

THE STEWARDSHIP PAPERS

A Light Shining in the Darkness

The closest brilliant star is Alpha Centauri, some $4 \frac{1}{3}$ light-years away (which means that light, traveling at 186,272 miles per second, takes $4 \frac{1}{3}$ years to get here).

If that star were to explode, today, we wouldn't see it for another $4 \frac{1}{3}$ years (because that's how long the light from that explosion would take to get here)...or, to put it another way, when we do see that explosion, we will be looking at something that occurred prior to that time (that is, the star's "past").

The same holds true for our own sun. Since light isn't instantaneous, it takes time (though not as long as from Alpha Centauri) to get from the sun to the earth...and, therefore, we are not seeing the sun as it "is," but as it "was."

In fact, whatever we see with our eyes is visible because light has traveled to us from somewhere (even reflected light from our nearby surroundings), and that light takes time to get to us...albeit, in some cases, a very small amount of time. Consequently, no matter what we look at, our eyes can only perceive what "was"...and not what "is."

So, where is "now" perceived?

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It would seem that this instant of time, which is neither the past nor the future, can only be glimpsed when there is “no distance” between ourselves and that which we are observing. In other words, “now” can only be experienced from “within”...and it would appear that the only way we can really see what “is” is to look at something other than with our eyes.

Jesus said to

“love thy neighbor as thyself” [Mark 12:31]

(that is, “no distance” between ourselves and another), and “to love” implies seeing not only with the mind but with the heart...and perceiving the “light from the other” as a “light from within”; for

“he who love his brother abides in the light” [1 John 2:10]

and

“Behold, now is the acceptable time”; [2 Cor. 6:2]

for

“God is the light and in Him is no darkness at all.” [1 John 1:5]

[Matt. 5:14, 15; Matt. 13:13-15; 1 John 1:5-7; 1 John 2:7-11]

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