

exception to the generalizations which mark all other occasions but is itself their chief exemplification.

-- Norman Pittenger, "Picturing God", in *Religion in Life* 49 (Summer 1980), 173.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a Jesuit paleontologist (1881-1955) was influential in the development of process theology. He espoused panentheism, claimed that there is a symbiotic relationship between God and the world, stressed evolution as a universal process, claimed that both God and universe are therefore evolving, and asserted that God is immanent in the world, "luring" it (and especially man) toward the complete fulfillment of itself and Himself in the "Omega Point".

In an article in the January-March 1988 issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Floyd S. Elmore, Assistant Professor of Bible at Cedarville College (Ohio), states:

In summary God in process thought accounts for the orderliness of the advance of the process itself and for the emergence of novelty in the world. God knows all that is possible, provides the initial aim of any occasion to allow for novelty, directs the process toward harmony rather than chaos, and receives into Himself all the good accomplished in creation.

The God of process theology differs greatly from the God of theism. Because the metaphysics of process requires God to be interdependent with the world and not different in His reality or nature from any other thing in the world, God is described as bipolar. God is continually in the process of becoming as much as any part of the world. Becoming implies potentiality and actuality, and these describe God's two poles. In His potential pole, or primordial nature, God provides the initial aims, the possibilities, for all occasions of existence. In His actual pole, or consequent nature, God realizes concretely in the world the vision for the world that He had in His primordial nature, and thereby He maintains a relationship with creation by being its causal ground.

In light of the above, process theologians describe the radical relatedness of God with the world in picturesque terms. For Hartshorne, God is "cosmic wholeness", "a supreme relativist", and "the modally all-inclusive or nonfragmentary being, surpassable only by Himself." God is as related to world as thoughts are to brain cells so that in a real sense, "the world is God's body." For Lewis Ford, "God is the supreme opportunist, the master politician who appreciates how to utilize every situation as it arises." And Pittenger recalls Whitehead's own thought that "God is the fellow-sufferer who understands." God is so intertwined with the world and the world with God that man becomes not only a cocreator of the world but also a creator of God Himself!

-Floyd S. Elmore, "An Evangelical Analysis of Process Pneumatology", in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January-March 1988, 15-29.