

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

In the Presence of God

Have you ever heard anyone instructing a tennis player to keep his “eyes on the ball”? An interesting thing happens when the player really concentrates: The ball appears to slow down. That which he is concentrating on (the ball) seems to allow him more time to do that which he isn't concentrating on (his racket placement), which appears to speed up.

The same type of phenomena occurs when we are driving to someplace we've never been: We concentrate on the road and it seems to take us forever to get there; but, once we're familiar with the route, our minds are free to concentrate on something else and we find ourselves at our destination in “no time at all.”

Road-concentration slows down our travel time in the same way that ball-concentration slows down the ball. But during those times when these events occur, there are actually two things happening simultaneously (not just one): a slowing down of that which is being concentrated on AND a speeding up of something else. Not unlike the way God sees things, for

“...to the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.” [2 Peter 3:8]

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But, while we are experiencing this shift in our time-sense, we seem unable to really notice it; because to analyze the process while it's going on is enough to relax our concentration to such a degree that the moment (and its eternity-ness) is lost.

It's like suddenly realizing that six stop lights have gone by, unnoticed, on our way to work in the morning; we notice it after the fact. Or, like looking at the face of God and, at the same time, knowing that's what's happening. It can't be done. The very process knocks one "out of sync," as it were. Perhaps that's why the First Person Singular of the verb "to be" is simply

"I AM"; [Exodus 3:14]

for, during that "infinity" that's experienced in tennis...or driving the car...or in any event that allows us the opportunity to experience "time" as God sees it, we can't analyze or judge, or the moment is lost.

But, like the little children whose angels

"...always behold the face" [Matt. 18:10]

of God, in His presence, we must simple... "be."

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