Perception is Reality

“Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.” – Albert Einstein

Take a minute to scan your surroundings. Are you in a familiar place or somewhere new? Stop reading this (or listening), and look around you. Pick out an object, maybe something you hadn’t noticed before, and focus your attention on it. If you really focus, it’ll get brighter and more “real” than it was when it was just an unnoticed piece of the background noise of your life. Now, try to view your surroundings from the point of view of the object. Some people can do this with no effort, and for others, it takes some concentration. Depending on how adept you are at focusing your concentration, you may notice a slight shift in your perception—a weird jump in reality, where you are suddenly viewing the world from a different perspective.

In robotics, unless a robot is endowed with sensors, it is just what Dr. Schwartz calls “a dumb machine.” In order to make Autonomous Mobile Intelligent Agents we must teach the would-be roboticist to add sensors, the more the better and to react intelligently to the newly acquired sensory input. We must also teach them to interpret the sensory data from the point of view the object otherwise their intelligent collection of hardware will not progress into an autonomous robot worthy of an A. In the 1990’s we used to count the number and type of sensors in a robot to determine whether or not the project had met the minimum requirements for a passing grade. But today with the advent of Bluetooth, XBee, and Wi-Fi an intelligent agent need not have any sensors on board and instead if it can communicate with a device that does have sensory capability that is fast enough to correctly alter the “perception” of the agent, the sensor-empty device can operate as an autonomous agent. For example, if we place a camera in the ceiling of this roof, and attach it to a full fledged computer that does image analysis and the rate of 30 frames per second or better, and communicate motor commands to a sensorless robot at the speed of light (via Wi-Fi, XBee, or Bluetooth), the robot will indeed act intelligently. In fact, it can outright look super intelligent as compared to the autonomous agents we have designed in the last 15 years! The MIL MILy robots (see http://www.mil.ufl.edu/publications/fcrar08/MILyBots_FCRAR_08.pdf) are precisely a swarm (group of cooperating agents) that would dance salsa by following the leader and also play soccer!

Even if you are not able to understand fully my diatribe on robotics in the previous paragraph, you would agree that the advent of a cell phone that can also use Wi-Fi (like the Android and iPhone) and or a tablet that can use Wi-Fi (like the iPad) makes an individual way more productive and aware of the world surrounding us. For example, with the touch of a button we can find out the current weather, the current stock market value of a given stock (and issue a sell/buy order), and with the same cell phone we could call our brother in Montana, we can e-mail or text the video we just took of our puppy doing its first flip. Who, among us, is ready to return to the day of the rotary phone or even the bulky cell phone of five years ago? Everybody needs a smartphone!

The Reality of the Spirit

Let us, for a moment consider the Spiritual Realm. Scripture tells us that mortal man is composed of body, soul and spirit: “May the God of shalom make you completely holy - may your entire spirit, soul and body be kept blameless for the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah” 1 Thes. 5:23. The soul of man is comprised of one’s mind, will and emotions. The things that we can perceive with our inherent human sensors of sight, sound, taste, feel, and smell (as well as pressure, temperature, velocity and acceleration, to name a few) are physical things and to a lesser extent, soulish realm things (for example people can associate mood changes with the weather or the outside temperature). But when it comes to the spirit of man, we were not given an inherent set of “spirit sensors.” But when we become born-again (John 3:3,6; 1 Peter 1:3, 23) the Holy Spirit unites with our spirit and gives us witness that we are indeed Children of God (Romans 8:16). It is our spirit that is born again (not our soul and not our body), and it is in this spiritual realm that we can experience the Holy Spirit of God. God is spirit, and those that want to worship him must do so in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). Without much convincing, we all agree that there is another “reality” which is not physical and which is not experienced via our physical sensory...
system of sight, sound, taste, feel and smell. Yet Scripture tell us that we can “Taste and See that the Lord He is good.” (Ps. 34:8). But how? We do not possess a spirit sight or taste sensor, do we?

_Yeshua_ said to his friends: “…having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear?” (Mark 8:18) What was it they did not see with their physical eyes nor hear with their ears? We all know the answer – they did not perceive the spiritual truths and actions that were happening in their very presence with spiritual eyes and ears. How do we know we are supposed to have spiritual eyes and ears? Because He said so. Period. Because the Word of God tell us. Evidently as _Yeshua_ was speaking with them they were being introduced to a whole new sensory system, but one that is operating in the spiritual realm, not the physical realm. This sensory system is activated when the Holy Spirit unites with our spirit, and since we are told that the Holy Spirit makes abode in our being and that we are Temples of the Holy Spirit, it is operating even if we are not “aware” of it. We cannot see or hear or feel or taste or smell Wi-Fi, but it is here in this room! We have an AT&T wireless unit and if we get the right sensor (e.g., a computer or smartphone) and if we type in the correct password, then presto!, we can experience Wi-Fi. I can tell you we have Wi-Fi, I can show you the modem, you can see it and touch it, and you can certainly see that we pay for it with real dollars. But unless you “connect” to it with your device, you cannot experience it nor you can take advantage of it. You can have faith that I am telling you the truth about or Wi-Fi, but without it working for you, it is as if we did not have it at all – it is useless to you.

How do we activate our spiritual Wi-Fi? Spiritual faith comes hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Since we are born-again we have the Spirit of God in union with our spirit and they are able to respond to faith. Thus, we activate our spiritual sensors by acting on this faith (or trust, as it referred to in the CJB). In other words, when we read, study or become aware of what God’s Word says and when we act on the circumstance based on the reality that God’s Word says, we activate our spiritual Wi-Fi, we turn on our smartphone, and we become intelligent, mobile spiritual agents.

This is so simple it is deep and if you would, a Revelation we must have and live by. The reality of the spirit realm is not perceived by physical things or by physical sensors. If we are born again, we ARE the children of God. But I do not feel like a child of God. Well who are we to believe: our physical sensors, our mind or our spirit? We believe our spirit when after being born again of the Spirit, we read God’s Word, which gives us faith/trust, and then when we act on that faith/trust we can truly say indeed, I am a child of God.

This principle applies to everything in the kingdom of God. This is the very kingdom that _Yeshua_ said was at hand. In the kingdom of God, which you and I are members of, God said, and it is so. It is just like Genesis 1. The creative Word of God, when applied (some would say when believed, or when trusted upon) is available for anyone in the kingdom, that is for you and for me. God said we are more than conquerors, but I feel defeated. Whom will you believe, your soul (mind, will and emotions) or God’s Word? The physical reality is that we are discouraged; the spiritual reality is that we are seated in heavenly places with _Yeshua_ who is seated at the Right Hand of the Father. The physical reality is that I may be poor and feel destitute, but the spiritual reality is that My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in glory! I may have a disease in my body and according to the doctors I may be in trouble. But the spiritual reality is that “By His stripes, I was healed!”

Perception is reality. Thus, we need to turn on our spiritual sensors so we can perceive the reality of how much God loves us and how much power Yeshua gave us (resurrection power), and how many great things we are to do in His Kingdom. Who are you going to believe? Your mind, your friends, CNN, your doctor or the Word? I trust you can join me and say: “Let God be true and everyone and everything else a liar!” God said it and it settles it. Amen! Shabbat Shalom.