

Summary

Thomas speaks about the life and thinking of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955), French Jesuit palaeontologist, thinker, writer, and mystic, whose most famous published book is "The Human Phenomenon". Thomas outlines and discusses Teilhard's three great contributions: (1) He told the story of the universe in an integral manner with four phases "Galactic, Earth, Life, Human" (2) He identified the human as a dimension of the Universe from the beginning and (3) He moved the essential Christian issue from the Redemption to the Creation.

Questions/Points for Discussion

1. Discuss why Teilhard's three contributions to modern evolutionary thought might be threatening to traditional Christian theology.
2. Discuss the idea that there is no such thing as "crass matter" or matter without a psychic or spiritual dimension. Do you feel connected to the emergent Universe?
3. If human consciousness and spirituality emerged after 14 billion years of cosmic evolution was the potential for this emergence not present in the elementary particles created shortly after the Big Bang?
4. Thomas says "Science is the yoga of the West" - discuss.
5. Does the scientific understanding of evolution awaken awe, or wonder, or a feeling of connection?