

1.2 The Vastness of the Universe!



**Barbershop
Leatherwood Dahlias
Maggie Valley/Waynesville, North Carolina**

Psalm 19: 1

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”

The Vastness of the Universe!

Consider the Vastness of the Universe!! Have you ever considered the speed of light? It's pretty fast you know — about 186,000 miles per second. Since the distance around the earth is about 25,000 miles, at this speed a "particle" of light can zip around the earth about 7 or 8 times in just 1 second. That's a huge distance in a short time! Yet our galaxy is so vast, so spread out, that we measure the distances to stars within our galaxy in light-years, where a light-year is the distance that light can travel in one year.

It so happens that the distance from the earth to one of our brightest stars, the not-too-distant star Betelgeuse (pronounced Beetle-juice), is approximately 520 light-years. Betelgeuse is the bright orange-red star in the winter constellation Orion. 520 light-years is a far-piece! Consider this: the light that left this star at the time that Martin Luther posted his 95 theses to the chapel door at Wittenberg beginning the Protestant Reformation on October 31, 1517, has not yet reached the earth. In fact this light will not reach the earth for many more years, until about the year 2037. That's probably not even in my lifetime. If you are a young person, it might get here in your lifetime. But don't blink, or you'll miss it!!

Afterthought: According to Seminole State's Laurent Pellerin, our Milky Way Galaxy is approximately 100,000 light-years in diameter. The farthest, and therefore oldest, object visible to the unaided eye is the Andromeda Galaxy is 2.75 million light-years (new updated distance.) And our Local Group of galaxies is about 6 million light-years in diameter. The farthest objects ever viewed were photographed by the Hubble Space Telescope and are thought to be about 12.5 billion light-years away! Is it possible to comprehend the vastness of this? . . . or to imagine what lies beyond!!

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

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