*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters; He restores my soul. He leads me in the path of righteousness for His name’s sake.* *Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.* Psalm 23

*“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for Him, and the sheep hear His voice. He calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. When He has brought out all His own, He goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow Him because they know His voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.”* *Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them.* John 10:1-10

*A husband and wife were involved in a petty argument, both of them unwilling to admit they might be in error.*

*"I'll admit I'm wrong," the wife told her husband in a conciliatory attempt, "if you'll admit I'm right."*

*He agreed and, like a gentleman, insisted she go first.*

*"I'm wrong:" she said.*

*With a twinkle in his eye, he responded: "You're right!"*

Where is God?

1. *“God is dead,”* said an existentialist, 19th century German philosopher, Fredrich Nietzsche. Interestingly enough, although he was an atheist, and did not believe in God, his statement actually said that the society’s idea of God has died. In his essay *“The Twilight of the Idols”* he wrote: *“When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one’s feet. This morality is by no means self-evident… Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole.”* His idea was not exactly a new one, it preceded Nietzsche, but ever since him the idea of the *“dead God”* has been propagated even by the Christian and Jewish theologians of the 50’s and 60’s. Today, more and more people seem to accept this idea also and try to eliminate God from our life. We clearly see this in the political, social, judicial, and even cultural and often religious realities. The hostility toward Christianity is evident in daily life on every level of the modern society.

2. In light of the modern American society’s views how interestingly the words of one of the “Founding Fathers” of this nation Benjamin Franklin sound. At the age of 81, while addressing the Constitutional Convention he said: *We have been assured in the Sacred Writings, that “except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” I firmly believe this;* *and I also believe that without this concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.* When we see the modern world, including our own country, we must wonder what is happening. What causes all these unusual events that seem to plague the 21st Century? Wars, diseases, societal anxiety, depression, and frustrations of many people, not to mention hatred, divisiveness on social and political levels, anger, crime, etc., the list never ends. Granted, we have always had some of these but not to the degree we see it today. Many people may ask: *”Where is God in all of this?”* – but this is not an entirely new question. For example, the Psalm 88:14 says: *“O Lord, why do You cast me off? Why do You hide Your face from me?”* This is however not God who rejects us, it is us, the people, who reject Him. Psalm 42:3 says: *“My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually: “Where is your God?”* We today may ask this question, and some do, but what David writes in his 23rd Psalm answers this question plainly: *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.”* God is with us always, He never abandons us, what we need is faith and acceptance of His divine presence, protection, and control.

3. Our God is everywhere we just need to see Him, but to do so, we must want to see Him, contrary to what the modern society with all its ideologies does. Modern society claims to be too sophisticated to accept God. I however believe that anyone, who wants to, will see God around, in all His creation. Many scientist today begin to realize that this Universe is not controlled by some spontaneous evolutionary process. There is too much order in the Universe. They might not know who is in control, but they see the pattern. We on the other hand know who is that Creator, and we know this because we have encountered Him in our lives. Werner von Braun, the NASA engineer, known as a *“father of space travel”* said: *“universe, revealed through scientific inquiry is the living witness that God has indeed been at work.”*

4. Many a time I said that anyone who witnessed a birth of a child and was unable to see God in this marvelous act of life must be indeed blind. Anyone who ever gardened must marvel on the mystery of a new life coming out of the seed which very often is so small but yet carrying enough strength to grow into a sizeable plant. God is indeed present in every tree that grows around us, He is in the beauty of the sunset, He is in the wonder of the northern lights. He is ever present in the beauty of and in the order of His creation. But we must want to see Him in all of these. We need to see Him in all of these, otherwise we are like the proverbial blind man never able to understand colors. From the beginning of the creation people worshipped God because they saw Him in His creation, but for a long time they did not really know Him until He revealed Himself. Today, because of Jesus Christ, we know our God, but for this we need to accept Him through our faith. Those who do not, do not want to know Him because they prefer not to be bound by any moral, ethical, or principled conduct.

5. Notwithstanding what the modern society may believe, God is present in the moral and ethical order. He established His principles, first while teaching Adam and Eve, then by offering the Ten Commandments to Moses and finally by sending His Son, Jesus to this world. Unfortunately, humanity often tries to establish new rules to govern God’s order and in result of these actions we witness misery, we see the destruction of the society and consequently we slide toward the fall of the humanity. A few years ago it was only a trend in the number of Hollywood movies with the vision of the world of the near future as the post-apocalyptic world where the humanity devolved to the most primitive society form, where the fist and the brute strength ruled, where the indifference and the surge for power were the most important values. There was no room for God and His order there. These movies might have been made as a warning about the degeneration and the danger of extinction of all the values hold dear by the civilized society, but more and more we see the world today where these primitive instincts take ahold of humanity’s actions. Once we replace God with the human visions and ideologies, the destruction of today’s civilization will certainly and surely follow. The modern world is on a fast track of achieving this.

6. The moral order as offered by God is best described in the story from the Great War, when a young soldier in the trenches asks his commander: *“Sir, where is God?”* Pointing to the *“no man’s land,”* the captain answers: *“There He is, son.”* As the young soldier looks he sees two medics under the enemy fire, picking up a wounded soldier groaning in pain. God is involved in every deed of compassion, in every measure of forgiveness, in every hospital service, in every proclamation of the Gospel, in every church that is concerned with preaching the Gospel, in every healing of the sick, in teaching the ignorant, in feeding the hungry, etc. God is there, involved in all these. God is present in every aspect of our life, and He sees what is happening to this world, yet He still patiently waits. People may ask: *“Where is God?”* He is in our lives, yours, and mine. God is in our soul. We find Him in the creation of the music, the poetry, the drama and in every other true form of the art we create. He is the One who touches us with love, forgiveness, self-sacrifice. For God indeed is the Life. Just like Jesus said: *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by me.”*

7. David experienced God in the vastness of Judea’s hills, mountains, and valleys. He saw God everywhere there. He acknowledge His presence with him and we too, through experiencing Jesus in our lives, acknowledge Him. Jesus was not just an accidental product of the *“by chance evolution,”* but He was sent to us by God. This world needs Him today more than ever. This world needs to hear and accept this basic message Jesus spoke to Nicodemus: *“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16) What we see in today’s world is the raise of crime and lack of punishment for it. We see young people without any direction and yet demanding and entitled. We live in the family-less society, the demand for the individual recognition, the lack of respect, the lack of honesty. We see the generation growing up without God and His guidance, because the parents not only lack the skills of teaching these guidance but relegated this role to the Godless, secular education system. So, here we are, the Church, those who know God. We know that God is in us. We know He is in the world He created. We know He is in Jesus Christ who offered Himself to the death on the cross so we may live. David concludes in his psalm: *“I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”* He knew what God in the end has in store for him and for us. He is with us here and now, and He will be with us forever in His house.