

Please note, there are four main levels of expansion of Jeremy Griffith's biological explanation of the human condition. The presentation that goes into all Jeremy's explanations of the human condition at great length is provided in *Freedom Expanded\**. Then there is Jeremy's definitive presentation of his explanation in his 2016 book *FREEDOM: The End Of The Human Condition\**, which is the recommended text to read for a comprehensive understanding of his treatise. There is also the short, condensed version of *FREEDOM* in the booklet *Transform Your Life And Save The World\**. Finally there are the *Freedom Essays\** which present all the main explanations in *FREEDOM* in wonderfully illustrated bite-sized portions. As well as these presentations there are various documents that deal with particular aspects of Jeremy's treatise and of the World Transformation Movement that promotes that understanding. The contents of earlier books and publications about Jeremy's treatise, including this essay, will in time be fully absorbed into and covered by the above presentations.

## **A longer, more in-depth description of Sir James Darling's Vision of Fostering the Ability to Undertake the 'Paramount' Task of Solving the Human Condition in Order to 'Save the World'**

Compiled by Jeremy Griffith

To affirm the crucial importance of the WTM's work of addressing the human condition we present a speech given by Sir James Darling, former Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (today's Australian Broadcasting Corporation, or ABC), the organisation that did all it could to misrepresent, vilify and destroy this all-important work.

From this address, it can be imagined how deeply, deeply impressed, interested in and encouraging of our work a Darling-led ABC would have been. That the very opposite response occurred shows how dangerously the ABC has lost its way: in fact, how utterly corrupted it has become as a meaningful influence in our society.

As well as Chairman of the ABC from 1961 to 1967 (and before that, from 1955, a member of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board), Sir James was headmaster of Geelong Grammar School (GGS) for 32 years until 1961. Significantly, GGS is the school that a number of WTM members attended, including WTM founding directors, Jeremy Griffith, his brother Simon Griffith, Tim Macartney-Snape AM OAM and Christopher Stephen. Tim Macartney-Snape's great great grandfather, Dean Macartney, was also one of the founding fathers of GGS. It is also not insignificant that both Jeremy and Simon's father, and Tim's father went to GGS.

In 1953 Sir James was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) and in 1968 he was knighted ‘for services to education and broadcasting’. In Australia’s bicentennial year, 1988, he was officially designated one of 200 ‘Great Australians’. Of the 200—22 then living—Sir James was the only headmaster, public recognition thereby being given to his exceptional, indeed unique, influence in Australia as an educator. In fact by the end of Darling’s tenure, GGS had become one of the most highly regarded schools in the world. The current heir to the English throne, HRH Prince Charles, was sent there from England for part of his education.

Given the nature of the WTM’s work it should also be recorded that in Sir James’s full-page obituary in *The Australian* newspaper on 3 November 1995 his extraordinary capacity for unequivocal, denial-free and thus penetrating, prophetic thinking was acknowledged when he was described as ‘**a prophet in the true biblical sense**’ (view Darling’s obituary at <[<www.humancondition.com/darling-obituary\\*>](http://www.humancondition.com/darling-obituary*)>).

In this speech, which Sir James gave to the College of Radiologists of Australasia in Melbourne on 17 November 1954, and in a few accompanying quotes from his other speeches, he identified the human condition as the critical issue before humanity, and said the answer had to come from a ‘teleological’ approach, and that a successful approach would require ‘sensitive’ soundness, which is innocence, and sufficient ‘toughness’ to ‘take up arms’ against our artificial world of denial and defiantly overthrow it. He said developing these qualities was the true objective of education. He clearly identified mechanistic science (as opposed to holistic science) and the rise of fundamentalism as the two specific threats to such an inquiry, emphasising in the process the need for science and religion to be reconciled. He even correctly anticipated what the biological answer to the human condition would be.

Indeed, amazing as it may seem, it can be seen from the following material that Sir James’s whole life was specifically dedicated to cultivating the ability needed to undertake, as he describes it, the ‘paramount’ task of finding the ‘answer’ to the ‘all-important question’ of the human condition and by so doing ‘saving the world’.

The underlinings and the few very brief comments in square brackets are the WTM’s emphasis and inclusion. In fact, if you are pressed for time you need only read the underlinings to gain the substance of Sir James’s speech.

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Also included at the conclusion of the essay and collection of other relevant quotes from Sir James’s speeches are some extracts from a book about Prince Charles that traces the history of denial-free, prophetic thinkers involved in the journey to bring enlightenment to the human condition directly back to Plato. This compilation, titled *The Golden Thread: From Plato to Kurt Hahn to Sir James Darling to Sir Laurens van der Post—and to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and Professor John Morton*, talks of a ‘tenuous golden thread of initiative through history to bring liberating understanding to the human condition’.

## On Looking Beneath the Surface of Things

by Sir James Darling

The Röntgen oration to the College of Radiologists of Australasia, Melbourne, 17 November 1954

Published in *The Education of a Civilized Man* A Selection of Speeches and Sermons by James Ralph Darling, 1962.

Edited, with an Introduction, by Michael Collins Persse.

I can only start by saying that I am quite overwhelmed by the honour you have done me in inviting one so ill-equipped to deliver this oration. The only roughly similar occasion in which I have felt almost equally out of place was when I was invited on one occasion to open an agricultural show. Had I known when I accepted the position of headmaster that occasions such as these were concealed in the future, I might, I think, have been even more hesitant than I was about promotion. Having been asked, however, and having accepted, I can only promise to do my best, and hope that you will not expect too much of one as unaccustomed as I am to the dignity of public orations.

The peculiar difficulty of making an oration on such an occasion and to such an audience is that, being particularly ignorant upon the subjects which to all of you are as clear as the alphabet, one is forced by this into the difficulty of finding any subject at all upon which to address you. I must apologize, therefore, for the banality of the title which has been chosen, not so much because it was a pun upon your profession, but because in its vagueness it will cover a multitude of sins. Worse still, as I directed my thoughts upon these lines, I have found that I have in fact got something which I very much want to say but which, I find, owing to defects in my mental capacity, in my education, and in my subsequent reading, I am quite incapable of saying adequately. If, in the end, I can leave you with a question to be answered, but have put it with sufficient cogency to make you want to answer it, I shall have achieved more than at this stage I think probable.

Professor Röntgen, (Wilhelm Konrad Röntgen, 1845-1923: discovered the 'X', or Röntgen, ray, 1895, at Würzburg, where he was Professor of Physics; Nobel Prize for Physics, 1901) in whose honour this oration is named, must be one of the greatest benefactors of mankind as well as one of the greatest scientific originators in history. That he was a scientist and a German, and that he made his great discovery as late as the end of the nineteenth century, is well known to you all, as is also the fact that he realised, almost immediately after he made the discovery, some of the possibilities that were contained in it. You know also that this important discovery created an almost immediate public interest. There followed all the misinterpretation and exaggeration which such publicity throws in the face of the scientist whose only desire is to pursue uninterrupted the new developments made possible by his discovery. It has long been a question whether the existence of a free press is compatible with democratic institutions, and sometimes one is tempted to ask whether the existence of the daily press is compatible with any thinking at all. Certainly poor Professor Röntgen suffered from the superficiality

and futility of the comments made upon his work, and needed all the acclamation of his fellow scientists to compensate for his undesired popular reputation. It is, I suppose, almost impossible for the Press to accept the fact that some people prefer to make their own statements to their own chosen audience in their own way.

From these beginnings, however, came the science which most of you practise and which has served so well the cause of medicine. But the common misinterpretations of what Professor Röntgen's rays could do in looking below the surface of our outward appearance may present to us the opportunity not only for some moralizing upon the use that man makes of the advances of human knowledge, but also for trying to understand what is indeed thus gained in looking beneath the surface. I shall, at least in this audience, arouse no opposition when I point out that what matters is not the fact of being able to see what is otherwise hidden but, on the contrary, what there is to be seen, how what is seen is interpreted, and, thirdly, what can be done about it when it has been seen. There is also, perhaps, the problem, even in your walk of life, arising from two other factors: how far, even with the most modern equipment, you really do see beneath the surface, or, to put it another way, what various surfaces there are on which the eye can rest before one sees right through and sees anything; and, secondly, whether what one sees by this kind of penetration is really penetration of the truth or merely penetration of a phenomenon which is only part of the truth. I could, I suppose, put these questions in a more concrete form and make them more understandable, but, in doing so, I should risk trespassing in a field altogether outside my ken, when all that I am intending to do is to make an introduction to a problem far less specialized. The doctor today has within his control a weapon, your weapon, which shows him much more of the truth than his predecessors of a hundred years ago could hope to know; but it is still only an observed truth which your rays reveal, and the additional evidence which is available to him in his diagnosis and is a preliminary to his cure, while it is obviously of great assistance to him, still depends upon a capacity for interpretation which may even be made more difficult by the extent of the knowledge acquired, and may in some cases make correct diagnosis more difficult. Such concentration of the mind, moreover, on the things that are seen and temporal may divert him from those other, possibly more important, factors of the diagnosis which have to be apprehended rather than seen. An American professor the other day, in a discussion with me, made a most apposite remark: 'Those,' he said, 'may be the facts, but they are not the truth' — for Truth with a capital T cannot be put in a bottle as a specimen; yet it is that kind of inquiry which is the need not less of the medical profession than of other ordinary people today. This truth is something which we both observe and apprehend, and observation without apprehension is valueless, perhaps more dangerous even than apprehension without observation.

When we contemplate our world, whether it be the world of contemporary thought, the world of art, the world of medicine, the world of education, the world of politics, or the world of social studies, which the University of Cambridge calls so delightfully the Ecology of Human Beings, we must all be struck by the need for such penetration of understanding. We all, of course, practise assiduously some kind of profession or occupation, but there are moments, I imagine, when all of us who are thus actively engaged desire passionately time, time in which to re-examine the purpose and the meaning of what we are doing. As some

woman said to me once about life, 'If it would only stop for six months to enable us to catch up with it': to enable us, she meant, I think, to try to understand it, to take bearings anew, to estimate with some accuracy where we are, and to set a course in the direction in which we want to go. Would you think me very rude if I suggested that perhaps the medical profession is as much in need of such a period of repose as any other, including my own? If such a need exists, as I am sure that it does, though there seems no possibility for the majority of us that the need will ever be satisfied, a second fact becomes apparent—that we are, most of us, extraordinarily badly equipped to seize the opportunity even if it were presented. In those times of history in which life gave men an opportunity to think and to contemplate, the capacity for thinking and contemplating was developed, and, as such thinking was the regular exercise of educated men, education was directed to develop in them a capacity for this kind of thinking. In our hurried age there is a danger that by lack of use the capacity will atrophy, and it is possibly this atrophy of even the desire to think deeply about anything which is the worst characteristic of the whole affair. Faced as he is by the impossibility of approaching a full understanding of even a small branch of human knowledge, it is not surprising that the student of today has allowed himself so to specialize that he forgets the need for understanding the relationships between things, let alone their ultimate meaning. If the student falls into such error, what can be expected of the ordinary man? If the world is too difficult for the scholar to understand, it is by so much the more incomprehensible to the rest of us. Vaguely disquieted by a lack of perceptible purpose in life, and convinced that he can make no sense of it even if he tries, modern man chooses the method of escape by preoccupation with all kinds of frivolous interests. Even more or less intelligent people like you and me prefer the relaxation of golf and bridge and detective novels to the satisfaction which at one time we would have sought in conversation, serious reading, or religious exercises, and that kind of frivolous preoccupation, inoffensive and not essentially vicious, continues the process of desensitizing our minds, just when the needs of the moment demand more than they ever have done the most acute sensitivity. Sensibility, which, we are told, the course of evolution demonstrates as the true equivalent of life, should always be the educator's objective: or, again, as the same author, Canon Raven, says, the future lies not with the predatory [selfish] and the immune [alienated] but with the sensitive [innocent/sound] who live dangerously [defy the world of denial]. (Charles E. Raven, *Science, Religion, and the Future*, 1943, p.103.) It should be the prime object of education, whether at the level on which I am engaged or in the specialized advanced education with which the medical faculty is concerned, to develop this sensitivity. I need not, surely, elaborate the great importance of this in clinical teaching, nor the obvious fact that there are two kinds of insensitivity, the pachydermatous and the frivolous. The sensitive mind is neither: not, that is to say, like the rhinoceros, which is so hidebound by prejudice or conviction that it cannot be penetrated by any new idea; nor yet, on the other hand, so occupied by surface agitation that it 'heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it'—and, when the sun is up, it is scorched, and because it has no root it withers away. (Matthew 13:20; Mark 4:6.) Of the two, perhaps the second is more common and more dangerous. But the truly sensitive mind is both susceptible and penetrating: it is open to new ideas, and it seeks truth at the bottom of the well. It is the development of this sort of mind which it should be the object of the educational process to cultivate. I doubt whether we are being very successful.

While I do not want to involve you in the technical details of school timetables and curricula, some reference to them is necessary in order to explain why, even with the best intentions in the world, a headmaster finds it so difficult to do what he knows to be right. A school timetable is an operation in various dimensions, and the making of one may be compared not so much to a jig-saw puzzle as to a rather complex game of patience. There are a fixed number of periods in the week, and a certain number of boys who must be divided for reasons of economy into a reasonable number of forms. The number and capacity of masters are also limited, and they cannot, any of them, be in two places at the same time. On the opposite side, the subjects which one would like to teach—indeed, without which education must be incomplete—are multifarious, if not infinite, and the peculiar vocational desires of the pupils equally so. To add to the difficulty, a well-meaning, if misguided, university and other examining bodies, impressed by experience with a grave distrust of schools and schoolmasters, and obsessed with the desire to teach only students of a much higher general standard than can in fact be produced from the available field, endeavour to ensure by the unsuitable weapon of the examination that at least the students have been taught in the way which they—if, that is, they can ever achieve enough agreement amongst themselves to be called ‘they’—think right. To this challenge the schoolmaster and his pupil respond by the use of every possible device to elude the vigilance and deceive the intelligence of the examiner, and so trick him into passing the candidate. This first hurdle surmounted, the student proceeds to the next by the same methods. But Education is not a series of hurdles, and the tendency to regard it as such forbids any chance of efficacy, except by chance as a side-line, in achieving the main objective, which we have postulated as the training of the sensitive and penetrating mind. For this can only be achieved in freedom and as a result of much more leisure in the classroom than the present necessary syllabus can possibly allow; and, of course, it demands teachers themselves possessed of the intellectual quality which they wish to develop in their pupils. Its success in the main depends not so much upon the subjects taught as upon the way in which it is possible to teach them; but, broadly speaking, I am prepared to argue that it does involve the preserving for as long as possible of a reasonable balance between the mathematical and the humane subjects, and I even believe, in defiance of educational experts, that the learning of some foreign language is necessary if a man is to learn how to think in words, as most of us need to do.

It is a serious fact that, to a large extent, the learning of languages is rapidly being extinguished in this State for those who are proceeding to any of the scientific, medical, engineering, and architectural courses. The solution, I hasten to add, is not to make a language again compulsory for matriculation, but so to free the candidates from excessive demands elsewhere that the school has some opportunity of fitting in the teaching of those subjects which it believes a necessary part of a liberal education. We are wrestling, at the moment anyhow, with a system which does in fact drive mathematical and scientific specialization right down into the middle school, and which has the quite unintended result, also, of encouraging boys to try to escape from all subjects which demand theoretical thinking. The young naturally prefer the concrete and the practical, and perhaps the Australian young even more than their counterparts in England. They prefer examples to principles and facts to ideas; they prefer learning to thinking. It is the duty of any self-respecting school somehow to wean

them into the more adult appreciation of the opposite attitude. For in all education principles are more important than examples, ideas than facts, and you cannot train the sensitive and penetrating mind except by exercising it in that direction.

In the processes of education, then, there is scope for considerable reform, and in spite of our many failings we do try to combat the worst effects of the present situation. We cannot, however, go very far, for much of the trouble is inherent in the present stage of the world's knowledge. A multiplicity of new facts in every field has tended to obscure all sight of principle, and the advances of knowledge upon all its frontiers have almost made excessive specialization imperative. This is true not only in learning but even in such trivialities as sport, so that in almost every human activity the necessary concentration upon the development of even the twigs upon the branches has resulted in our losing sight of the tree, let alone the wood of which the tree is part. If one wants to take part in everything, one is tempted to believe that, unless one is a Sedgman or a Landy, it is not worth doing so at all; and, if one is, one is tempted to forget everything else, or at least to get everything out of perspective. If it is part of the art of living to see life clearly and to see it whole, this age of specialization makes living a very difficult art. I am tempted to suggest that this is so in your profession even more than it is in mine, where it takes the form chiefly of competition between specialist masters for the undivided attention of pupils, without a proper regard for the balance which should be preserved.

It is, of course, no new problem, though it seems today to be becoming more and more acute. Ever since man first began to study natural phenomena, he has been obsessed by the difficulty of making general sense of all the individual discoveries which he made. Like a fond landscape-gardener, who loves too well each individual tree and shrub, he seeks in vain for the pattern which he planned.

It was the ancient Greek philosophers who were first obsessed by this perplexity. They sought, and men since have sought continuously, for some single binding principle from which it might be said that all else sprang. Heraclitus found it in Fire, Pythagoras in the science of Numbers, Socrates in Reason, and Plato, coming near to monotheism, while he remained nominally a worshipper of the ancient gods, in the idea of the Good and the Beautiful.

It may have been more difficult for them, or less difficult, but at least they kept on trying, for their minds could not rest unless they did. But in those days science was in its infancy and the content of human knowledge could be held within the boundaries of one head. That is no longer so, and it is hard for specialists in different branches even to understand the language spoken by each other, far less the modes of their thought.

The difficulty is accentuated by the modern, or rather the recent, divorce between theological and scientific thinking. I qualify 'modern' in order to draw attention to the inescapable fact that societies must, as far as I can see, be dominated by those who are already out-of-date. This is not unrelieved tragedy, as will be readily recognized by anyone who has contemplated seriously the unrestrained ideology of Robespierre or Lenin at work; but it is in some respects unfortunate. There can be very few headmasters who are not regarded by their best young masters as unenlightened and reactionary: and so we are, as we think, for excellent reasons, which the young cannot be expected to understand. Perhaps you, in your profession, accept with better grace the wisdom of your elders. It is in some respects a pity if you do, for we can only with the greatest difficulty, and with the gift of free time for reading and

thought, which it is very hard to seize, escape from the modes of thought which we adopted when our minds were ‘young and gay’. Lord Raglan, you will remember, having fought the French when he was young, still persisted forty years later in calling all enemies Frenchies, even when in the Crimean War they were, in fact, his allies (Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Reason Why*, Constable, 1953, p.162). But, of course, we do have wisdom of a sort, the wisdom of experience, the wisdom of a greater tolerance, and perhaps of a wider vision, as well as the wisdom which can come just from the fact of being nearer death, something different from being merely further from birth. There should be—I speak with feeling—some system of payment devised for the older amongst us, which would take us out of active responsibility and daily strain and yet, having given us the leisure to think while we still want to, give us also some opportunities of influence. They do it in the best businesses, where there seems to be money to spare for all; but it is not so easy in the professions.

But that is a digression. My real point is that many of us grew up and tasted the Pierian fount at a time when the divorce between Religion and Science was an accepted fact. There were scientists who remained religious, and even theologians who dabbled in science, but there was still the kind of mental strain which disturbed the soul of Darwin or Huxley. The two intellectual activities had to be kept in separate compartments: a man who was accustomed in his scientific studies to apply certain rules and principles was convinced that he had to throw them away when he approached the study of Theology, the truths of which he was told that he could only accept by Faith. In the results, at least the lower ranks of thinkers divided themselves into two classes: those who, like myself, found Science almost an excrescence, a technical achievement, perhaps, for those whose minds were made that way, but something which had little bearing upon the real life of the mind; and those who, like, I imagine, a good many of you, threw away Religion because it wouldn’t fit in with the truths which you discovered by the scientific method. In this fabric of mental habit, formed when we were at the university, most of us remain—and fail to notice that the world of thought has left us behind.

Quite obviously it is a most unsatisfactory condition, creating, as it does, on the one hand a division between two kinds of thinker, and on the other a dichotomy in our minds, which is either disquieting if we are conscious of it, or damnable if we are not. Add this dichotomy to the problems created by the multiplicity of specialization, and it will be seen how difficult it is for modern man to see life clearly and to see it whole. (Cf. Matthew Arnold, *Sonnet to a Friend*: ‘Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole.’)

But the Greeks must be right. The scientist can no more deny or devalue the truths of spiritual experience than the theologian can neglect the truths of science: and the two truths must be reconcilable, and it must be of importance to each of us that they should be reconciled. Fortunately, there lies between the two extremes and stretches over the gulf of division a bridge—or would you prefer to call it a rainbow? (for a rainbow combines in it something of both worlds)—the bridge of the arts: music, painting, poetry, those strange emanations of the evolutionary process.

In two admirable essays (*Towards a Christian Aesthetic and Creative Mind*), published in a book entitled *Unpopular Opinions*, Miss Dorothy Sayers endeavours to explain the function of the artist of any kind in society. ‘A poet,’ she writes, ‘is a man who not only suffers “the impact of external events”, but experiences them;’ (*Unpopular Opinions*, 1946, p.39. Miss Sayers’ own quotation comes



from T. S. Eliot's play, *The Family Reunion*, 'You are all people To whom nothing has happened, at most a continual impact Of external events...') and later she adds: 'The recognition of the truth that we get in the artist's work comes to us as a revelation of new truth... It is new, startling, and perhaps shattering—and yet it comes to us with a sense of familiarity. We did not know it before, but the moment the poet has shown it to us we know that, somehow or other, we had always really known it.' (Ibid., p.40.) For truth is there to be revealed, as all scientists know; and the seeing of the truth is a discovery, not an invention. It may well be that it is on the common meeting-ground of art and music and poetry that scientist and theologian may meet to compose their differences.

Certainly it was a poet with a scientific—at least a medical—training, Robert Bridges (1844-1930; O.M.; Poet Laureate from 1913), who first, as far as I know, and as long ago as 1927, and at the end of his long life, tried to produce order out of chaos and to compose, in *The Testament of Beauty*, both the problem of multiplicity and the problem of dichotomy. They are, in fact, the same problem, for once the dichotomy is composed the multiple forms will fall into order around the central idea. I do not know how much impressed the scientists were with this work, but I do know that one theologian at least of high standing, the late Archbishop Temple, to whom the book was submitted in proof, hailed it as one of the greatest works in the English language. I wish that I had left myself some time to use this great poem at length. As it is, I can only quote, away from its context, a short extract which, with the magnificent climax, seems to me to sum up the main argument.

Man is portrayed (from the beginning of Book II) in the picture of Plato's two-horsed chariot (*Phaedrus: The Dialogues of Plato*, ed, B. Jowett, 4th ed., 1953, Vol. III, pp.153-5, 160-3.), the charioteer Reason driving the two components of man's character, the instincts of Selfhood and Breed, or Sex; and the science of conduct, which he calls Ethick, deals with 'the skill and manage' (*The Testament of Beauty*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1929, Bk IV, 11. 88-89) of the charioteer. [Note: As is explained in *Part 4:6 of Jeremy Griffith's book Freedom Expanded: Book 1\**, Bridges's interpretation here of Plato's charioteer as being reason and the two horses as being our supposed selfish animal instincts and our wanton sexuality is not correct. Plato's two horses are our corrupting, self-adjusting intellect—the '**crooked lumbering animal...of a dark colour...the mate of insolence and pride, shag-eared and deaf**' as Plato described it, and our species' cooperatively orientated original instinctive self or soul—the '**upright and cleanly made**', '**white**', '**lover of honour and modesty and temperance**' as Plato described it. Plato's charioteer is us, the individual resulting from the effects of both our instinct and our intellect.] He [Bridges] goes on:

Since all Ethick implyeth a sense of Duty in man, / 'tis first to enquire whence that responsible OUGHT arose; / a call so universal and plain-spoken that some / hav abstracted a special faculty, distinct / from animal bias and underivable, / whereby the creature kenneth the creator's Will,...that we call Law of Nature,—in its grade the same / with the determin'd habit of electrons, the same / with the determining instinct of unreasoning life, / NECESSITY become conscient in man—whereto / all insubordination is imperfection in kind.

Reality appeareth in forms to man's thought / as several links interdependent of a chain / that circling returneth upon itself, as doth / the coil'd snake that in art figureth eternity.

From Universal Mind the first-born atoms draw / their function, whose rich chemistry the plants transmute / to make organic life, whereon animals feed / to fashion sight and sense and give service to man, / who sprung from them is conscient in his last degree / of ministry unto God, the Universal Mind, / whither all effect returneth whence it first began.

The Ring in its repose is Unity and Being: / Causation and Existence are the motion thereof. / Thru'out all runneth Duty, and the conscience of it / is thatt creativ faculty of animal mind / that, wakening to self-conscience of all Essences, / closeth the full circle, where the spirit of man / escaping from the bondage of physical Law / re-entereth eternity by the vision of God. (*Ibid.*, Bk IV, 11. 91-96, 107-130.)

[Note: this crucial underpinning 'Law of Nature', the 'monotheism' 'pattern' of a 'single binding principle from which...all else sprang', from which the moral 'OUGHT arose' when we humans became 'conscient' such that 'all insubordination is imperfection in kind', and around which the 'spiritual experience' of 'the theologian' and 'the truths of science' are 'reconcilable' and 'produce order out of chaos', is the teleological, holistic, negative-entropy-driven, integrative meaning and purpose and theme of existence that is described in all of Jeremy Griffith's books.]

This is the idea of Purpose in life, and I am suggesting that it is to the idea of Purpose in all things that we must return, if we are to discover unity in the midst of variety.

I once served under a great headmaster (Sir Frank Fletcher: see Introduction, pp.5-6) whose conversation with assistant masters, at least those who wanted anything, consisted largely of the monosyllable, 'Why?' As a response to a conventional 'Good morning', it was rather devastating, but as an aid to honesty of thought invaluable. I suggest that the same policy of enquiry might be profitable in a whole lot of activities which we have come to take for granted, together with all the accretion of the years. In the comparatively small problems, not least those of curriculum and syllabus, whether at school or university level, it is high time that there should be some whys and some answers; only so will there be any chance of the required revision and synthesis. In the wider or deeper field of thought, there is no less need.

But, before we return to this binding idea of purpose and function and duty in life, we should perhaps try to understand why the apparent dichotomy between Religion and Science has arisen. It has arisen, according to Canon Raven (a theologian and a biologist), in his two series of Gifford lectures (*Natural Religion and Christian Theology*: delivered at Edinburgh in 1951 and 1952; published in two volumes, *Science and Religion, Experience and Interpretation*, Cambridge, 1953), as a result of faults upon both sides.

At a time when, three or four hundred years after the life of Christ, the Roman Empire was breaking up, or indeed possibly earlier, when the life of the Christian convert was arduous and dangerous, the belief grew up that 'the days were evil' and the world was bad, and Christianity therefore an escape. 'With the closing in of the dark ages,' he writes, 'faith became a creed, hope an escapism, and love a snare; to contrast the transient with the supernatural, to flee from the world rather than to convert it, and to order this life so as to secure the bliss of heaven became the object of Christian endeavour.' (Charles E. Raven, *Science and Religion*, p.48.)

For hundreds of years this kind of thought dominated religion, in spite of St Francis and some medieval theologians. It received a new lease of life as a result of the influence of

Calvin and the Puritans; the idea that salvation lay only in an asceticism which removed men from this world in order to prepare themselves for the next became dominant. To such minds the studies of the scientists and their interest in natural phenomena were *ipso facto* frivolous. Some religious thinkers have not even now escaped from this contradiction of the first chapter of Genesis, where it is written: 'And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.' (Genesis 1:31.)

It is little wonder that the scientist, especially the English scientist of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who may also have been politically influenced in the same direction, reacted against this attitude of the Puritan theologian. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that at the same time scientific thought, partly in consequence, became dominated by the mathematicians and the physicists—a domination preserved almost to the present day, and further enhanced by the utilitarian philosophers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and by the practical needs of the Industrial Revolution. 'This belief, with its consequent enhancement of economic and industrial values at the expense of aesthetic and moral, persisted until, with Charles Darwin, man himself was deposed from the position of controller and graded as part of the machine; and by that time mechanism was so securely established that it took two generations for the absurdity of this final step to be recognized.' (Raven, *op. cit.*, p.134.)

It is only today, or very recently, that the physicist has abandoned his dogmatism, and the biologist begun again to study the living creature with its ecology instead of being content with rather barren classification. Meanwhile a grievous damage has been done. The result of these two kinds of thought has been to produce in our world that dichotomy of which I have spoken, and which lies at the root of our difficulty in seeing life clearly and seeing it whole. We shall not bridge that gulf unless both scientist and theologian are prepared to start towards each other from either side. It is of the greatest importance to all our thinking that they should do so. What, then, is the problem?

We have, then, these two factors which make it impossible for us to see the unity in life—the dichotomy existing between the scientist and the theologian, and the multiplicity of fragmented specialization. Because of these our life has lost coherence and significance and direction.

Far be it from me, who am neither theologian nor scientist, nor even reader, to say what the answer is: and yet, as a plain man engaged practically and every day in a mundane occupation which deals nevertheless with the training of minds and the saving of souls, I should like to be allowed to come back to the possibility that the solution lies quite simply in what is known as the teleological conception of evolution. [Again, this teleological, integrative-meaning-and-purpose-accepting approach to biology is the basis of Jeremy Griffith's synthesis.]

Is the binding principle, the solvent idea, to be found in Purpose? Let me take a few very simple examples. When a boy goes wrong, he does so for various superficial reasons; but beneath these reasons lies the basic trouble, usually that he has lost his sense of purpose. Neither success in schoolwork nor in games nor in the hierarchy of school promotion, nor even the estimation of his parents, has value with him, and his sense of responsibility to anything or anyone is lost. Restore that and he will start moving again.

Again, when we criticize contemporary society, it is not its viciousness but its aimlessness which we condemn. The world, the flesh, and the devil, (*The Book of Common Prayer*:

from a petition in the Litany) or, if you like, gambling, women, and drink, those boasted adversaries of man in the first years after he throws off the controls of tutelage, meet their strongest opposition, not necessarily in high ideals or a good upbringing, but much more in a strong purpose, strong interests, the ambition to do well.

There used to be a Chairman of our School Council (William Thomson Manifold, 1861-1922, of Purrumbete, Chairman of the School Council during much of the headmastership of the Rev. Dr Francis Earnest Brown, fourth Headmaster, 1912-1929; with others of his family, a munificent benefactor to Geelong Grammar School; his eldest son, John Manifold, 1887-1957, was Chairman of the School Council during much of Dr Darling's headmastership) who was accustomed, when discussion became heated, to restore his colleagues to the point by the remark: 'Gentlemen, this is, after all, an educational establishment.' While there may be some in this audience who view with some doubt the truth of this assertion, or regard it as presumptuous, there are many other fields in which such a recall to fundamental purpose might be profitable: not least, democratic society as a whole. Clearly, one of our main problems *vis-à-vis* our Communist opponents is that they have at least on their side a clear and definite purpose, from which they derive a coherence and direction almost wholly lacking in the Western world. Consider England before and after Dunkirk and you cannot fail to realize the resolution which such purpose gives. The problem of discovering for our liberal democratic society, with its heritage of *laissez-faire*, a purpose as clear and compelling as Communism is indubitably one of the greatest needs of our time. Only in the light of such a discovered purpose can we lead Australia into an attitude of mind which is prepared for sacrifice and service. Without it there will be the disintegration of conflicting selfishness, the chaos which comes from individual greed and laziness. Unless we can discover such a purpose, it is not too much to say that we shall not hold this country for long.

So it is with everything; but there are two further points, allied closely to each other—first, that in seeking for such purpose [for our lives] it will be necessary to seek below the surface, below the apparent and obvious, to the underlying and fundamental. It is an interesting reflection that the busy bee, that model of moral behaviour, imagines itself to be thriftily and frugally collecting food for its winter store, and that even the commercial apiarist imagines that he keeps bees in order to steal from them and sell their honey. Actually they are both at fault, for the real purpose of the bee is to fertilize my apple blossom so that the fruit will form. In this simple parable there may be thoughts which do lie too deep for tears. (Cf. William Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*, last line.) How often, I wonder, are we not all confused in our sense of purpose. It is often the incidental good that matters more than the apparent.

Secondly, the discovery of individual purpose in everything is insufficient unless, having applied the criterion to our varied activities, we attempt to correlate what we have found in one embracing purpose. Only so can we come to a better understanding of life, to answer even the all-important question: 'What is man that thou art mindful of him [that human behaviour is very often less than ideal], and the son of man that thou visitest him?' [That Christ's behaviour by contrast was sound and ideal]. [Note: Darling has clearly stated here that the 'all-important question' that we have 'to answer' is the good-and-evil-differentiated issue of the human condition.] (Psalm 8:4; Hebrews 2:6.) For to exclude that question from the study of evolution is indeed to play *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark (Sir Walter Scott, *The*

*Talisman*, introduction)—an exclusion surely as futile as to talk theology and to forget evolution? [Note: Darling is saying that it is precisely around this ‘question’ of the human condition and its ‘answer’ that the reconciliation of science and religion depend]. There must be a complete answer; there must be coherence and sense in the universe; and, until we find it, our thinking is degenerated into disintegration, and our existence fragmented into a rubbish-heap of shreds and patches, with coherence, significance, and growth impossible, our compass-bearings lost, and civilization foundering. [Note: Healing amelioration of the human condition has to be found if the world is to be saved.]

In the study of evolution, it is the scientist’s first duty to deal with the question, How? The theologian is more concerned with Why? But you cannot answer either question fully without answering the other as well. The medical man may say that he is concerned only with the healing of men’s bodies; but, when he says so, he knows that he lies. He is concerned with the restoration of wholeness of life, which is health, and wholeness by definition includes man in all his variety of experience. The priest may say that he is concerned with man’s soul, but in fact that soul is something which grows out of man’s body. You cannot divide man into parts and then, by simple arithmetic, add him up to make a whole. So the theologian—and the scientist—when they study the story which the one calls Creation and the other Evolution, must attempt to see it as a whole, and must from the varying standpoints endeavour to understand it as a whole, its end no less than its beginning. The answer will be found in a proper understanding of what theologians call the Incarnation, for as Bridges says,

...his humanity is God’s Personality / and communion with him is the life of the soul.

(Robert Bridges, *op. cit.*, Bk IV, 11. 1392-3.)

‘He is no half-brother to mankind, and therefore of a nature in which humanity can only partially partake; but Elder Brother, blood-brother, the forerunner of our race, the first-fruits of every human creature; not the great Exception but the great Example, who claims no difference either of “substance” or of “nature” from the least of His brethren.’ (I have not been able to trace this quotation. M.D.C.P.) ‘He became like us,’ says Irenaeus, ‘that we might become like Him.’ (St Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses*, Bk V, Preface.) ‘He became human,’ says Athanasius, ‘that we might become divine.’ (St Athanasius, *On the Incarnation*, Sect.54, The Library of Christian Classics, Vol. III, p.107. Cf. the *Quicumque Vult*: ‘one Christ...by taking of the Manhood into God.’)

It is God’s purpose that men should be like Christ: they are whole and healthy only when they are so, and the purpose of evolution is, as Saint Paul says, that ‘we all come in the unity of the faith...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.’

(Ephesians 4:13.)

This is that excellent way whereon if we will walk / all things shall be added unto us.

(Bridges, *op. cit.*, Bk IV, 11. 1426-7.)

This is the solvent of our divisions and the cohesive purpose which can explain and put sense into our multifarious individual activities. This is what we see if we look deeply enough below the surface of things.

...and now with many words / pleasing myself betimes I am fearing lest in the end  
/ I play the tedious orator who maundereth on / for lack of heart to make an end of

his nothings. / Wherefor as when a runner who hath run his round / handeth his staff away, and is glad of his rest, / here break I off, knowing the goal was not for me / the while I ran on telling of what cannot be told. (*Ibid.*, 11. 1306-13.)  
END

## Other relevant quotes from Sir James Darling

In a letter from Sir James to Jeremy Griffith in response to Jeremy's 1988 book *Free: The End of The Human Condition*: **'The main, perhaps the only thing, that a school can do is to create an atmosphere in which boys can grow up in such a way as to develop their own selves without having too much imposed upon them or destroyed in them...From reading what you have written it seems to have been successful with you. I particularly like the combination of furniture building and metaphysical thought'** (21 Feb 1989).

From Sir James's 1960 GGS Speech Day address: **'There are two attributes of leadership... to think independently and originally, and the instilling of the confidence and courage required from those who are going to take a line different from that of the majority. Archbishop Temple once asked me whether I had ever noticed that in the Old Testament the majority was always wrong. This is just as likely to be true today, if the majority lack leaders from within who are prepared to think for themselves and stand up for what they believe. It is much easier to conform, but nothing worthwhile was ever achieved that way'** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.98).

From Sir James's sermon at GGS Chapel on 14 August 1932: **'The greater the power, the greater the opportunity and the responsibility: and from those who, besides the tradition of their race and family, have added to them a more than average capacity, even more is demanded. If an empire is to be great, it must be because there are never wanting such men as Theodosius and Ambrose to understand the greatness of their opportunity and to undertake the double burden of their responsibility to their fellow men and to the Law of God'** (*The Education of a Civilized Man* p.110). This quote is similar to Christ's: **'From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked'** (Luke 12:48).

From Sir James's address at GGS on Anzac Day 1961: **'What, then, is the issue? It is this. Do we wish to preserve for ourselves and for our children this country as a place in which, in spite of the imperfections of the system, free men and women can live and seek Truth for themselves by the exercise of their own brains? Or are we prepared to sell this precarious birthright, for which so many generations of our forefathers have fought, to sell it because we are either too woolly-minded to see what has happened in other parts of the world, or too cowardly to risk our lives or our comfort in working to preserve it? This is no new situation. Nearly always in the past the wine of freedom has been too strong for the heads of men and women, and they have betrayed it...Freedom without responsibility is self-destructive. No civilization can last long in this age which does not carry its belief in social justice beyond its own boundaries. In a world besotted with selfishness, are you going to continue to conform to the world or will you try to be men of courage? Of course, if a war came, you would respond in the same way as those whom we commemorate today. But it will then be too late. Wars are sometimes necessary as a last resort, to preserve our very existence; they never do any positive good. If you want Peace, you must prepare for Peace; you**

must make sacrifices for Peace. This means, for every single man and woman here today, for every boy, however young, that he should here highly resolve that those whom we commemorate should not have died in vain. It means that each of us should regard our lives as pledged to the one paramount purpose of saving the world: that we should choose our job in life on the basis of what needs to be done that we are capable of doing; that, beyond that, we should use our spare time, not in pursuing transitory and expensive and unsatisfying pleasures but in working for our society:...we should use our educational and other advantages, not in our own interests but as an opportunity for leadership in conduct, in taste, and in intelligent appreciation of the issues before us...Pray, therefore, for faith above all things, for that and only that will bring with it the will and power to serve. The alternative is death, not only of the soul but of the body also, and the sands of time are running out' (*The Education of a Civilised Man*, p.139-140).

In Weston Bate's 1990 book about GGS, titled *Light Blue Down Under*, Bate refers to Sir James's renowned 1950 GGS Speech Day address, saying: Darling 'spoke of the kind of man needed to save Australia and humanity: "We need in this generation, as we have had them in the past, men of conscience, driven, even against their wills, certainly against their own interest, to take a stand for principles. Men not afraid of facing unpleasant facts, not afraid of being different in their views from other people, men who cannot rest so long as opportunities remain to work for the really great human objectives—peace, justice, honesty and decency between men." After warning parents to be careful not to destroy the precious growth of conscience in a boy (and thus destroy the boy himself and the possibility of civilized society) he went on to his inevitable peroration—the great fixed point in his philosophy: "For selfishness is, as it has ever been, the ultimately destructive force in a society, and there are only two cures for selfishness—the regimented state which we all profess to dislike, and the change of heart, which we refuse to make. That is the choice, believe me, for each one of us, and we have not much time in which to make it. The need for decision is serious and urgent, and the sands are running out. If as a school we can do even a little to help boys to make the decision aright, then we have some right to exist; if not, we do not matter at all.'" (p.219)

From Sir James's address to the Victorian Branch of the Royal Empire Society on 14 March 1946: '...it is not for men to run away from the truth for fear of the consequences' (*The Education of a Civilised Man*, p.131).

From Sir James's address at GGS on Anzac Day 1961: 'Last Sunday the Bishop spoke to you about St George and reminded you that life at all times was a challenge to live dangerously and to be strong...' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.138).

From Sir James's Sermon at GGS Chapel on 11 June 1950: 'Lean towards danger like a good boxer...' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.155).

From Sir James's address at GGS on Anzac Day 1961: '...the daily decline of the West [In the later part of chapter 8 of his book *FREEDOM: The End Of The Human Condition*, Jeremy Griffith explains the rapidly increasing levels of alienation in society and the great danger from the resulting increased deferment to politically correct, pseudo idealistic dogma], not in power only but in morale, in standards of behaviour and morals, above all in its loss of faith in itself. The clouds are gathering round us again as they did in 1936 and the years which followed. Once again we are faced with a way of life which in our hearts we know to be wrong, but in which others believe fanatically, and we, for our part, continue to live as though we believed in nothing but our own comfort and a superficial prosperity' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.138).

**‘Much of the world’s trouble is, as it always has been, the result of greed’** (*Reflections for The Age*, 1991, p.19).

From Sir James’s Sermon at GGS Chapel on 13 May 1951: **‘...for, when men and women lose their sense of purpose, their faith in religion, and their desire to serve their fellow men (as we have largely lost these things), then there is little left to them but to look after their own skins and to seek what seems their own advantage’** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.170).

From Sir James’s Sermon at Rugby School Chapel on 10 July 1955: **‘...when you think of the way in which you plan that your life should be spent, decide to disregard the rewards: think first of what needs to be done rather than of what you want to do: do not run away from the heroic and the apparently self-sacrificing vocations’** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.184).

From a chapter of extracts of Sir James’s Speech Day addresses at GGS from 1930 to 1960: **‘It requires more toughness to resist the world than to join in the rat-race...In the end it is the service of the holy and humble which does most good in the world. I treasure the remark made to me once by an Old Boy: “If you have been to Geelong Grammar you may drift, but you cannot drift with a clear conscience.” It is the awakening and vivifying of the conscience of those who belong to it which ought to be the chief purpose of a Church school...because...conscience is the executive part of consciousness’** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.96).

From a chapter of extracts of Sir James’s Speech Day addresses at GGS from 1930 to 1960: **‘Rest assured, the influence of the home is far stronger than that of any school, and the ways of the world not so easy to conquer. You may even think that you are the customer and ought to be allowed to determine the nature of the article. Well, of course, you can choose another school; but a school has customers beyond the parents whom it must consider—the boy himself, the nation, the world, and, in the end, God. To Him we owe our ultimate responsibility. [Note, Darling’s revolutionary focus for education of preserving and cultivating our instinctive self or soul rather than stressing intellectual achievement and competitive success did not please all parents, but he would not be diverted from the clarity and certainty of his Platonic vision.]’** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.100).

From Sir James’s address to The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons on 16 August 1960: **‘the civilized man withholds judgment...on what he doesn’t understand: wise enough not to express opinions to which he has no right, and humble enough to give credit to the artists and experts who have devoted their lives to a subject. It is wise sometimes to remember the all too frequent rejections of the prophets by the barbarians...’**

**The quality which, above all other, needs to be cultivated [in education] is sensitivity...it would be true to say, wouldn’t it, that a lack of sensitiveness is the mark of death...in a mind or a conscience... [Education’s] objective is a development of the whole man, sensitive all round the circumference...In the end the man with a solid core to his mind will make greater and more sure advances into the unknown than will a paratrooper who has no base...[although some people argue that] the sensitive man cannot survive in the hard modern world...But the future, [Canon Raven] has said, lies not with the predatory and the immune but with the sensitive who live dangerously [defy the world of denial]. There is a threefold choice for the free man...He may grasp for himself what he can get and trample the needs and feelings of others beneath his feet: or he may try to withdraw from the world to a monastery...: or he may “take up arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing end them”...[and so] There remains the sensitive, on one proviso: he must be sensitive and tough [to solve the human condition and ‘save**



**the world** requires sufficient sensitivity/innocence to access the truth but also sufficient toughness to stand up to, defy, and ultimately overthrow our artificial world of denial of our corrupted human condition]. **He must combine tenderness and awareness with fortitude, perseverance, and courage.** **The sensitivity is necessary because without it there is no life of the mind, no growing consciousness, no living conscience;** nor is there any real communication one with another. It is necessary also if we accept **Father Teilhard's [Teilhard de Chardin] extension of the idea of evolution as illuminating the end of life. Only by a growth of sensitivity can man progress from the alpha of original chaos to the omega of God's purpose for him** [only through denial-free innocence can the reconciling biological understanding of the human condition be found]...**But sensitivity is not enough. Without toughness it may be only a thin skin...**[only from] **an inner core of strength** are [you] **enabled to fight back...**Can such men be? **Of course they can: and they are the leaders whom others will follow. In the world of books there are, for me, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, or Laurens van der Post'** (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.28-36). [To illustrate Sir James's point about the need for both innocence and toughness, the Bushmen of the Kalahari, that DNA studies have shown to be the most ancient race of humans alive in the world today, were all somewhat like Christ in their relative innocence. The English explorer and philosopher Bruce Chatwin once acknowledged this truth that **'the First man was also Christ'** when he wrote that **'There is no contradiction between the Theory of Evolution and belief in God and His Son on earth. If Christ were the perfect instinctual specimen—and we have every reason to believe He was—He must be the Son of God. By the same token the First man was also Christ'** (*What Am I Doing Here*, 1989, p.65 of 367). Being Christ-like they had no need of Christianity, as Sir Laurens van der Post recorded: **'The pastor, Dominee Ferdie Weich, though much loved by the Bushmen, could report no permanent conversion to Christ in 21 years'** (*Testament to the Bushmen*, 1984, text accompanying photograph 91). However the Bushmen were not a race sufficiently toughened from thousands of years of encounter with the horror of the extremely upset state of the human condition to take on the world of denial—as was illustrated by Sir Laurens when he recorded the Bushman's inability to cope with being goaled: **'You know I once saw a little Bushman imprisoned in one of our goals because he killed a giant bustard which according to the police, was a crime...he was dying because he couldn't bear being shut up and having his freedom of movement stopped...Physically the doctor couldn't find anything wrong with him but he died none the less!'** (*The Lost World of the Kalahari*, 1958, p.236 of 253).]

The above mention of the writings of Sir Laurens van der Post warrants the inclusion here of Sir Lauren's response to Jeremy Griffith's work. On 20 May 1988 Sir Laurens wrote to Jeremy saying: **'Could you please send me an extra copy of your book [Free: The End of The Human Condition]? Yours to me is already out on loan because it was so appreciated, and I shall give it to my publishers to read and see whether they are as interested as we are.'** On 15 August 1989 Sir Laurens wrote to Tim Macartney-Snape saying: **'If I do not do more to help Jeremy Griffith it is simply that the weight and amount of my responsibilities prevent me, short of self-destruction.'** On 6 May 1993, three and half years before his death, Sir Laurens wrote to Jeremy saying: **'I would hope you will always know how we value the examples you set and the work you are doing in Australia.'**

The mention of Teilhard de Chardin and his idea of a final coming together of our split selves—reconciliation of the human condition—into an **'omega'** point is also highly relevant. In his 1978 autobiography *Richly Rewarding*, Sir James Darling makes another reference to de Chardin saying: **'I...took them [the GGS students] myself for English...In spite of vastly increased numbers during the thirty-two years of my headmastership I continued this practice...We tried to...**

read together one profound work, which became a basis for general discussion. Of all the books selected it has always interested me that the most successful were Livingston's selections from Plato, Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man* and, of all things, Shelley's *Defence of Poetry*' (pp.129-130). Teilhard de Chardin is one of the most quoted authors in Jeremy Griffith's writings (the only authors in Jeremy Griffith's library that he has sought copies of all their publications are van der Post, de Chardin, de Saint-Exupéry, Koestler, R.D. Laing, Nietzsche and Rousseau), and de Chardin is also the life long inspiration of the late John Morton, New Zealand's former Emeritus Professor of Biology from Auckland University and leading theologian. As John Morton said in his 1984 book *Redeeming Creation*, 'My [holistic, teleological] model of the Evolving Creation owes most to the French Catholic theologian and palaeontologist Teilhard de Chardin' (p.11). In his review of Jeremy Griffith's book *Beyond The Human Condition*, Professor Morton wrote, 'I believe it foresees the same vista as Teilhard de Chardin did in his more orthodox terms, which is in fact the consummation promised for humanity set free, in the Christian Gospel...Jeremy Griffith would equate the Noosphere—our present state of cosmic "upset"—with the consciousness of "sin" and our disabling sense of guilt. To confront "sin" with a directness that Teilhard was not to bring to bear, is certainly theologically necessary today, even if it carries theological risks.'

For daring to be honest about the human condition, in particular to seek to throw light on the biological origins of sin and by so doing demystify religious concepts, as the work of Jeremy Griffith does, de Chardin was also persecuted. To quote from Sir Julian Huxley's Introduction to the 1959 English translation of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man*: 'Some of the ideas which he [de Chardin] had expressed in his lectures about original sin, and its relation to evolution, were regarded as unorthodox by his religious superiors, and he was forbidden to continue teaching. [His ideas were described as] "dangerous thoughts"...[and] he never succeeded in obtaining permission to publish any of his controversial or major works. This caused him much distress, for he was conscious of a prophetic mission: but he faithfully observed his vow of obedience...The wide range of his conscious vision made him impatient of over-specialisation, and of the timidity which refuses to pass from detailed study to broad synthesis...he was particularly impatient of what he felt as the narrowness of those anthropologists who limited themselves to the study of physical structure and the details of primitive social life. He wanted to deal with the entire human phenomenon, as a transcendence of biological by psychosocial evolution...he was enjoined by his superiors not to write any more on philosophical subjects: and in 1948 he was forbidden to put forward his candidature for Professorship in College de France...his application for permission to publish *Le Groupe Zoologique Humain*...was refused in Rome...He was prevailed on to leave his manuscripts to a friend. They therefore could be published after his death, since permission to publish is only required for the work of a living writer' (*Le Phénomène Humain*, written 1938, published 1955, published in English as *The Phenomenon of Man*, 1959, pp.23–25).

From Sir James's address to the Melbourne University Literature Club in July 1933: 'At every time when there has been great activity and great originality, there has been opposition and tenacity from the old. Those who have grown up in another age, particularly in an age which seemed to them settled and secure, are terribly afraid of newness of life; quite honestly, and quite wisely, they cling to what is slipping from them, they resent new style in poetry, modern music, modern art, modern architecture, modern plays, modern furniture. It was not so when they were young; it offends the canons of taste which they have accepted and by which they judge, and they cannot adapt themselves to the new life. They are

wrong, of course...to the individual artist the opposition is often cruel, sometimes fatal. That is what older people should remember in their criticism, for theirs is the power, usually not indeed to stop the Spring from coming, but at least to trample and to kill the first few flowers of the year. The artist must be supported while he finds his strength, and the power of patronage remains very largely with the old. But, on the other hand, the young should try to understand the tragedy for the old of living in a Renaissance. It is and must be a tragedy to remain no longer in the fabric which you have so laboriously built for yourself. The mind of most men is not adaptable after a certain age [which means new ideas have to be taken up by the young] and the onrush of a Renaissance is very rapid' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.53).

From Sir James's Sermon at Christ Church, Geelong on 23 November 1941: 'Under the strain of danger and persecution, the society was tested like gold tried in the fire. Inside the fellowship we can imagine that the bonds of fellowship were very strong and the pride in membership high. Such a fellowship, though only the brave would join it, would naturally attract the best, but, even so, only if its members were convinced themselves and anxious to convince others that they had found in the new religion [Darling is using for his illustration the early Christian Church] a pearl of great price' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.117).

'The time is past for help which is only a Band-Aid. It is time for radical thinking and for a solution on the grand scale' (*Reflections for The Age*, p.145).

From Sir James's renowned 1950 GGS Speech Day address, 'We are not now that strength which in old days moved Heaven and Earth...but something ere the end, some work of noble note may yet be done' (From Weston Bate's *Light Blue Down Under*, p.219).

From Sir James's address to the Melbourne University Literature Club in July 1933: 'The infinite abyss of immeasurable space, the awful vastness of the Universe is becoming intelligible to the minds of the scientists, and soon its meaning will shed light upon our own more ordinary thought' (*The Education of a Civilized Man*, p.59).

Note again the contrast between the appreciation Sir James would have had of our work at the WTM and the treatment of us by the current ABC.

## **The Golden Thread:** **From Plato to Kurt Hahn to Sir James Darling to** **Sir Laurens van der Post—and to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin** **and Professor John Morton**

The following is a sequence of extracts from a 1987 book titled *Charles* by Penny Junor about HRH Prince Charles. The sequence serves to show the fragile (in terms of the very few denial-free, prophetic thinkers who have carried it forward) yet strong (in terms of the clarity and certainty of its vision) golden thread of initiative that goes all the way back to Plato to bring liberating understanding to the underlying problem in all human affairs of the human condition.

**‘Gordonstoun’s [Gordonstoun is a school on the north-east coast of Scotland that HRH Prince Charles attended for part of his education] uniqueness arose partly from...its founder, Dr Kurt Hahn. He was a German whose unconventional ideas about education had been prompted by his country’s defeat in the First World War...As a young man he had suffered a long period of illness, and while convalescing had read Plato’s *Republic* [written approximately 360 BC]. Inspired by the ideals he discovered there, he had conceived the idea of starting an entirely new sort of school, broadly based on the Platonic view that “any nation is a slovenly guardian of its own interests if it does not do all it can to make the individual citizen discover his own powers” [p.35] ...It was designed to train citizens who would not shrink from leadership and who could, if called upon, make independent decisions, put the right moral action before expediency and the common cause before personal ambition [p.35] ...He wanted to make the tough compassionate and the timid enterprising to “find a substitute for war” as a means of achieving this. In *Plato’s Republic* Socrates asserts that his citizens, if they are to be guardians of the state, must be “spirited, swift and strong” and yet, at the same time, gentle and swayed by “beauty and truth”. “Our youth should dwell in the land of health, amid fair sights and sounds; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, will meet the sense like a breeze, and insensibly draw the soul even in childhood into harmony with the beauty of reason” [p.36] ...Hahn was convinced that competition brought out the very worst in children [p.37].**

Note: In *The Republic* Plato said that the object of education should be to cultivate ‘philosopher guardians’ or ‘philosopher rulers’, who he described as ‘the true philosophers, those whose passion is to see the truth’ (Plato *The Republic*, tr. H.D.P. Lee, 1955, p.238 of 405). He explained, ‘But suppose...that such natures were cut loose, when they were still children, from the dead weight of worldliness, fastened on them by sensual indulgences like gluttony, which distorts their minds’ vision to lower things, and suppose that when so freed [during their upbringing] they were turned towards the truth [during their education], then the same faculty in them would have as keen a vision of truth as it has of the objects on which it is at present turned’ (p.284). He argued, ‘isn’t it obvious whether it’s better for a blind man or a clear-sighted one to keep an eye on anything’ (p.244), adding that, ‘If you get, in public affairs, men who are so morally impoverished that they have nothing they can contribute themselves, but who hope to snatch some compensation for their own inadequacy from a political career, there can never be good government. They start fighting for power...[whereas those who pursue a life] of true philosophy which looks down on political power...[should be] the only men to get power...men who do not love it [who are well-nurtured with unconditional love in their upbringing and encouraged to be enterprising in their education and who are thus not insecure and thus egocentric, excessively in need of reinforcement]...rulers [who] come to their duties with least enthusiasm’ (p.286).

**Gordonstoun may have provided the mould that made the Prince of Wales into the man he is today, but it was the six months in Australia that cemented it...Australian Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, was therefore consulted as to which school would be most suitable...His destination was Timbertop, an annexe to the prestigious Melbourne public school [called “private” schools in Australia], Geelong Church of England Grammar School, where boys were sent for a year of character building and self-reliance in the Australian bush [p.53] ...Geelong [Grammar School]...was not unlike Gordonstoun. A previous headmaster, Dr Darling [whose initiative Timbertop was] had been a disciple of Kurt Hahn...[p.54].**

In his year at Timbertop in 1961 Jeremy Griffith was runner-up for 'best boy of the year' to Jeremy Madin (who became the headmaster of Cranbrook School in Sydney), won 'The Natural History Prize' and all the cross-country endurance races except the marathon where he was beaten by the renowned documentary film maker, the late John Darling, Sir James's son.

Early in 1977 the Prince of Wales treated himself to a return trip to Kenya for a second safari holiday... it was a trip which was to have an important influence on his life. One of the members of the select party... was...Sir Laurens van der Post [who] was a remarkable companion to have in any setting, but in the bushveld of Africa he was in his element...Every evening when the party made camp—on the banks of a river, maybe, with the sun setting deep into a dramatic crimson backcloth—they would settle down by the campfire, while the camels hobbled about them, and listen spellbound to the wise thoughts on man and nature that spilled forth from the elderly man. [p.110-111] ...Even the most hardened and cynical of critics, Auberon Waugh, has said that there is no one he would more like to spend five hours talking to than Laurens van der Post. But the writer's popularity is not universal, and has waxed and waned over the years: he has been hailed as both a prophet and a charlatan. Few people who have had the experience of hearing him at first hand, however, have failed to be impressed, and many highranking politicians and world leaders count themselves among his friends and admirers. Prince Charles was the latest recruit, and a friendship was formed in those days that has endured and strengthened with the years [p.112] ...Sir Laurens van der Post... was this man more than any other who seemed to know so many of the answers to life's mysteries [p.148]'.

Note: Sir Laurens van der Post's books about humanity's lost state of innocence helped Jeremy Griffith to hold onto the truth of the existence of another true world, and he is the author most often quoted in his books. Sir Laurens was also so important a person to HRH The Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, that he was chosen to be godfather to Prince Charles's eldest son and the future king, Prince William, and there is 'A bronze bust of van der Post...in Prince Charles' garden at Highgrove' ('Post, Sir Laurens Jan van der (1906-1996)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Christopher Booker, 2004). A former British Prime Minister, Baroness Thatcher, no less, once described Sir Laurens as 'the most perfect man I have ever met' (mentioned in J.D.F. Jones interview on *Late Night Live*, ABC Radio, 25 Feb. 2002). And, as mentioned in the quote collection above, Sir James said, when referring to the 'leaders whom others will follow', that 'In the world of books there are, for me, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, or Laurens van der Post'. As mentioned amongst the Darling quotes, Sir Laurens wrote to Jeremy about his first book, *Free: The End Of The Human Condition*, asking, 'Could you please send me an extra copy of your book. Yours to me is already out on loan because it was so appreciated.' For daring to be honest about the human condition Sir Laurens was also viciously persecuted, an event that is documented by Jeremy Griffith in his book *A Species In Denial* on pages 251 to 256 (see <[<www.humancondition.com/asid-the-extent-of-humans-fear-of-the-human-condition\\*>](http://www.humancondition.com/asid-the-extent-of-humans-fear-of-the-human-condition*)). Like Sir James, Sir Laurens was recognised as an exceptional denial-free, penetrating, honest, prophetic thinker; in his full-page obituary in London's *The Times* he was described as 'a prophet out of Africa' (20 Dec 1996). (View van der Post's obituary that was reproduced in *The Australian* at <[<www.humancondition.com/vanderpost-obituary\\*>](http://www.humancondition.com/vanderpost-obituary*).)

The online version of Jeremy Griffith's second book *Beyond The Human Condition* has these dedications:

**'This book is dedicated to the vision of Sir Laurens van der Post: "...for I had a private hope of the utmost importance to me. The Bushman's physical shape combined those of a child and a man: I surmised that examination of his inner life might reveal a pattern which reconciled the spiritual opposites in the human being and made him whole...it might start the first movement towards a reconciliation..."** Laurens van der Post, *The Heart of the Hunter*, 1961

And that of Sir James Darling who acknowledged that: **"...the future lies not with the predatory and the immune but with the sensitive who live dangerously...the truly sensitive mind is both susceptible and penetrating: it is open to new ideas, and it seeks truth at the bottom of the well. It is the development of this sort of mind which it should be the object of the educational process to cultivate."** James Darling, *The Education of a Civilized Man*, 1962

And that of Dr Louis Leakey who foresaw: **"...that knowledge of the past would help us to understand and possibly control the future."** Mentioned by Dr Mary Leakey in her book *Disclosing the Past*, 1984<sup>7</sup>

Incidentally, the dedication in Jeremy Griffith's first book, *Free: The End Of The Human Condition*, reads, **'To my father and from my mother'**. Jeremy is acknowledging that any ability he has to look into the human condition and thus write his book about the human condition comes **'from'**, is directly due to, the nurturing he received from his mother. Further, since Jeremy argues in his books that it has been men's role to take on the upsetting task of overthrowing ignorance about our species' corrupted condition, the book is written for or **'to'**, his father.

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With regard to Plato, it is relevant to note that one of the greatest philosophers of the 20th century, Alfred North Whitehead, said that the history of philosophy is nothing but **'a series of footnotes to Plato'** (*Process and Reality*, p.39). Since the most highly regarded of Plato's works is *The Republic* and the centrepiece of *The Republic* is the allegory of the cave, then it follows that the cave allegory must contain the most penetrating of insights into our human condition. In fact Plato begins his allegory of the cave with the words, **'I want you to go on to picture the enlightenment or ignorance of our human condition somewhat as follows'** (p.278).

In his book *A Species In Denial*, Jeremy Griffith includes a chapter titled 'Deciphering Plato's Cave Allegory' that explains the allegory as a perfectly accurate description of how humans have had to live in a state of almost total denial of their human condition. The allegory describes humans as being imprisoned in a dark cave where they are blocked from seeing the world truthfully and thus clearly. To quote the *Encarta Encyclopedia* summary of Plato's cave allegory: **'The myth of the cave describes individuals chained deep within the recesses of a cave. Bound so that vision is restricted, they cannot see one another. The only thing visible is the wall of the cave upon which appear shadows cast by models or statues of animals and objects that are passed before a brightly burning fire [that bars escape from the cave]. Breaking free, one of the individuals escapes from the cave into the light of day. With the aid of the sun, that person sees for the first time the real world and returns to the cave with the message that the only things they have seen heretofore are shadows and appearances and that the real world awaits them if they are willing to struggle free of their bonds. The shadowy environment of the cave symbolizes for Plato the physical world of appearances.'**

Escape into the sun-filled setting outside the cave symbolizes the transition to the real world, the world of full and perfect being, the world of Forms, which is the proper object of knowledge.' In *The Republic*, Plato explains that **'the light of the fire in the [cave] prison corresponds to the power of the sun'** (p.282), and that the sun represents **'the absolute form of Good'** (p.282) which in turn represents the **'universal, self-sufficient first principle'** (p.277), namely the integrative, cooperative, Godly ideals of life that so condemn our less-than-ideal human condition and cause us to have to live in a dark cave-like state of denial.

In terms of our court case against persecution, Plato accurately describes what happens when understanding of the human condition is found and the 'cave prisoners' are invited to 'struggle free of their bonds'. Plato said, **'if he [the cave prisoner] were made to look directly at the light of the fire, it would hurt his eyes and he would turn back and take refuge in the things which he could see, which he would think really far clearer than the things being shown him. And if he [the cave prisoner] were forcibly dragged up the steep and rocky ascent [out of the cave] and not let go till he had been dragged out into the sunlight, the process would be a painful one, to which he would much object, and when he emerged into the light his eyes would be so overwhelmed by the brightness of it that he wouldn't be able to see a single one of the things he was now told were real [what we in the WTM refer to as "the deaf effect" response to our work]'** — **'they would say that his visit to the upper world had ruined his sight [they would say he is a mad person], and that the ascent was not worth even attempting [The main campaigner against our work, Reverend Dr David Millikan said during the making of his *Four Corners* program, "you realise you're attempting the impossible, you will be fighting to have these ideas accepted right down to the last person on the planet"'. One of the other leading campaigners against our work, Charles Belfield, father of WTM member Sam Belfield, has similarly said, "you are dealing with the personal unspeakable, shaking the black box inside people, and you can't succeed"'. And if anyone tried to release them and lead them up, they would kill him if they could lay hands on him [the attempted assassination of the WTM by the ABC]'** (p.280). (To read more about the persecution we have had to endure, see <[<www.humancondition.com/persecution\\*>](http://www.humancondition.com/persecution*)>.)

It can be seen how immensely important Plato—and Socrates, for he was Plato's educator—have been to the human journey to enlightenment. So, so much traces back to those two men. What a truly 'golden age' it was in Athens at the time of these men, a time of extraordinary freshness and with it clarity. Plato links to Kurt Hahn who links to Darling who links to van der Post, and also to de Chardin (referred to earlier in one of Darling's quotes) who links to John Morton, a strong but always tenuous golden thread of initiative through history to bring liberating understanding to the human condition.

And it was almost as if these six men were only talking to each other, that there was no other real dialogue going on on Earth, so uniformly denial-free and profound has been their thinking, and so amazingly interdependent and interconnected back and forth are they. Indeed that has been the case, because the rest of humanity *has* been hiding deep in the 'cave' of alienated denial, hiding from the scorching glare of **'the absolute form of Good'** of the integrative, cooperative, Godly ideals of life. And these are the holistic, teleological, deeper, penetrating, seekers-of-**'Truth-with-a-capital-T'** (to quote Darling) that Jeremy Griffith has taken, and, in the case of three of them, been given, appreciative peer review from.

END

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