth, the geological layers and so forth, and they try to see which model these fit. And they have discovered that fewer adjustments have to be made if one follows the model of creation -- if there was a God who created things in the beginning and if the earth is not billions of years old but only some thousands of years old.

The evolutionary model, on the other hand, requires a good many corrections which can be compared to the old Ptolemaic universe (vs. Copernican) and which is proving quite cumbersome. In fact, some members of this institute travel around to various universities and in the last year or two they have held several debates before thousands of spectators at the University of Tennessee, Texas.... Interest has been quite high; and those defending evolution have not been able to give sound evidence in support of it and, in fact, on several points were caught on their ignorance of several recent discoveries in paleontology.

There are then people who are very sophisticated and knowledgeable defending both points of view. Here we won't even discuss the question of atheistic evolution because it is obviously a philosophy of fools and people who can believe, as Huxley said, that if you put a group of monkeys with typewriters they will eventually give you the Encyclopedia Britannica, given enough time, if not millions then billions of years according to the laws of chance. Someone calculated this according to the laws of chance and found that in fact such a thing would never happen. But anyone who can believe that can believe anything.

The more serious dispute is between theistic evolution, that God created the world and then it evolved, and the Christian point of view. Here we must say that the Fundamentalist point of view is incorrect in many instances because they don't know how

to interpret Scripture. They say, for example, that the Book of Genesis must be understood "literally" and one cannot do this. The Holy Fathers tell us which parts are literal and which parts are not.

The first misunderstanding which must be cleared away before even discussing this question is one that causes many people to miss the point, and that is that we must distinguish between evolution and variation. Variation is the process by which the people who make various hybrids of peas, different kinds of cats -- after fifty years of experimentation they come up with a new kind of cat which is a combination of Siamese and Persian called the Himalayan cat which has long hair like a Persian with the coloring of a Siamese. This had happened accidentally, but it was never able to reproduce itself purely and only now after all these years of experimentation have they come up with a new breed which breeds true -- just so there are different species of dogs, different kinds of plants and the very races of men are all quite different: Pygmies, Hottentots, Chinese, Northern Europeans -- all different kinds of human beings who came from one ancestor. And so the question of variation is one thing.

There are undoubtedly many variations within one type or kind of creature and these variations can be erected [expected?] by people on scientific principle. But these variations never produce anything *new*; they only produce a different kind of dog or cat or bean and people. In fact, this is more a proof *against* evolution rather than for it because no one has ever been able to come up with a new creature or new species. In fact, the different species -- and this term is itself quite arbitrary -- for the most part are not able to bear offspring and, in the few cases where they can and the mule is produced, it is not able itself to reproduce itself. And St. Ambrose of Milan says: "This is an example to you, O man, to stop meddling in the ways of God. God means for each creature to be separate."cxcvii

During the period of the Enlightenment the view of nature, also called the Enlightenment world-view, was quite stable. In fact just before this time the Anglican Archbishop Usher calculated all the years given in the Old Testament and came up with the idea that the world was created in the year 4004 B.C. Newton believed this and the enlightened world-view was in favor of the idea that God in six days created the world and then left it to develop itself and all the species were just as we see them today; and the scientists of that time accepted that.

At the end of the period of Enlightenment, however, as the revolutionary fever began to come on, this very stable world-view began to breakdown and already some scientists were coming up with more radical theories. At the end of the eighteenth century already Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles Darwin, came up with the hypothesis that all of life comes from one primordial filament which is exactly what is meant today by the theory of evolution. It is not a theory concerning only one species or kind of creature, but the theory that everything comes from some primordial blob or filament, and that this developed into the different kinds of creatures by transmutations.

This new kind of explanation, which he came up with then, is an attempt to continue the spirit of the Enlightenment as utter rationalism and simplicity. As the rationalism entered deeper into the mind, it was simpler to believe, he thought, to explain life as coming from one single living filament instead of the more complicated explanation that God gave being all at once to all different kinds of creatures.

There was one naturalist, Lamarck, who had a definite evolutionary theory just after this, but he had the idea that the changes necessary to account for the evolving of one species into another were due to the inheritance of acquired characteristics; and this could never be proved and has in fact been quite disproved. And so the idea of evolution did not take hold.

But there was one important geologist at this period of the early nineteenth century who gave a great impetus towards this acceptance of this idea of evolution; and this was Charles Lyell who came up with the theory of Uniformitarianism, that is, that all the changes we see in the earth today are not due to some kind of catastrophes, a sudden flood or something similar, but that the processes we see today have been operating in past centuries, past ages, from the beginning of the world, as far as we can see. And therefore if we look at the Grand Canyon, we see that the river has been eating away the canyon, and you can calculate by taking into account how fast the water flows, how much water there is in it now, the quality of the soil and so on, how long it must have taken to wear away that. And Lyell thinks that if we assume that these processes were always going on at the same rate -- this being very rational and given to calculation -- we can come up with a uniform explanation of things; and, of course, there is no proof of this; this is merely his hypothesis.

But this, together with the idea which was now gaining sympathy -- that species evolve one into the other -- if you put these two together, you get the idea that most likely the world is not just a few thousand years old like the Christians seem to say, but it must be very many of thousands or even millions of years old or even more. This begins the greater and greater age of the earth. But again this was only a presupposition, a belief that the earth must be very old; it was not proved.

But already this idea was sinking into the minds of men; and when Darwin came up in 1859 with his book with the idea of natural selection as opposed to Lamarck who said that the giraffe was evolved because a short-necked creature stretched his neck to eat the higher leaves and his ancestors had a neck an inch longer, the next one stretched a little more and gradually it became what we know today as a giraffe. This is against all scientific laws because such things don't happen. An acquired characteristic cannot be inherited as, for example, when the Chinese women had their feet bound their daughters were always born with normal feet.

But Darwin came up with the idea that there were perhaps two longer-necked creatures who survived because they had longer necks and they were joined together because all the rest died off, because of some kind of disaster, and their children did have longer necks because they were -- a change had occurred within them, a mutation. This might have been a chance thing at first, but once reproduction between two such like creatures has taken place it continues down throughout the ages.

Of course, this is a *guess* because no one has observed such a thing to happen. But this kind of a guess struck upon the consciousness of the people; they were like tinder, all ready for it, and this was the spark. The idea sounded so plausible; and the idea of evolution took hold -- not because it was proved.

As a matter of fact, the speculations of Darwin were based almost entirely upon his observations, not of evolution, but of *variation*, because he wondered when he was traveling in the Galapagos Islands why there were thirteen different varieties of one kind of finch and thought that it was because there was one original variety which had developed according to its environment. This is not evolution but variation. From this, he jumped to the conclusion that if you keep making small changes like that, eventually you will have a different species. The problem in trying to prove this scientifically is that no one has ever observed these larger changes; they have only observed changes *within* a type, within a species.

Let us look then at the so-called "proofs of evolution" to see what kind there are. We are not going to try to disprove, but just to try to see the quality of the proof they use; what is it that seems convincing to people who believe in evolution.

There is a standard textbook of zoology used twenty years ago and it lists a number of proofs. The first of these is

called "comparative morphology," that is, man has arms, birds have wings, the fish have flippers -- they even have convincing diagrams which make them look very much alike. Even the moth. The birds have claws and we have fingers and they show how one might have developed into the other. [Fr. S. is showing illustrations from p. 215 of *General Zoology* by Storer] All creatures are shown to have a very similar structure and the different structures are all in different phyla and genera, families and so on. Of course, this is not a proof. This is very logical to one who believes in evolution.

But, as the scientific creationists say, if you believe that God created ----- ?

basic master-plan of creation; that is, that all kinds of creatures have a basic similarity in their plan. If you believe that God created them, these pictures convince you that, yes, God created them in a sort of gradation. If you believe that one evolved into the other, you look at the same picture and say, yes, one evolved into the other. But there is no proof either for or against evolution in this. In fact, people accept evolution on some other basis and then look at this, and this convinces them even more.

Secondly, there is "comparative physiology": "The tissue and fluids of organisms show many basic similarities in physiological and chemical properties that" are close to the similarities in morphology. For example, "from the hemoglobin in vertebrate blood," a certain kind of "oxyhemoglobin crystals can be obtained; their crystalline structure... parallels that of vertebrate classification" which is "based on body structure. Those of each species are distinct, but all from [a]" the one "genus have some common characteristic. [Furthermore] those of all birds have certain resemblances" [but differ] different "from crystals obtained from" the "blood of mammals or reptiles."^{cxcviii}

This is the same thing as in morphology. If you believe in creation, you say that God made similar creatures with similar blood, and there is no problem. If you believe in evolution, you say that one evolved into the other. In fact, [in] one of the dating systems that has been devised from precipitations from blood, they see that they are similar in each species, something in common [with] those in one genus and quite distinct in birds, monkeys and so forth. And from this they make certain calculations and decide how many years apart on the evolutionary scale these different creatures are. As it happens, their calculations throw everything else off. If this is to be accepted, other dating systems have to be changed; so it is still controversial and it actually proves nothing because you can accept it either as a proof of evolution or of God's creation.

There is a third argument called "comparative embryology." Textbooks like this [*General Zoology*] used to have these classical pictures which -- baby fish, salamander, turtle, chicken, pig, man -- and they all look very much alike and they gradually evolve differently. Besides, you see that man has so-called "gill-slits" in the embryo. Therefore, this is a remembrance of his ancestry. Ernst Haeckel and the "theory of recapitulation" and "biogenetic law": "An individual organism in its development (ontogeny) tends to recapitulate the stages passed through by its ancestors (phylogeny)."^{cxcix} Today this theory is no longer accepted by evolutionists, that the gill-slits are not gill-slits at all but they are just preparing for what is to be developed in the neck of the human being. So this proof has been pretty well discarded. Again they use the argument that similarity means proof, which it in fact does not.

Another proof which used to be more powerful than it is today is that of vestigial organs. There are certain things, like the appendix in man, which seem to have no function now and therefore must be left over from a previous stage of evolution when he was a monkey or sometime when he used this organ. But more and more these vestigial organs are found to have a certain use; the appendix is found to have some kind of glandular

function; so this argument is also losing its weight. And just because we don't know what a certain organ does, this does not mean that it is left over from some lower form of life.

Then there are the arguments from paleontology, the study of fossils. Of course, the first very convincing thing is the geological strata, as, for example, the Grand Canyon where you see all kinds of strata; and the lower you get the more primitive the creatures seem to be. And they date the strata by what kind of creatures are found in them. [Fr. S. is showing illustration from *General Zoology*, p. 222 of strata in the Grand Canyon.]

There is a whole story how in the nineteenth century they discovered these strata and how they determined which were older and which were younger; and now they think they have a pretty elaborate system to tell which strata are older and which are younger. But the whole dating system is rather circular because they date -- since often these strata are upside-down -- they have to have certain readjustments, just like the Ptolemaic system needed certain adjustments to make epicycles, because the planets were not going around the earth uniformly. In the same way, you must make adjustments when you find the strata are upside down. You have to date them by the fossils in them. But how do you know that the fossils in them are in the right order? You know because somewhere else the fossils were in the right way, and you got the system from that. But as you look at it, it is a kind of circular system; and you have to have faith that this actually corresponds to reality.

But there are a number of flaws in this. For one thing the new creatures come quite suddenly into each strata with no intermediary types. Besides this, as research continues, they are finding animals in the strata which are not supposed to be there, so that now in the pre-Cambrian level they are finding quite advanced squid and all kinds of animals like that which should not be there because they weren't evolved until some hundred million years later. And you either have to change your idea of the squid's evolution or say this was an exception.

But in general there is no proof that these strata were laid down over millions of years. And the creationists who talk about the Flood of Noah say that it is equally conceivable that the Flood of Noah caused exactly the same thing because the more advanced animals would be going on higher ground trying to get away from the flood; the lower marine animals would obviously be the first to be buried; and there would be little [few] remnants of man at all because man would be trying to get on ships and other things to get away.

And there are only very particular conditions which cause a fossil to be left at all. It has to be buried suddenly in a certain kind of mud which allows it to be preserved. The whole idea of the gradualness of these phenomena is being called more and more into question. In fact there is now proof that oil and coal and such things can be made in an extremely short time in a matter of days or weeks. The formation of fossils itself is very much in favor of some catastrophe.

The final thing which is against evolution is that it is hard to say that there has ever been found a single thing which can be called an intermediary species. In fact Darwin was extremely worried about this. He said, "According to my theory there should be a million intermediary species at least or more and I have never found one. But we will wait until the fossil record is more complete."^{cc} And today's scientists say that the fossil record is extremely complete; and there are more fossil species known than living species. And still there have not been found more than a couple which might be interpreted as somehow being an intermediary species. They will tell you about the pterodactyl -- this reptile with wings, and say that this reptile is becoming a bird. But why can't you simply say this is a reptile with wings?

And there are certain fossils called "index fossils" which,

[when] seen in a certain strata, mean that strata cannot be any older or younger than a certain date because that animal was extinct at that period. And they found one recently that was supposed to be extinct 500 million years ago which is swimming around in the ocean; and because it was thought to be an index fossil, it threw off the whole thing; and that particular layer which was dated according to this extinct fish is no longer correct.

And why is it that certain species evolve and others stay the same as they were? There are many species found in the past which are exactly the same as currently living species. And they have ideas that some are "reprobate" species that don't go anywhere for some reason, and others are more progressive species since they have the energy to go forward. But that is *faith*, not proof. And so, the fossil species which have been preserved are just as distinct from each other as living species.

Then we have something else which you find in all textbooks of evolution: the horse and the elephant [*General Zoology*, pp. 226-228, illustrations]. And there is a great deal of subjectivity involved, just as when you make the Neanderthal man look bent over to resemble an ape. This is imagination, not scientific proof, but something based on one's philosophical idea. And there is quite a bit of such evidence which is either pretty much against evolution or shows that there is no proof one way or the other. And there are some things which are quite remarkable and are unable to be explained by evolution.

Just recently in the last two to three years, they discovered a place in Texas where there are dinosaur tracks and right next to it human tracks; and in one place the human tracks and the dinosaur tracks overlap, which show that these two creatures were living at the same time. The Protestants made a movie about this and show it as a proof against evolution. But one of the scientists who saw this -- he was a creationist -- said, "Well, this is very interesting, isn't it?" And one man who believed in evolution looked at it and said, "I don't believe it." He has faith that this didn't happen, that this dinosaur was extinct before man came; and therefore it is impossible to have dinosaur and human tracks together. Or else you make an epicycle in your system to provide some kind of explanation.

The final so-called "proof of evolution" is mutation. In fact the serious scientist will tell you that all the rest is not really proof. But the one proof is *mutations*. And in fact Randall who wrote this *History of Modern Thought* -- he himself is an evolutionist -- says, "At present biologists admit that we do not, strictly speaking, know anything about the causes of the origins of new species; we must fall back upon the scientific faith that they occur because of chemical changes in" the "germ plasm."^{cci} He then is sophisticated enough to admit that this is a faith.

There are some like Dobzhansky who say that "I have proved evolution because I have made a new species in the laboratory." And so, after thirty years of working on fruit flies who multiply very quickly, you can get a whole equivalent of several hundred thousand years of human life in a few decades. He experimented by radiating fruit flies and finally came up with two who had changes -- they had no wings or something -- and they were no longer able to interbreed with the other kind of fruit fly. And this is his definition of species -- that they can't interbreed; and therefore "I have evolved a new species."

Well, in the first case, this was done under extremely artificial conditions with radiation; and you have to have a new theory of radioactive waves from outer space in order to justify it. And secondly, it is still a fruit fly. So it has no wings or it's purple instead of yellow; it is still a fruit fly and is basically no different from any other fruit fly; it's simply another variety. So he has actually proved nothing.

Besides that, mutations are ninety-nine percent harmful; and all experiments, including those [by scientists] who have worked on this for many decades, all have proved

unsuccessful to show any kind of real change from one kind of creature into another, even the most primitive kind that reproduces itself every ten days. If anything, the evidence in that sphere is for the _____? [uniformitarianism? stability?] of species.

But in the end we have to say that there is no conclusive proof, scientific proof, *for* evolution. And likewise there is not any conclusive proof *against* evolution, because even though it might not seem too logical or too plausible according to the evidence, still there is no proof that given a billion or trillion years you might not produce from an amoeba a man or a monkey. A man is more complicated because he has a soul. Who knows? If you have a completely objective mind and don't consider for a moment what the Holy Fathers say, you might think that perhaps it's true, especially if there is a God. By "chance," you have no argument at all. The latter -- if one were to believe in chance -- requires much more faith than to believe in God. In any case, the evidence we have just examined makes sense to you according to what your philosophy is. And the creationist philosophy requires less adjustment of the evidence. And so it is more in accordance with simplistic and uniformitarian presuppositions of modern science.

There is one more thing which has been used as a kind of "proof of evolution"; and that is the dating system: radio-carbon, potassium-argon, uranium decay, fluorine system and so on. These were all discovered in the present century, some of them just recently. They say that this proves the world is really very old. And in one textbook it says this is a revolution in dating because before that we had only relative ideas of age and now we have absolute ideas.

You can test your potassium-argon and come up with the idea that a certain rock is three billion, two billion years old; they allow a margin of error of about ten percent. The fact of the matter is that the great age of the earth was already known supposedly by scientists before these dating systems were developed. And the dating systems already accepted [were based on] the presuppositions which led to the idea that the world was already many millions if not billions of years old. So they are not really revolutionary in dating; they simply fit into an already accepted view. If these new dating systems had said that the world was only 5,000 years old, instead of 3 billion, scientists would not have been accepting them so easily.

Secondly, there are certain basic principles, presuppositions, which these dating systems must have. The carbon-14 system, which traces the radio-active decay of half-life of carbon-14 to carbon-12, requires: 1) that there is absolute uniformity -- that the decay rate has always been the same for as long as the process has been going on, 2) that there has been no contamination from outside sources -- which they admit does happen, and 3) that the thing being dated has been isolated, buried somewhere and nothing else has been touching it from outside, no organic matter, and finally, 4) that there was no carbon-12 in the first place, it was all carbon-14. All these things are assumptions; they are not proved.

Many people, even among non-evolutionists, will admit that carbon-14 is the most reliable of all the dating systems; even the scientific creationists admit that it has an accuracy back perhaps 2,000 years. It has been tested on certain articles whose age has been determined and it has proved to be not too far off in most cases. But beyond 2,000 or 3,000 years it becomes extremely dubious. And even those adherents to this system admit that because the half-life of carbon-14 is 5,600 years or so, it cannot be accurate beyond 20,000 or 30,000 years at the most. The other systems, potassium-argon, uranium and so forth claim to [have a] half-life of one billion, three-hundred million years; and therefore when they talk about improving the age of old rocks they use these systems.

The carbon-14 system is used only on organic matter, on the fossils themselves; and potassium-argon and uranium

systems on rocks. But the same things are true: there must be uniformity throughout the billion years, no contamination from outside. We must assume that it was all potassium in the beginning before it decayed to argon; and all these things you have to take on faith. And if you try to measure anything recent, say only a million years ago, and you take this system with a half-life of a billion years, it is like trying to measure a millimeter with a yard stick; and is not very accurate even assuming it is valid. And there have been numerous cases when they have applied this system to new rocks; and they give them a life of two billion years old. Therefore, the whole thing is very shaky. And it requires that those billion years exist in the first place.

There are other kinds of tests which have been used at various times as, for example, the rate at which sodium is dissolved into the oceans, the rate at which various chemicals are discharged into the ocean. You measure the amount of the elements there are now in the oceans, measure approximately how much of it goes into the sea every year, and from that you come up with a guess of how old the ocean must be; and probably the ocean is as old as the world. They did this with sodium and discovered the world was, say, a billion years old. But it was found that you get different answers depending on which element you use, ranging from lead which gives a life rating of 150 years, others give 5,000 years, some 500 years, some 10 billion -- there is absolutely no uniformity.

There are other tests. For example, one tried the rate at which nickel accumulates on the earth in meteorites. By taking approximately the amount of nickel which accumulates in the earth from the meteorites every year and projecting it into the past on the uniformitarian basis, and one person made a calculation that if the earth was 5 billion years old according to the latest guess, there should be a layer of nickel on the earth 146 miles thick. There is another test, the rate of helium which also gives some utterly fantastic result. Therefore, these tests are very unsure; and some of them make it very dubious that the world could be anything like that, 50 billion years old.

When you come down to it, it depends what your faith is. Some scientists think the earth is very old because so far evolution is unthinkable unless the earth is very old. And if you believe in evolution, you must believe the earth is very old, since evolution does not work on any kind of a short scale. But as far as any scientific proof, there is none whatsoever that the earth is 5 billion years old, or 7,000 years old -- it could be either. It depends on what kind of suppositions you start with.

So evolution is not, in fact, a scientific problem; it is a *philosophical* question. And we have to realize that the theory of evolution is acceptable to certain scientists, certain people, philosophers, because they have been accepting something like -- -? [the presuppositions, the way?] they have been prepared for it.

Here is another quote or two from this same Randall, who believed in evolution, talking about how much faith enters into this. As we already read: "At present biologists admit that we do not strictly speaking know the causes of the origin of new species. We must fall back on the faith that they occur because of chemical changes in" the "germ plasm."^{ccii} That is the scientific faith. And if you question the scientist he will say, but anything else is unthinkable -- the "anything else" meaning that God created the world 7,000 or 8,000 years ago.

Again he says, describing the effect of evolution on the world: "In spite of these difficulties, the beliefs of men today have become thoroughly permeated with the concept of evolution. The great underlying notions and concepts that meant so much to the eighteenth century, Nature and Reason and Utility, have largely given way to a new set better expressing the ultimate intellectual ideas of the Growing World. Many social factors conspired to popularize the idea of development and its corollaries."^{cciii}

"Evolution has introduced a whole new scale of values.

Where for the eighteenth century the ideal was the rational, the natural, even the primitive and unspoiled, for us the desirable is identified rather with the latter end of the process of development, and our terms of praise are 'modern,' 'up-to-date,' 'advanced,' 'progressive.' Just as much as the Enlightenment we tend to identify what we approved with Nature, but for us it is not the rational order of nature, but the culmination of an evolutionary process, which we take for our leverage in existence. The eighteenth century could think of nothing worse than to call a man than an 'unnatural enthusiast'; we prefer to dub him an 'antiquated and outgrown fossil.' That age believed a theory if it were called rational, useful and natural; we favor it if it is 'the most recent development.' We had rather be modernists and progressives than sound reasoners. It is perhaps an open question if in our new scale of values we have not lost as much as we have gained.

"...The idea of evolution, as it has finally come to be understood, has reinforced the humanistic and naturalistic attitude."^{cciv}

The Orthodox Perspective

Now we must look to see what Orthodoxy says about the questions which evolution talks about, where they touch upon philosophy and theology. According to the theory of evolution, man is coming up from savagery and that is why [*General Zoology*, p. 765 illus., perhaps other artistic versions] they show in books the Cro-Magnon man, Neanderthal man -- obviously very savage, ready to beat someone over the head and take his meat. This is obviously someone's imagination; it is not based upon the shape of the fossils or anything else.

If you believe that man came up from savagery then you'll interpret all past history in those terms. But according to Orthodoxy man fell from paradise. In evolutionary philosophy there is no room for a supernatural state of Adam. And those who want to keep both Christianity and evolutionism, are forced to stick some kind of artificial paradise onto an ape-like creature. These are obviously two different kinds of systems which can't be mixed.

What finally begins to happen is that the people who begin to do this, as many Catholics have done in recent decades, they see that they got mixed up and therefore they accept that evolution must be right and Christianity a myth; that the fall of man is only some kind of cosmic immaturity, that the ape-like creatures when they became man, they became some kind of naive human creature and involved in some kind of guilt complex at the same time.

Besides, there was not just one pair but many, which is called polygenism -- that man came from many different pairs. Once you give into the idea that we will inspect it rationally -- on the basis of our rational naturalistic philosophy of the modern philosophers -- then Christianity has to be put away someplace, or made...

...unexamined presuppositions or examined presuppositions. Anyway, it is a realm of very relative truths. And in the teaching of Holy Fathers we have truths which are revealed and truths which are given to us by God-inspired men.

So we'll look at a few of these things which Holy Fathers say. There is a great deal of material about evolution, although you wouldn't think so. But if you think through what evolution is philosophically and theologically and then look up those questions in the Holy Fathers, there is a great deal of information to be found in the writings of Holy Fathers. But we can't go into much of it right now. Let's just have a few points to see if we can characterize evolution according to patristic teaching.

First, we should make a note that the idea of creation is something which is quite different from the world we see today;

it's a whole different principle. And therefore, when we read in a modern Christian evolutionist -- in fact, he's a noted conservative Greek theologian, [Panagiotis] Trempeles, supposed to be scholastic, but anyway, he's a conservative -- he says that "it appears more glorious and divine-like and more in harmony with the regular methods of God, which we daily see expressed in nature to have created the various forms by evolutionary methods, Himself remaining the first and supreme creative Cause of the secondary and mediate causes to which are owed the development of the variety of species."^{ccv}

We will note here that oftentimes theologians are quite behind the times. And in order to apologize for the scientific dogma, they often come up with things which the scientists have already left behind, because the scientists are reading the literature; and the theologians often are scared that they're going to be old-fashioned or say something which is not in accordance with scientific opinion. So, often a theologian can quite unconsciously fall for an evolutionary idea by not thinking the whole thing through, by not having a thorough-going philosophy, and not being aware of scientific evidence and scientific questions.

But this very idea that he sets forth that creation is supposed to be in accordance with the methods which God uses all the time is certainly nothing patristic about it, because creation is when the world came into being. And every kind of Holy Father who writes about this will tell you that those first six days of creation were quite different from anything else that ever happened in the history of the world.

And even Augustine -- who says that this whole thing is a mystery -- he says we really can't even talk about it because it's so different from our own experience: it's beyond us. And in the same way we simply cannot project present-day laws of nature back into the past and come up with the creation. Creation is something different; it's the *beginning* of all this and *not* the way it is now.

Some rather naive theologians try to say that the six days of creation can be infinitely long periods; they can correspond to these different layers, you know, the geological strata -- which, of course, is nonsense because the geological strata do not come up with six easily identifiable layers, or five or four or anything of the sort. There's a whole lot of layers; and they simply do not correspond at all to six days of creation. So that simply is a very weak kind of accommodation.

And as a matter of fact, if you look at the Holy Fathers, even though it looks as though it might be terribly fundamentalistic to say it, they do with one voice say that those days were twenty-four hours long. St. Ephraim the Syrian even divides them into two days, two periods, twelve hours each. St. Basil the Great says, the first day is called in Genesis not the "first day," it's called "one day" because that is the one day by which God measured out the entire rest of the creation; that is, this first day which he says was twenty-four hours long is exactly the same day which is repeated in the rest of creation.

And if you think about it, there is nothing particularly difficult in that idea because the creation of God is something totally outside our present knowledge, and the accommodation of days to epochs doesn't make any sense; you can't fit them together. And therefore, why do you need to have a day which is a thousand years long or a million years long? You don't have a need for that.

And as a matter of fact, the Holy Fathers say again with one voice that the creative acts of God are *instantaneous*. St. Basil the Great, St. Ambrose the Great, St. Ephraim and many others say, when God creates, He says the word and it is, faster than thought.

There's a whole lot of quotations, but we just can't go

into [them]. And there's no one that says creation is slow. There are six days of creation and the Holy Fathers explain this, not that this is some kind of long process, not that man has been evolving from something lower -- that idea is totally foreign to any Holy Fathers -- but that the lower creatures came first in order to prepare the realm for the higher creature who is man, who must have his kingdom already created before he comes. And even St. Gregory the Theologian uses the phrase that man was made by God on the sixth day and entered into the newly created earth.^{ccvi}

There was a whole teaching of Holy Fathers concerning the state of the world and of Adam before the fall of Adam. Adam was immortal, or rather, as Augustine says, he was not created immortal; he was created with the possibility of being either mortal or immortal in the body; and he chose by his fall to be mortal in the body.

The Creation before the fall of Adam was in a different state. About that the Holy Fathers do not tell us very much; it's really beyond us. But certain Holy Fathers of the most contemplative sort, such as St. Gregory of Sinai, do describe what is the state of paradise. And he says it is a state which exists now but has become invisible to us, the same state that was then; and that it is placed between corruption and incorruption so that when a tree falls in paradise, it does not rot away, like we know, but is turned into the most fragrant kind of substance. Of course, this is a hint which tells us this is beyond us, that there's some other kind of law.

We know people who have been to paradise, you know, like St. Euphrosynos, who went to paradise and brought back three apples. Remember that story? St. Euphrosynos, the cook. He's in our kitchen, the patron of cooks. And these three apples were kept for a little while; they divided them up and ate them; and they were very sweet. They ate them like holy bread; which means there's something to do with *matter*, and yet there's something different from matter. Of course, people now are speculating about matter, anti-matter, what is the source of, root of matter -- they don't know any more. And so why should we be surprised that there's some other different kind of matter?

We know also that there's going to be a different body, a spiritual body. Our resurrected body will be a different kind of matter than the one we know now. St. Gregory the Sinaite says it will be like our present body, but without moisture and without heaviness. And what that is we don't know because unless you've seen an angel, you haven't had experience of that. You don't. Our own bodies are filled with precisely this heaviness.

So we do not have to make any kind of speculation about exactly what kind of matter this is, because that's going to be revealed to us when we need to know it, in the next life. But it is enough for us to know that paradise, the state of the whole creation before the fall of Adam, was quite different from what we know.

You can speculate if you like whether any creature died before Adam. Adam brought death into the world, so it's very likely that no creature ever died before Adam died, before Adam fell. But that's, the Holy Fathers don't talk about particular points like that, or very little. So it's not for us to speculate. All we know is that world was quite different. And the law of nature we know now is the law of nature which God gave when Adam fell; that is, when He said, "Cursed be the earth for Thy sake." (Gen. 3:17) And, "In pain thou shalt bring forth children." (Gen. 3:16) Before the fall Eve was a virgin. And God made male and female knowing man would fall and would need this means of reproducing.

But there's an element of great mystery in the state of creation before the fall of Adam which we don't need to pry into because we are not interested in the "how" of creation. We know that there was a creation of six days, and the Holy Fathers say 24-hour days -- there's nothing surprising about that; that the acts

were instantaneous -- God wills and it's done, He speaks and it's done. That is, since we believe in God Who's Almighty, there is no problem whatsoever. But how it looked, how many species of creatures there were, whether there were all the different kinds of cats we see or whether there were five basic types or only families or only genera -- we have no idea, and it's not important for us to know.

To add to the theory of evolution the idea of God, as some Christian evolutionists do, gives no help at all. Or rather it gives only one help, that is, it gets you out of this problem of finding out where everything came from in the first place. Instead of a great kind of tapioca bowl of cosmic jelly or something, you have God. Well, that's more clear, it's a straight idea. If you have the tapioca jelly in space someplace, it's a very mystical and difficult to understand. If you're a materialist, it makes sense to you, but that's purely on the basis of your prejudices. But apart from that, given the beginning, God does not help the theory of evolution at all. Because the difficulties in the theory are still there, no matter whether God is behind it or not. So, there's no particular help from the idea of adding God to the idea of evolution.

Another difference between this, the modern philosophy of evolution and Orthodox teaching, is not only the past of man, but the future of mankind. If the creation is one great filament which evolves and is transmuted into new species, then we have one kind of philosophy of the future, which we'll discuss shortly about the evolution of "superman." If the creation is one great hierarchy of being, then we can expect something different. We do not have to expect some kind of changes, some kind of rising up from the lower to the higher.

Concerning the transmutability of species -- or "kinds," according to the word used in Genesis because "species" is a very arbitrary concept; we don't have to take that as any kind of limit -- the Holy Fathers have a quite definite teaching. And briefly we'll quote a few Holy Fathers about this.

St. Gregory of Nyssa, or rather, he quotes his sister Macrina on her deathbed -- remember this conversation we heard about, when she was dying? She talks about this very question, when she's opposing the idea of the transmigration of souls, the pre-existence of souls which was taught by Origen. She says or rather St. Gregory says through her: "Those who would have it that the soul migrates into natures divergent from each other seem to me to obliterate all natural distinctions, to blend and confuse together in every possible respect the rational, the irrational, the sentient and the insensate. If, that is, all these are to pass into each other with no distinct natural order secluding them from mutual transition. To say that one and the same soul on account of a particular environment of body is at one time a rational and intellectual soul and that then it is cavered along with the reptiles, or herds with the birds, or is a beast of burden or a carnivorous one, or swims in the deep, or even drops down to an insensate thing so as to strike out roots and become a complete tree producing buds on branches and from those buds a flower or a thorn or a fruit edible or noxious -- to say this is nothing short of making all things the same, and believing that one single nature runs through all beings, that there is a connection between them which blends and confuses hopelessly all the marks by which one could be distinguished from another."^{ccvii}

Well, that shows very clearly the Holy Fathers believed in a whole hierarchy of beings. It is not, as Erasmus Darwin wanted to have it, one single filament which runs through all beings -- there are distinct *natures*.

And if we look at one of the basic works of Orthodox theology which is the *On the Orthodox Faith* of St. John of Damascus, we find that before he gives us *On the Orthodox Faith*, he has two books before it which he says are all part of a whole. One is *On the Heresies* which tells exactly what the heretics

believed, and why we do not believe that. And the first part of this great work which is one of the standard books of Orthodox theology; it's called *On Philosophy*. The whole thing is called *The Fount of Knowledge*. He begins with philosophical chapters in which he goes into such things as "what is knowledge?", "what is philosophy?", "what is being?", "what is substance?", "what is accident?", "what is species?", "what is genus?", "what are differences?", "what are properties, predicates?" And the whole thing is based on the idea that reality is quite distinctly divided up into different beings, each of which has its own essence, its own nature, not one is confused with the other. There is a distinct hierarchy of beings, and he said he thinks you have to read this before you can read his book on Orthodox theology, *The Orthodox Faith*.

Student: Who's that is by?

Fr. S: St. John of Damascus, in the eighth century.

You should know there are a number of basic books, by the way, by Orthodox Fathers on this very question. There's one book called *Hexaemeron*, that is, the Six Days, commentaries on the six days of Genesis. There's one by St. Basil the Great in the East, one by St. Ambrose the Great in the West, and other lesser ones. There are commentaries on the Book of Genesis by St. John Chrysostom, St. Ephraim the Syrian, who also wrote treatises on Adam and Eve. And there are many writings on these subjects scattered in the writings of many other Holy Fathers. St. John of Kronstadt also wrote a *Hexaemeron*, about six days of creation.

These books are very inspiring, by the way, because they are not mere abstract knowledge; they very are full of a practical wisdom. He uses a love of nature, and the splendor of God's creation, to give an example for us human beings, and many quaint little examples of how we should imitate the dove, in its love for its fellow, for its mate and so forth, how we should be like the wiser animals and not be like the dumber animals. For example, we can take an example from our squirrels. They're very greedy. We're not supposed to be like that. We're supposed to be gentle like the deer. We have all around us examples like that.

We can see if there are one or two quotes from St. Basil; for example, he says, "Let the earth bring forth." This brief command was immediately mighty Nature, an elaborate system which brought to perfection more swiftly than our thought the countless properties of plants.^{ccviii} Elsewhere he says when the trees, "Let the earth bring forth plants," he says "Instantly, swifter than thought, mighty forests arose, and all the different kinds of plants."^{ccix}

And here he has a quote on this very question of the succession of creatures one after the other. He quotes Genesis: "Let the earth bring forth living creatures." This is from the 9th Homily on *Hexaemeron*. "Cattle and wild beasts and crawling creatures." And St. Basil says to this: "Consider the Word of God moving through all creation, having begun at that time, active up to the present and efficacious until the end, even to the consummation of the world. As a ball when pushed by someone and then meeting with a slope is borne downward by its own shape and inclination of the ground and does not stop before some level surface receives it, so too the nature of existing objects, set in motion by one command, passes through creation without change, by generation and destruction, preserving the succession of the species through resemblance until it reaches the very end. It begets a horse as a successor of a horse, a lion of a lion, and an eagle of an eagle. And it continues to preserve each of the animals by uninterrupted successions until the consummation of the universe. No length of time causes the specific characteristics of the animals to be corrupted or extinct. But, as if established just recently, nature, ever fresh, moves along with time."^{ccx}

So that is a statement not of science but of philosophy. This is the way God created creatures, and each one has a certain

seed, a certain nature and transmits that to its offspring. When there is some kind of exception, then it's a monstrosity; it's an exception. And this does not invalidate the principle of the natures of things, each one of which is quite distinct from the other. If we do not understand the whole variety of God's creation, that's our fault, not God's.

St. Ambrose has a number of quotations on the same line. His *Hexaemeron* is very close to St. Basil's in spirit.

And now we have another quote from St. Gregory [of Nyssa] which shows a very interesting [thing], that there was in fact a theory something like evolution in ancient times, although, of course, not at all like the present theory. He is combatting the idea of the pre-existence of souls. There's a second idea which is the opposite idea. St. John of Damascus whose writings, his *On the Orthodox Faith* sums up the theological writings of the earlier Fathers. And he has one statement which says: "Let us not think like Origen and other blasphemers that God created the soul and the body of man at different times. He created them simultaneously."^{ccxi}

But if we read the account of Genesis, it says rightly, [if I be?] correct, "He made the body and breathed into it a living soul." And in fact, the Christian evolutionists said, "Aha, perfect! That means man was something first and then he became human."

Let us see what St. Gregory of Nyssa says about this. "Some of those before our time who have dealt with the question of principles think it right to say that souls have a previous existence as a people and a society of their own." This is Origen's idea that the soul "fell down" into our world. "And that among them also there are standards of vice and of virtue, and that the soul there, which abides in goodness, remains without experience of conjunction with the body. But if it does depart from its communion with good, it falls down to this lower life and so comes to be in a body. Others on the contrary, marking the order of the making of man as stated by Moses, say that the soul is second to the body in order of time, since God first took dust from the earth and formed man, and then animated the being thus formed by his breath. And by this argument they prove that the flesh is more noble than the soul, that which was previously formed than that which was afterwards infused into it. For they say that the soul was made for the body, that the thing formed might not be without breath and motion, and that everything that is made for something else is surely less precious than that for which it is made. As the Gospel tells us that the soul is more than the meat and the body than raiment. Because the latter things exist for the sake of the former."^{ccxii}

Surely this is very close, although it's in a different climate of ideas, still it's very close to the modern evolutionists' idea that matter indeed is the *first* thing and the soul is secondary.

Now he goes on to discuss the second one, after getting rid of, after disposing of the idea of Origen that the souls preexist.

"Nor again are we in our doctrine to begin by making up man like a clay figure, and to say that the soul came into being for the sake of this; for surely in that case the intellectual nature would be shown to be less precious than the clay figure. But as man is one, the being consisting of soul and body, we are to suppose that the beginning of his existence is one common to both parts, so that he should not be found to be antecedent and posterior to himself, if the bodily element were first in point of time, and the other were a later addition. For we are to say that in the power of God's foreknowledge, according to the doctrine laid down earlier in our discourse, all the fullness of human nature had preexistence. And to this the prophetic writing bears witness which says that God knoweth all things before they be. And in the creation of individuals, not to place the one element before the other: neither the soul before the body, nor the contrary, that

man may not be at strife against himself by being divided by the difference in point of time. For as our nature is conceived as twofold, according to the apostolic teachings, made up of the visible man and the hidden man, if the one came first and the other supervened, the power of Him that made us would be shown to be in some way imperfect, as not being completely sufficient for the whole task at once, but dividing the work and busying himself with each of the halves in turn.”ccxiii

Of course the whole reason for an idea of evolution is you do *not* believe that God is powerful enough to create the whole world by His Word. You are trying to help Him out by letting (vaying?) Nature do most of the creating.

There are many other quotes we could have, but we have no time. The Holy Fathers talk quite in detail about the question of what it means that Adam was created from the dust. Some people take the fact that St. Athanasius the Great says in one of his writings, “Adam was created from the dust in the same way that every man is created from the dust.”ccxiv And they say “Aha, that means that Adam could have been descended from some other creature. He didn’t need to be taken from literal dust. You don’t have to take that part of Genesis literally.” But it so happens this very point is discussed in great detail by many Holy Fathers. And they come up with many different ways of expressing it, and makes it absolutely clear that Adam and Cain are two different kinds of people. Cain was born of man and Adam had no father. Adam was born of the, was created of the dust, directly by the hand of Christ. And many Fathers taught the same: Cyril of Jerusalem, St. John Damascene, St. -- many of the Holy Fathers.

So, when we come to questions such as what is to be interpreted literally in Genesis, what is to be interpreted figuratively or allegorically, the Holy Fathers set forth for us very clearly. And St. John Chrysostom in his commentary even points out in certain passages exactly what is figurative, what is literal. And he says those who try to make it all allegory are trying to destroy our faith.

St. Gregory the Theologian -- who was noted for being very elevated in his interpretations -- [says concerning] the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, “I think this is a way of saying ‘Contemplation.’”ccxv Therefore, some people say, “Aha, it means he doesn’t believe in Paradise. He doesn’t believe that there was an actual tree.” Of course, we are told that: the tree is not a real tree.

But a thousand years after him, there was a great Orthodox theologian, St. Gregory Palamas. And he was confronted by Barlaam, the Latinizer. And Barlaam said that the uncreated light was not real divine light, uncreated light was some created light. It is only symbolically called divine. And this St. Gregory applied to him:

“Do we believe because St. Gregory the Theologian says the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil means Contemplation, do we believe that he meant to say that there was no tree?” Of course not; there was a tree, and he believed it. In the same way St. Maximus the Confessor said Moses is a symbol of contemplation, Elijah a symbol of something else. Does that mean that Moses and Elijah do not exist?ccxvi

And of course, in reading the Holy Fathers we have to know both the fact that one Father comments on the other, and that it is not such an easy thing to find what is literal and what is not literal. One has to read much and get the whole context in which they are speaking in order to see exactly how one is to interpret them. And of course for the most part the things of the book of Genesis are in two levels. That is, there are literal truths, and there are also -- many times for our spiritual benefit -- some kind of spiritual truths. In fact, there are whole systems of three or four levels of meaning, but [it is] sufficient for us that there are many deeper meanings in the Scriptures; and very seldom is the

literal meaning destroyed. Only occasionally.

Well, enough for that subject. We can characterize in general evolution in its philosophical aspect as a naturalistic heresy which comes closest of all to being the opposite of the ancient heresy of the pre-existence of souls. That is, that there’s one kind of soul nature which runs throughout creation; evolution is the idea there’s one kind of material being which runs throughout creation. And the same, both of them destroy the idea of the hierarchy of beings and the distinct natures of each. This was a heresy which was actually lacking in ancient times. Usually Orthodoxy is midway between two errors: between the doing away with the divine nature of Arius, and the doing away with the human nature of Monophysitism. And in this particular case the other heresy was not incarnated in ancient times. And it waited for modern times to make this particular error. But we’ll see now much more clearly this philosophical side of evolutionism when we look at a few of the so-called Christian evolutionists.

Question: “Are there any Orthodox scholars?”

Fr. S: Oh, afraid there are. We’ll look at one or two now.

In the last few years there’ve been articles -- small articles, some longer articles -- in some of the Orthodox press on this very question of evolution. And in fact the Greek Archdiocese newspaper, *The Orthodox Observer*, printed several articles which are quite surprising in that they are so far away from Orthodoxy.

One of these articles in the Greek newspaper says that evolution cannot really be a heresy because there are many Christians who believe in it. And it quotes two. These are Lecomte du Nouy and Teilhard de Chardin. So we’ll look for a moment at Lecomte du Nouy; he’s supposed to be a Christian who believes in evolution; therefore it can’t be a heresy.

He was a widely-known respected scientist, mathematician and physiologist, who has written several books on scientific philosophy. He was born in Paris in 1883. He wrote a popular book called *Human Destiny* wherein he sets forth his conclusions about evolution. It turns out he’s not too much of a Christian because he believed that man created his own God, who is actually “a formidable fiction.”ccxvii He is very patronizing towards Christianity, and he believes that Christianity has been misunderstood and misinterpreted, but it is still good for the masses, and is a useful tool for man’s continuing evolution on a moral and ethical plane. It has no objective, absolute truth, of course. Christ is not God, but He’s perfect man. But Christian tradition somehow helps to educate the race towards further evolution. He says that, “We are” now “at the beginning of the transformations which will end in the superior race....”ccxviii “Evolution continues in our time, *no longer on the physiological or anatomical plane, but on the spiritual and moral plane*. We are at the dawn of a new phase of evolution.”ccxix [emphasis in original]

Of course, it is difficult enough to find scientific evidence of evolution; it’s impossible to find evidence for spiritual evolution. But he believes in it. He says, “Our conclusions are identical with those expressed in the second chapter of Genesis, provided that this chapter is interpreted in a new way and considered as the highly symbolical expression of a truth which is intuitively perceived by its redactor or by the sages who communicated it to him.”ccxx

By the way Holy Fathers say that Moses heard from God. And one Father even says from the Archangel Gabriel, he received a revelation concerning -- in fact St. John Chrysostom says the book of Genesis is a *prophecy of the past*; that is, he saw an exalted vision of what it was in the beginning. And St. Isaac the Syrian also says that in his state of ecstasy...

ôSt. Isaac...describes how, in men of the highest spiritual

life, the soul can rise to a vision of the beginning of things. Describing how such a soul is enraptured at the thought of the future age of incorruption, St. Isaac writes: æAnd from this one is already exalted in his mind to that which preceded the composition (making) of the world, when there was no creature, nor heaven, nor earth, nor angels, nothing of that which was brought into being, and to how God, solely by His good will, suddenly brought everything from non-being into being, and everything stood before Him in perfection.ö^{ccxxi}

...into revelation, to vision when a holy man is in a very, ascends to a vision of God.

Messr. Lecomte du Nouy continues: “Let us try...to analyze the sacred text as though it were a highly symbolical and cryptic description of scientific truths.”^{ccxxii} It is, of course, extremely patronizing that this poor Moses tried his best to get a scientific picture of the way things were, and all he came up with is these sort of images. He explains, this Lecomte du Nouy, that, “The omnipotence of God is manifested by the fact that man,” who is “descended from the marine worms, is today capable of conceiving the future existence of a superior being and of wanting to be his ancestor. Christ brings us the proof that this is not an unrealizable dream, but an accessible ideal.”^{ccxxiii} That is, Christ is some kind of superman, and this is somehow the ideal to which man now is evolving. For this man, we have a new criterion of good and evil which is “absolute with respect to Man. Good is that which contributes to the course of ascending evolution.... Evil is that which opposes evolution.... The respect of human personality is based on the recognition of man’s dignity as a worker for evolution, as a collaborator with God.”^{ccxxiv} “The only goal of man should be the attainment of human dignity with all its implications.”^{ccxxv}

If you can call this man a Christian, it’s very surprising. He goes on to describe the fact that there are thinking men in all religions, and therefore all religions have a unique inspiration, a spiritual kinship, an original identity. He says, “The unity of religions must be sought in that which is divine, namely, universal in man.”^{ccxxvi} “No matter what our religion, we are all like people at the bottom of a valley who seek to climb a snowy peak that dominates the others. We all have our eyes fixed on the same goal,... Unfortunately we differ on what road to take.... [O]ne day, provided they never stop ascending, they must all meet at the top of the mountain...the road to it matters little.”^{ccxxvii} Of course, the top of the mountain is not the salvation of the soul; it’s not the kingdom of heaven; it’s precisely this chiliastic new age.

Well, that’s one so-called “Christian evolutionist.” He’s not very Christian. He’s in fact a deist.

There’s a second Christian evolutionist. Well, we can make a few miscellaneous comments, taken from this Greek newspaper also. In another issue of *The Orthodox Observer*, this Greek newspaper, Greek Orthodox *official* newspaper, there’s a priest -- in fact a priest who lives in San Francisco, who once visited our bookshop -- Fr. Anthony Kosturos. There were two priests came in. One had never heard of *The Philokalia* and a second had never read it but had someone recommended it to him as a good book. He has a question column, and he received a question: “If Adam and Eve were the first humans, where did their son Cain get his wife? Does our Church shed any light on this question?” Fr. Kosturos replies: “Man’s origin is too far back in history for any person or group to know how man began.” What is Genesis for? “Science is still groping for answers. The word Adam denotes earth. The word Eve,” denotes “life. Generally, and only generally, our traditional theologians take the view that all of us stem from one male and one female....” But “There are others who feel that humankind appeared in clusters, a few here and a few there.... [Our Church’s traditional approach theorizes that mankind emanates from one couple...{Kosturas’

insert}] No theologian has the definitive answer on the subject of man’s origin and his development.... The dawn of human history is a mystery.”^{ccxxviii}

And later, in another answer to a similar question, he says, “Perhaps there are many Adams and Eves who appeared concurrently in different areas, and then met. How man was created and how man procreated initially is a mystery. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. Our Church gives you the opportunity to ponder the subjects you mention and come up with your own speculation about them.”^{ccxxix}

The answer to the question is very easy: Because Adam and Eve had many children who are not mentioned in Genesis. This is only the basic outline of the story. And, the second, the question was answered in a different column in the same newspaper by a different priest. And then they asked a further question, “How is it that Cain could marry his own sister? Isn’t this against the laws of the Orthodox Church?” Of course, this is the beginning of time, this is in a different law; they’re not living under the law we have now. In those days people lived to be nine hundred years old. Obviously humanity was quite different from what we know it, even physically. And if it’s surprising -- no, it shouldn’t be surprising because the world was at its beginning then.

Well, we’ll look for a few minutes at a few recent Catholic speculations on this question because they ask these questions we’ve already looked at a little bit, but you can see what kind of answers they give. There’s one theologian, Karl Rahner, Jesuit, who comes up with a new, the theory of “polygenesis,” that is, that there were many Adams and Eves. He asks two questions: “How is evolution compatible with the doctrine of Adam’s preternatural gifts?”^{ccxxx} He was immortal. And “Can we seriously think that the first man to evolve was capable of the first sin...?” He says, “Scientists prefer to conceive hominization,” that is, the making of man, “as having taken place in many individuals -- a ‘population’ -- rather than in a single pair.” Well, some scientists think and some don’t. It is in the first group of recognizable men, that is, original man which committed the first transgression. He says, “Grace could be offered to the original group and, upon being rejected by that group’s free and yet mutually-influencing choice, be lost to the whole of succeeding humanity.”^{ccxxxi}

He says, “In the *first* [emphasis Rahner’s] man or group such as paleontology reveals to us, how could there have been” such “a degree of freedom sufficiently developed to have made possible such a fateful choice as original sin? How can we attempt to reconcile the supernatural or preternatural paradise-situation of Adam (individual or group) with what we know of the origins of the biological, anthropological, cultural world?”^{ccxxxii}

And he answers his question by saying, “It is not easy to determine precisely where and when an earthly creature actually became spirit and thus free.... We may serenely reckon with the fact that original sin really happened, but at a moment which cannot be more accurately determined. It was ‘sometime’ within a fairly long time-span during which many individuals may have been already existing and capable of performing the guilty act ‘simultaneously,’”^{ccxxxiii} so to speak. In other words the whole thing becomes very vague. Obviously the next generation of thinkers is going to do away with some of this double talk.

And so there’s another book, by a Dutch Jesuit, [Stephanus] Trooster, called *Evolution and the Doctrine of Original Sin*. And he sets off forthrightly, “Those who take the scientific doctrine of evolution seriously can no longer accept (the) traditional presentation.” So we must find “an interpretation that is relevant to our times.”^{ccxxxiv}

“The proponents of the doctrine of evolution,” he says,

“visualize mankind as a reality which, in the course of history, only very gradually matured to achieve a degree of self-realization. Its earliest emergence must be conceived of as fumbling transitional forms appearing next to extremely primitive levels of human existence. Such primitive intermediate forms of human life still must have been intimately fused with their prehistoric animal state.... But in this evolutionary theory *there is no room for a ‘paradisaical’ existence of this prehistoric man.* [emphasis in “Christian Evolutionism”] To place an extremely gifted and highly privileged spiritual man at the beginning of human life on earth appears in complete contradiction to modern scientific thought on this matter.”^{ccxxxv} Which of course is true.

“Acceptance of the modern viewpoint, however, eliminates the possibility of accounting for the genesis of evil in the world on the basis of sin committed by the first man. After all, how could so primitive a human being have been in a position to refuse God’s offer of salvation; how could such a primitive being have been capable of a breach of covenant with God?”^{ccxxxvi}

It turns out that he decides that the Fall of man is nothing but what he calls “cosmic immaturity.” Adam actually is not one man; it’s “Everyman.”^{ccxxxvii} And the book of Genesis is “an *idealized image*”... [emph. in “Chr. Ev.”] “of a world without sin,” even though “the author” of Genesis “knows quite well it does not correspond to reality.”^{ccxxxviii} He does “not mean to say that the original state of grace of Adam and Eve in all its purity was once upon a time an actual reality in the history of mankind.”^{ccxxxix} Of course, if you believe in evolution, it makes no sense to talk about Paradise. And you’re only fooling yourself trying to combine these two different forms of thinking.

The Catholics in the past have had some problems about knowing when man began, if you accept evolution. And there are different theories depending on whether you think -- I don’t know what’s allowed now -- but in the old days you were not allowed to believe that man’s soul could evolve from matter. You had to believe that the man was given a soul at a particular moment. At that moment he became man, and therefore he is no longer subject to all those laws of evolution. Obviously this is, you know, sticking in one of these “epicycles” again to make the theory correspond to your own beliefs. Either you believe in evolution, in which case man is a very primitive creature which came from the beasts -- it’s a definite view, and the textbooks on evolution will tell you that, that man still has the savage inside of him, and all the pictures show him evolving from the monkey-like creature -- or else you believe that man descended from a being who was greater than we are now, who was actually perfect man in his own way, was not subject to corruption -- the Holy Fathers even tell us -- did not go to the bathroom, did not have to eat in order to live, he had the Tree of Life; but that it was not the same way we have now, to live in order to eat.

In fact, St. Seraphim has a whole section on the state of Adam, in his “Conversation with Motovilov,” how he was not subject to being injured or hurt; in other words, he was quite invulnerable to the elements, could not be drowned or anything like that. It’s interesting that even in the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, they asked precisely questions like this for him to solve: What was the state, did he go to the bathroom?, how was it that he could not be harmed? And he has elaborate explanations. First of all, he does go to the bathroom because we cannot believe that he would be of a different material than we are now. And second, that he was never harmed, and could not be drowned, not because it was impossible, but because God arranged to take all the boulders out of the way, never to have the stream go too high. In other words, He arranged the world just correct so that Adam walked very carefully and never happened to get hurt.

But Orthodoxy believes, as we read in the very first chapter of Abba Dorotheus, he sets forth for us there the image of Adam, the first man, to give us an inspiration of what we have to

strive back for; that is, our nature is *immortal*. We are meant to live eternally in the body; and that’s the way it was in the beginning. And only after falling did we lose that nature and that blessed state in which Adam was beholding God.

And according to Orthodoxy, the state of man in Paradise is his nature. Our nature now is changed; then we were immortal. Now we have been changed into a mortal being, that is, mortal in the body.

And the Catholics teach, on the contrary, that the state of man in Paradise was a *supernatural* state, that man actually is just like we know him today, but God gave him a special state of grace. And when he fell, he simply fell away from that extra grace which had been added to him. And therefore his nature was not changed. He was the same man, mortal man, but he was given some kind of extra gift in the beginning. But according to Orthodoxy, our very nature was ruined, was changed.

Fr. H: And that’s the whole crux of the matter.

Fr. S: Christ is the new Adam; and in Him we are restored to our old nature.

Some Fathers like St. Symeon the New Theologian thought it, discussed the question of why, then, did we not immediately become immortal when Christ died and resurrected. And he says so that we would not have to be forced, we would not be someplace(?) like He did not come down from the Cross, that we still must achieve our own salvation. And the creation is waiting for us to achieve our salvation, when it too will rise up to the state it was before the Fall, in fact, even to a higher state.

All that is filled with mysteries; it’s beyond us, but still we know enough of it from the Holy Fathers. In fact, St. Symeon the New Theologian has a long quote on the subject, what the state of man was before the Fall, and the whole of creation was, he says, incorrupt and immortal, just like man. And only after the Fall did the creatures begin to die. And when the new world comes, the heaven and the earth, man, the meek will inherit the earth. He said, what earth is that? It is this earth you see right here, only it will be burned up and restored so that all the creatures now will be immortal. And that is what the whole creation is striving for, what the creatures are groaning after. When St. Paul said they were subject to vanity, it means they were subject to corruption, through the Fall of man.

Dobzhansky

We’ll look at one more Christian evolutionist before we come to the great prophet of our age. This one is, alas, a Russian Orthodox scientist. His name is Theodosius Dobzhansky and he lives in Davis, California, last we heard. He teaches there genetics. In fact, I think he still has his fruit flies, and is continuing to make experiments to prove evolution. Dobzhansky. D-O-B-Z-H-A-N-S-K-Y. He was born in the year of the canonization of St. Theodosius of Chernigov, in answer to prayer from his parents; and that’s why he was called Theodosius. Alas, he became an apostate. He came to America in the twenties and has been an American since that time.

And he’s been absolutely prohibited in Soviet Russia, although the Soviet scientists know about him. And once when a film was accidentally presented at one scientific meeting in Russia which showed him on it, all the scientists cheered; and the film was withdrawn because he is non-existent, a non-person because he left Russia. But he thinks like a Communist.

He’s so religious that when his wife died, he had her cremated, took the ashes and scattered them in the Sierras. As far as one can guess, he never goes to church; he’s quite beyond religion. But for his great Christian evolutionist views, he was granted a doctorate of theology by St. Vladimir’s Academy in New York. And he gave an address to, I think it’s called, the Orthodox

Theological Society of America. It has all the great theologians. Orthodox theologians of all the jurisdictions, except ours, in America listened to him give his talk, which was printed in Orthodox periodical called *Concern*. And it's called "Evolution: God's Method of Creation." In this article, he says that anybody who says anything against evolution is a blasphemer, because that is the way God acts and that's the way it is.

He says in this article, "Natural selection is a blind and a creative process.... Natural selection does *not* work according to a foreordained plan...."^{ccxli} That is, where is God's providence, if you're a Christian? He notes the extraordinary variety of life on the earth, but he says, "What a senseless operation" it would be if God had [were] "to fabricate a multitude of species *ex nihilo*," from nothing, "and then let most of them die out! ...What is the sense of having as many as two or three million species living on earth? ...Was the creator in a jocular mood" when he did this? Was he "playing practical jokes?" No, he reasons, "This organic diversity becomes, [however,] reasonable and understandable if the Creator has created the living world, not by gratuitous caprice but by natural selection. It is wrong to hold creation and evolution as mutually exclusive alternatives."^{ccxli}

Well, what he means by that,... it actually makes no difference if you have a God. And he makes two or three million species by means of natural selection. Isn't it just as silly as if He creates them all at once? Doesn't think straight...and there's no plan to it. He says it's all just blind, a blind process.

Of course, he is filled with the usual liberal Christian ideas that Genesis is symbolical, that man's awareness is the cause of the tragic meaninglessness in the world today, and the only escape is for man to realize that he can cooperate with the enterprise of creation willed by God, for participation in this enterprise makes mortal man part of God's eternal design. And he says, "The most gallant and by far the most nearly successful attempt to do this -- cooperate with God's eternal design -- has been that of Teilhard de Chardin."^{ccxlii}

Teilhard de Chardin

So, we'll look into now this last evolutionist who is the great evolutionist prophet of our times. Teilhard de Chardin. He died in 1955, about 70 years old I believe.

Student: Buried in New York State.

Fr. S: He was a paleontologist who was present at the discovery of many, most of the great fossil "men" of our century. It was he who took part with two other people in the discovery of Piltdown Man. He discovered the tooth, which was dyed. It's not known whether he had a part in it. One of these men is accused of being the one who fabricated the Piltdown Man; and it's been hushed up that Teilhard de Chardin had anything to do with it. But it's already known in the earlier books that he discovered the tooth.

He was present at the new discoveries of Java Man, which were incidentally all locked up in a closet, in Holland someplace, and not allowed to be examined again. He was present at many of the discoveries of Peking Man, while not at the very beginning. And there's a great mystery there because the leading man who discovered [it] dropped dead in the ditch one day. He [Teilhard] was also present when the fossils of Peking Man disappeared for the last time. And so we have no fossils of Peking Man left, and no casts were made. There's only some kind of drawings and models.

But he is the one who is chiefly responsible for the *interpretation* of all these findings. As he himself said, "No matter where I went, I continually found just the proof I was looking for."^{ccxliii} And he fit these together into the evidence for the proof of human evolution, which is so shaky that it's, well, we

won't go into it now; but one writer has said, "All the evidence for human evolution, all the skulls could be put into a single small coffin."^{ccxliv} And we just don't know what the relation is of these pieces to each other.

This man, Teilhard de Chardin, is very remarkable because he is both a scientist and a mystic. And the surprising thing is not so much that he is that way because he was a Jesuit, after all, but that he is quite respected both by theologians, Roman Catholic theologians, and in fact by many Orthodox so-called "theologians," and by scientists. In fact, this book *The Phenomenon of Man* has an introduction by Julian Huxley who is the son of the, son or grandson, the son of the older Huxley, T. H. Huxley, and is an absolute atheist, an atheist evolutionist. And he agrees with Teilhard de Chardin on everything except when he puts too much religion in. His attempt to reconcile Catholicism and evolution he felt was a little -- he can't agree with everything there -- but basically he agrees with his philosophy.

This will bring us into territory which we discussed a little bit earlier. [As] you recall, the earlier scientists in the West, at the revival of modern science, actually the birth of modern science at the time of the Renaissance, were all mystically oriented. They were filled with Pythagorean philosophy. And Bruno himself was quite a mystical pantheist, "The whole world is God,"^{ccxlv} how God is the soul of the world. Again, we remember Saint-Simon, the socialist prophet, who said the time is coming when not only the social order will be a religious institution, but science and religion also will come together. And no longer will science be atheistic. Well, this is the one they were looking for, the one who brings together science and religion.

Let's take one more quote from nineteenth-century American philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who talks about the very same thing: the restoration of unity in man since he faces a situation where man's faith has been now divorced from knowledge because of modern enlightenment, and how can we get back together faith and knowledge. He says this in his essay "On Nature": "The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is because man is disunited with himself. He cannot be a naturalist until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand as perception. [Indeed, neither can be perfect without the other. In the uttermost meaning of the words, thought is devout, and devotion is thought. {Emerson}] Deep calls unto deep, but in actual life, the marriage is not celebrated. There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to all their faculties." That is, they are not critical about science and philosophy; they do not criticize their own religion. "And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze their subject under the wintry light of the understanding." That is, divorce it from religion. "[Is not prayer also a study of truth -- a sally of the soul into the unbound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.] But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation."^{ccxlvi} So, he's a prophet of, Teilhard de Chardin, one can say, of a person who discovers science and religion are once more compatible.

Dobzhansky himself summarizes what Teilhard de Chardin tried to do in his books. Teilhard de Chardin describes the stages through which evolutionary development goes. And he uses technical terms, we'll only use a few of them. He says, "...first, there is cosmogenesis, the evolution of inanimate nature, that is, the genesis of the cosmos; second, biogenesis," which means evolution of life. And "third, noogenesis, the development of human thought." And he uses those spheres, the words, the "biosphere," which means the sphere of life; and there's a "noosphere," the sphere of thought. He says the whole of the globe now is being penetrated by a web of thought which he calls the "noosphere."

“Up to here,” says Dobzhansky, “Teilhard stands firmly on a foundation of demonstrable facts. To complete his theology of nature he then embarks on *prophecy based on his religious faith*. [emphasis in “Christian Evolutionism”] He speaks of his ‘conviction, strictly undemonstrable to science, that the universe has a direction and that it could -- indeed, if we are faithful, it should -- result in some sort of irreversible perfection.’”^{ccxlvii}

Dobzhansky quotes with approval this statement of Teilhard de Chardin about what is evolution: “Is evolution a theory, a system or a hypothesis? It is much more -- it is a general postulate to which all theories, all hypotheses, all systems must henceforward bow and which they must satisfy in order to be thinkable and true. Evolution is a light which illuminates all facts, a trajectory which all lines of thought must follow. This is what evolution is.”^{ccxlviii}

That is, evolution becomes in his thought -- which many, many people follow, whether they're Christian, or atheist, or whatever -- it is a kind of new universal revelation for mankind. And everything, including religion, must be understood in terms of evolution.

Briefly the teaching of Teilhard de Chardin is this:

“What inspired Teilhard de Chardin, and inspires his followers today, is a certain *unitary view* of reality, a joining together of God and the world, of the spiritual and the secular, into a single harmonious and all-encompassing process which cannot only be grasped by the modern intellectual, but can be *felt* by the sensitive soul that is in close contact with the spirit of modern life; indeed, the next step of the process can be *anticipated* by the ‘modern man,’ and that is why Teilhard de Chardin is so readily accepted as a ‘prophet,’ even by people who do not believe in God: he announces in a very ‘mystical’ way, the future which every thinking man today (save for conscious Orthodox Christians) hopes for.”^{ccxlix} That is, every person who is in this tradition of rationalism, coming from the age of the Enlightenment, and eventually from the Middle Ages.

“There are two sides to this unitary thought of Teilhard de Chardin: the worldly side (by which he attracts and holds even total atheists),” such as Julian Huxley, “and the spiritual side (by which he attracts ‘Christians’ and gives a religion to unbelievers). Teilhard de Chardin’s own words leave no doubt that first and foremost he was passionately in love with the world, with the earth.

“He says, ‘The world, its value, its infallibility and its goodness, that when all is said and done is the first, the last and the only thing in which I believe.’”^{cccli}

Again he says, “Now the earth can certainly clasp me in her giant arms. She can swell me with her life, or take me back in to her dust. She can deck herself out for me with every charm, with every horror, with every mystery. She can intoxicate me with her perfume of tangibility and unity.”^{cccli} He said, “Salvation was no longer to be sought in ‘abandoning the world,’ but now in active ‘participation’ in building it up.”^{ccclii}

He was against the old forms of Christian spirituality; he disdained, quote, “All those goody-goody romances about the saints and the martyrs! Whatever normal child would want to spend an eternity in such boring company?”^{ccliii} This is a Jesuit priest. “What we are all more or less lacking at this moment is a new definition of holiness.”^{cccliv} “The modern world is a world in evolution; hence, the static concepts of the spiritual life must be rethought and the classical teachings of Christ must be reinterpreted.”^{ccclv}

Of course, this is a reflection of the overthrowing of the old universe of Newton, and with that he wants to put

Christianity into the same category, because it also is bound up with the classical, static way of thinking. Now we have a new way of thinking; and therefore, just as we have a new physics, we must also have a new Christianity.

The most powerful vision of Père Teilhard de Chardin is this idea of spiritualization of the world and worldly activity. He “was not merely in love with the world and all ‘modern progress’ and scientific development; his distinguishing mark was that he gave these things a distinctly ‘religious’ significance.”^{ccclvi} As he even himself writes, “‘Then is it really true, Lord, by helping on the spread of science and freedom, I can increase the density of the divine atmosphere in itself as well as for me, that atmosphere in which it is always my one desire to be immersed? By laying hold of the earth I enable myself to cling closely to you....

“May the world’s energies, mastered by us bow down before us and accept the yoke of our power.

“May the race of men, grown to fuller consciousness and great strength become grouped into rich and happy organisms in which life shall be put to better use and bring in a hundredfold return.”^{ccclvii}

“I am not speaking metaphorically,” he says, “when I say that it is throughout the length and breadth and depth of the world in movement that man can attain the experience and vision of his god.”^{ccclviii} “[T]he time is past,” he says, “in which God could simply impose Himself on us from without, as master and owner of the estate. Henceforth the world will kneel down only before the organic center of its own evolution.”^{ccclix} “Christianity and evolution are not two irreconcilable visions; but two perspectives destined to fit together and complement each other.”^{ccclx} “Evolution has come to infuse new blood, so to speak, into the perspectives and aspirations of Christianity.”^{ccclxi} The earth, he says, “can cast me to my knees in expectation of what is maturing in her breast. She has become for me over and above herself, the body of him who is and of him who is coming. [*The divine milieu*].”^{ccclxii}

...Teilhard de Chardin as to what was in back of him. We should keep in mind that he is not at all some kind of exception, some kind of, outside of Roman Catholic tradition. He had some extremely traditional piety. For example, he was extremely devoted to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And he has the following mystical meditation upon it: “Two centuries ago, Oh God, your Church,” that is, Roman Catholicism, “began to feel the particular power of your heart...” Now we are becoming “aware that your main purpose in this revealing to us of your heart was to enable our love to escape from the constrictions of the too narrow, too precise, too limited image of You which we had fashioned for ourselves. What I discern in Your breast is simply a furnace of fire; and the more I fix my gaze on its ardency the more it seems to me that all around it the contours of your body melt away and become enlarged beyond all measure, till the only features I can distinguish in you are those of the face of a world which has burst into flame.”^{ccclxiii}

A person who is meditating on the “Sacred Heart” next begins to meditate upon evolution, which is a further development of the same direction.

In fact, we didn’t go into the Catholic mystics, but undoubtedly if we looked into them we could find all sorts of parallels to what is happening in this scientific, rationalistic world. They’re all preparing the same thing -- chiliasm.

Evolution for Teilhard de Chardin is a process which is building up the cosmic body of Christ in which all things are united with God. His most striking idea, which is actually a kind of new development in Catholic thought, something like the development of the Sacred Heart in piety, is his idea of the

“transubstantiation of the earth,” which he wrote when he was in the Chinese desert, near the Gobi Desert, in the twenties or thirties. And he has a little article called “The Mass on the World.” He celebrates the Mass in this desert. “As our humanity assimilates the material world, and as the Host,” that is, the Roman Catholic Host, “assimilates our humanity, the Eucharistic transformation goes beyond and completes the transubstantiation of the bread on the altar. Step by step, it irresistibly invades the universe.... The sacramental Species are formed by the totality of the world, and the duration of the creation is the time needed for its consecration.”^{cclxiv} In this process of evolution, the “Body of Christ” is being formed in the world. Not the Christ of Orthodoxy, but the “universal” Christ or “Super-Christ,” as he says.

The Super-Christ is defined by Teilhard as the synthesis of Christ and the universe. This “evolving” Christ will bring about the unity of all religions. As he says, quote, “A general convergence of religions upon a universal Christ Who fundamentally satisfies them all: this seems to me the only possible conversion of the world, and the only form in which a religion of the future can be conceived.”^{cclxv} Thus, for Teilhard de Chardin, Christianity is not unique truth, but it is rather, as he says, “an emerging phylum of evolution,”^{cclxvi} subject to change and transformation like everything else in the evolving world.

Even like recent popes, he does not wish to convert the world, but only to offer the papacy as the kind of mystical center of man’s religious quest, a super-denominational Delphic Oracle. As one of his admirers summarizes his view, “If Christianity...is indeed to be the religion of tomorrow, there is only one way in which it can hope to come up to the measure of today’s great humanitarian trends and assimilate them; and that is through the axis, living and organic, of its Catholicism centered on Rome.”^{cclxvii}

At the same time that the universe is evolving into the Body of Christ, according to Teilhard de Chardin, man himself is reaching the pinnacle of his evolutionary development, which is called Super-Humanity. He says, “If...the evidence obliges our reason to accept that something greater than the man of today is in gestation upon the earth,...in order to be able to continue to worship as before we must be able to say to ourselves, as we look at the Son of Man, (not ‘*Apparuit humanitas,*’ but) ‘*Apparuit Superhumanitas,*’”^{cclxviii} let Super-Humanity appear. “Humanity would reach a point of development when it would detach itself altogether from the earth and unite with Omega, a phenomenon outwardly similar to death perhaps, but in reality simple metamorphosis and accession to the supreme synthesis.”^{cclxix} That is, this new state which is coming. He calls it the Omega Point, the point to which all the creation now is ascending.

“One day, the Gospel tells us, the tension gradually accumulating between humanity and God will touch the limits prescribed by the possibilities of the world. And then will come the end. Then the presence of Christ, which has been silently accruing in things, will suddenly be revealed -- like a flash of light from pole to pole.... The spiritual atoms of the world will be borne along by a force generated by the powers of cohesion proper to the universe itself, and will occupy, whether within Christ or without Christ (but always under the influence of Christ) the [place of] happiness or pain designated for them by the living structure of the Pleroma,”^{cclxx} the fullness of things. “[T]he climax of evolution is identified... with the risen Christ of the Parousia.”^{cclxxi} All men, Teilhard believes, must desire this goal, for “it is an accumulation of desires that should cause the Pleroma to burst upon us.”^{cclxxii} And he says, “To cooperate in total cosmic evolution is the only deliberate act that can adequately express our devotion to an evolutive and universal Christ.”^{cclxxiii} “The unique business of the world is the physical

incorporation of the faithful in Christ, who is of God. This major task is pursued with the rigor and harmony of a natural process of evolution.”^{cclxxiv}

Of course, he is completely doing away with all ideas of Christianity which have been hitherto. Christianity is not an individual trying to save his soul; it is everybody in the world evolving by a natural process up to the Omega Point.

“Though frightened for a moment by evolution,” he says, “the Christian now perceives that what it offers him is nothing but a magnificent means of feeling more at one with God, and of giving himself more to him. In a pluralistic and static Nature, the universal domination of Christ could, strictly speaking, still be regarded as an extrinsic and superimposed power.” But “In a spiritually converging world, this ‘Christic’ energy acquires an urgency and intensity of another order altogether.”^{cclxxv} That is, Christ is not outside saying, “Obey me, come to me,” He is set inside *pushing* us.

There are a few more of the views of Teilhard de Chardin we should mention. In this pamphlet -- here’s a picture of him [*Cross Currents* cover] by the way, very intense thinker -- which show his views. Interestingly, he looks for a state which will take us beyond the dead end of Communism. In fact, the three -- he wrote this apparently during the war -- Communism, fascism and democracy, they’re all fighting each other. He says we must go beyond that. “[T]he great affair for modern mankind,” he says, “is to break its way out by forcing some threshold of greater consciousness. Whether Christians or not, the men who are animated by this conviction form a homogeneous category--”^{cclxxvi} “The great event which we are awaiting” is this: “the discovery of a synthetic act of adoration in which are allied and mutually exalted the passionate desire to conquer the world, and the passionate desire to unite ourselves with God; the vital act, specifically new, corresponding to a new age of the Earth--”^{cclxxvii}

By the way, you can see how chiasm’s very strong. The New Age comes out. “In Communism, at any rate in its origins, faith in a universal human organism reached a magnificent state of exaltation.”^{cclxxviii} Perhaps because this is something is heading toward the millenium. “On the other hand, in its unbalanced admiration for the tangible powers of the universe, [communism] has systematically excluded from its hopes the possibility of a spiritual metamorphosis of the universe.”^{cclxxix} So, if you add spirituality to Communism, it’s the answer.

“We must unite. No more political fronts, but one great crusade for human advancement.... The democrat, the communist and the fascist must jettison the deviations and limitations of their systems and pursue to the full the positive aspirations which inspire their enthusiasm, and then, quite naturally, the new spirit will burst the exclusive bonds which still imprison it; the three currents will find themselves merging in the conception of a common task; namely, to promote the spiritual future of the world.... [T]he function of man is to build and direct the whole of the earth.”^{cclxxx}

“... [W]e shall end by perceiving that the great object unconsciously pursued by science is nothing else than the discovery of God.”^{cclxxxii} That’s how mysticism comes right into the middle of science. And of course, what’s in science nowadays is losing all of its bearings; it’s become indeterminate, it’s a whole universe of anti-matter, which mixes them up. It all ends in mysticism.

“The only truly natural and real human unity,” he says, “is the Spirit of the Earth.... A conquering passion begins to show itself, which will sweep away or transform what has hitherto been the immaturity of the earth.... The call towards the great union whose realization is the only business now afoot in

nature....”cclxxxii He means the universal unity of mankind. “The Sense of Earth is the irresistible pressure which will come at the right moment to unite them” all “in a common passion.”cclxxxiii

“The age of nations is past. The task before us now, if we would not perish, is to shake off our ancient prejudices, and to build the earth.”cclxxxiv

“...[T]he great conflict from which we shall have emerged will merely have consolidated in the world the need to believe. Having reached a higher degree of self-mastery, the Spirit of Earth will experience an increasingly vital need to adore; out of universal evolution God emerges [emphasis in original] in our consciousness as greater and more necessary than ever.”cclxxxv We have an “urgent need to find a faith, a hope to give meaning and soul to the immense organism we are building.”cclxxxvi This, of course, means this whole modern revolution needs; it’s lost itself. It finds when it tries to build a new paradise, it destroys everything, and what is needed is a religious meaning to it. And this he gives. So all the things in modern life are good. Only add to them this: they’re all heading for some kind of spiritual kingdom, new kingdom.

“We cannot yet understand exactly where this will” all “lead us, but it would be absurd for us to doubt that it will lead us towards some end of supreme value.”cclxxxvii In this he’s really, he’s a prophet, but he’s not really quite sure where it’s all going.

“The generating principle of our unification is not finally to be found in the single contemplation of the same truth or in the single desire awakened by something, but in the single attraction exercised by the same Someone.”cclxxxviii That is, we’re striving towards worshipping Someone.

“Therefore, in spite of all the apparent improbabilities, we are inevitably approaching a new age in which the world will cast off its chains, to give itself up at last to the power of its internal affinities.”cclxxxix

“[W]ith two thousand years of mystic experience behind us,” of Roman Catholicism, “the contact which we can make with the personal focus of the universe has gained just as much explicit richness as the contact we can make, after two thousand years of science, with the natural spheres of the world. Regarded as a ‘phylum’ of love, Christianity is so living that, at this very moment, we can see it undergoing an extraordinary mutation by elevating itself to a firmer consciousness of its universal value.

“Is there not now under way one further metamorphosis, the ultimate, ...the realization of God at the heart of the Noosphere,” the mental world, “the passage of the circles,” of all the spheres, “to their common Center...the apparition at last of the “Theosphere”?”ccxc when man and the world become God.

This is very deep in modern man because this is what he wants. All these philosophical, chiliastic, socialistic systems all have as their end the idea that God is thrown out, Christianity is thrown out; the world is divine. The world is somehow the body of God. And man wants to be a god. And now he’s lost God, God is dead. The Superman wants to be born; and he’s the one who, being a scientist at the same time, is a mystic. That is, he’s trying to unite, what we saw, this desire for the Grand Inquisitor, the spiritual side and the scientific side, the union of religion and science, and of course a new order which will be political. And he’s a prophet of Antichrist.

And so with this, modern rationalism in our time comes to an end. Reason finally comes to doubt or even to deny itself. Science is upset, does not know what is, what it can know, what it cannot know; every place there is relativism. And we saw already this morning about the philosophy of the absurd. And it turns out that going through all those experiments of the apostasy, *man*

cannot develop anything for himself. He tried everything and each time he was confident that he’d had finally found the answer, he overthrew more and more from the past. And always whatever he made was overthrown by the next generation. And now he comes finally to doubting even whether the world exists, whether he, what he is. Many people commit suicide. Many destroy. And what is left for man? There’s nothing left except to wait for a new revelation. And man is in such a state, he has no value system, he has no religion of his own that he cannot but accept whatever comes, as this new revelation.

Tomorrow we’ll take one last look at the prospects for the new revelation. And the striving of mankind for this new revelation.

About Teilhard de Chardin, we can add that his book *The Phenomenon of Man* was published in 1965 in Moscow. The first book of a Christian thinker, except the propaganda volume of the red Dean of Canterbury [Hewlett Johnson], ever to be published in the USSR. After this publication, Fr. John Meyendorff of the American Metropolia wrote the following words:

“The Christocentric understanding of man and the world which, according to Teilhard de Chardin, are in a state of constant change and striving towards the ‘Omega Point,’ that is, the highest point of being and evolution, which is identified by the author with God Himself, connects Teilhard with the profound intuition of the Orthodox Fathers of the Church.”ccxci

And Nikida Struve writes, “It should be noted that the chief characteristic of Teilhardism is not at all the acceptance of evolution -- this has not been a novelty for a long time among theologians and religious philosophers. The soul of the teaching of the French thinker is a new approach to the problem of the world and creation.” Teilhard de Chardin “only sets forth in contemporary language the teaching of the Apostle Paul concerning nature, which is not excluded from the plan of Salvation.”ccxcii

Fr. H: Pure Orthodox scholar.

Fr. S: And he even says, concerning this “Mass on the World,” where the earth is being evolved into God, he says, “In the ‘Mass on the World,’” Teilhard’s experiences “were for him something like a cosmic Liturgy, which is invisibly performed in the world. Here is the very heart of the Teilhardian proclamation which restores to us the forgotten, immemorially Christian understanding of the universe and the Divine Incarnation. Precisely it illuminated for Teilhard de Chardin the meaning of evolution as the movement of the whole cosmos toward the Kingdom of God and enabled him to overcome the negative approach to the world which is deeply rooted among Christians.”ccxciii

Fr. H: Now we see who are our enemies. Metropolia, the first enemy.

Fr. S: And there’s a whole article in the Paris newspaper, the Paris, what’s it called? *Vestnik* ccxciv by a Polish Orthodox theologian [Fr. George Klinger] in which he makes Teilhard de Chardin a Father of the Church, in the tradition of the “great Orthodox Fathers” who are Montanus, Joachim of Flores, etc....

[Fr. Seraphim quotes Fr. Klinger on p. 21 of “Christian Evolutionism”:]

ôFr. Teilhard speaks much on the cosmic role of Christ, of the Divine Milieu, and very little of the Church. In this case too he aconvergesÆ with tendencies akin to him in Orthodox theology.... In Fr. Teilhard, the Church is identified with the working of Christ in the cosmos.öccxcv ôAccording to Fr. Teilhard, through communion of the Holy Mysteries the world

being sanctified becomes the Body of Christ... These thoughts are possibly the profoundest that have been said in recent years on the question of the central sacrament of Christianity.öccxcvi

Anti-evolution points

o. Soul can't be evolved (words, etc.)

1. Paradise — doesn't fit evolution.

2. Two different kinds of world — before and after the Fall (2/3 Adam 900 years old)

3. 1 Adam vs. many Adams.

4. Earth and grass before the sun.

5. Rib of Adam.

6. Years — 1,000's vs. millions: Batrichie real or not?

7. Scripture — real or allegorical