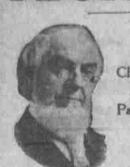
## PEOPLE'S



Sermon by CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Pastor Brooklyn Tabemacle.

Sunday, November 28 .- Pastor Rus-

sell of "Brooklyn Tabernacle" preached today from the above text. He said: There is a beauty and consistency in the Bible which many overlook, to their own confusion. Failing to "rightly divide the Word of Truth" (Il Timothy II, 15), failing to discriminate between the consecrated believers and nominal believers of the world, which the Bible everywhere recognizes, has led to this confusion. To the logically-minded thus confused, the Bible is an unreasonable Book, inconsistent with facts.

These matters are well illustrated in our text, which was addressed, not to all mankind, nor to merely nominal Christians-but to Christians; "in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ," as the introduction shows. This word in means something more than is generally appreciated. Note the Savior's words, "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." "I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you" (John xiv. 20, 23). The whole testimony of the Scriptures is that those who attain to this glorious oneness with the Father and with the Son are in all but a "little flock" and amongst them are "not many great, not many wise, not many learned." It is to this class alone that the Scriptures are addressed-though to some extent including a justified class supposedly approaching this sanctified condition. These may well be informed by the Apostle that they should "in everything give thanks," when in full harmony with the Divine will.

But note the confusion of attempting to apply these words to the world in What has the world to be thankful for-from its own standpoint? It knows not what God's future purposes are, which, therefore, cannot enter into its consideration. And without that knowledge of coming blessings life is often so little appreciated that seif-destruction is preferred. Undoubtedly the number of suicides would be far greater than it is, were it not for a certain fear or dread that the future might be more terrible than the present.

The average man, heathen and civilized, knows that his coming into the world was without his consent. He eats and drinks and sleeps and labors, because these are necessities. He has headaches and heartaches, and every other kind. Altogether his experience is "of few years and full of trouble." His chief pleasure is in hoping for and striving to attain pleasure. And when the "cup" of supposed happiness is in sorrows. Can such a man be thankful? especially if he has been taught the doctrine of the "dark ages" respecting the future-that when he into a Purgatory of centuries or torture indescribable, or, worse still, that his lot will be to suffer endlessly-unless he should be one of the saints. which he well knows he is not, and which we all know, as the Bible declares, are but "few." Surely to call upon such people for thankfulness to God would be an absurdity. And it is to the credit of the Scriptures that they are not thus absurd, and that our text is addressed, not to those who constitute the masses, but to the "little flock"-the saints.

### Groaning Creation's Hope.

Before proceeding to apply our text to the class to which it is addressed (the saints), we pause to consider the hope of the world in general, as set forth in the Scriptures. The knowledge of this hope is not granted to the world, but to the saints-that they might know, might appreciate, the gracions purposes of God toward mankind in general; and that they might understand also the Divine intention respecting their co-operation with God in the blessings he purposes to bring eventually to all the families of the earth.

The explanation of the sorrows of the world is given in the Bible; which tells us that sin lies at the door and that the mental, moral and physical blemishes which cause humanity such distress are incidental to the penalty pronounced against sin; namely, death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Because Father Adam when on trial representatively for his race sinued and came under sin's penalty, "Dying thou shalt die," therefore all his children sharing in his imperfections are likewise imperfect-slaners, as St. Paul explains (Romans v. 12). Thus, during sixty centuries, approximately twenty thousand millions of Adam's children have been "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and have come into the world condemned and dying. mentally, morally and physically,

Divine sympathy exercised toward this race of sinners provided a Savior. "who for the joy that was set before him' sacrificed his life-for the world and the ear of faith and the Divine (John III, 16), "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man." Then instead of dealing with the Lord's consecrated ones possess the world, instead of saving the world, instead of setting up the promised and your ears, for they hear." Not Kingdom to bless the world, the Sav- only so, but to the extent that anyfor did samething else, And this which he has been doing from the the grace of God he has responsibility. time of his death until now the Apos- To possess the knowledge of God and tie explains to us is "a mystery" (I to disdain it is to receive the grace of

### In Every Thing Give Thanks!

"In Every Thing Give Thanks, For This Is the Will of God Concerning You In Christ Jesus" (I Thessalonians

Corinthians xv. 51; Ephesians 1, 9; Romans xi. 25). "The mystery of God" the world does not understand, because God prefers to keep the matter a mystery from them. But "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will shew them his Covenant" (Psalm xxv. 14).

"The mystery" is, that God purposed that the blessing of the world should be accomplished by our Savior alone, but in association with a select class of saints gathered out of the world and specially taught and prepared in the School of Christ during this age, Not only is this feature of the Divine Plan Scripturally called "the mystery of God," which will be finished by the close of this age, but additionally the Church herself is Scripturally termed 'the mystery of God"-the Mystic Body of Christ. "For God gave Christ to be the Head over the Church, which is his Body." "Ye are members in particular of the Body of Christ," which is the Church (Ephesians i, 22, 23; I Corinthians xii, 27).

During these long centuries required for the finding of this saintly class for whom the Lord has been searching with the magnet of Truth, various false theories have sprung up and found acceptance in the world. One of these is that God does not love the world and has never purposed its salvation; but that, on the contrary, he fore-ordained and predestinated that all except the "elect saints" should suffer eternal toriure, because he wished to have it so. Another wrong theory which gained acceptance was that whilst God wishes to save the world, he finds himself unable to do so, because handicapped by human self-will and by the aggressiveness of Satan. who has blinded and deceived the vast majority and has them completely in his power through ignorance and superstition. This theory tells us that God loves the world, including the heathen millions, and that he longs to have the Gospel taken to them, but cannot do so, except through human agency, and is disappointed and baffled, because those who profess to be his people fail to raise sufficient missionary donations.

To rational minds these theories which satisfied in the past are no longer satisfactory; hence many are turned to infidelity. As the Scriptures say, "My people perish for lack of knowledge" (Hosea iv, 6).

Leaving these unsatisfactory errors of the "dark ages" and going back to the Scriptures we find their teachings his hand, the gall of bitterness is found consistent; namely, that as soon as mingled with it, and its dregs are the "mystery," the Church, is completed, the blessing of God will proceed through The Christ (Head and members) to the world. As it is written, "In thy Seed shall all the famishall die he will either be ushered lies of the earth be blessed." The mystery, be it known, is that the spiritual "Seed of Abraham" is not the Lord Jesus only, but includes also his members-the Church. As we read, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians III, 29). According to the Scriptures the bless-

ing of God will proceed through Spiritual Israel, a "Royal Priestbood," "after the order of Melchizedec," to natural Israel under the terms of their New Covenant (Jeremlah xxxi, 31). During the Millennial Age under the spiritual Kingdom of The Christ (operating through the earthly Kingdom of Israeli all nations will be instructed, enlightened, blessed. Not only so, but the merit of Christ will then be applied also on behalf of the thousands of millions who have gone down into the prison-house of death-sheel, hades -the grave. The Church will constitute the "First Resurrection," "His resurrection." . All sharing in it will attain life on the spirit plane like unto the angels, but superior, "far above angels." Later during the Millennium the world will return from the tomb. revery man in his own order" (I Coriuthinns xv. 23). And the resurrecting process will continue with them, to the intent that the willing and obedient may continue to rise gradually towards perfection and finally attain it; while at the same time the earth will be rejuvenated and become the prom-(Acts III, 19-21).

"Give Thanks, For He Is Good." Looking down into the future prophetically the Psalmist exclaims, in view of the Kingdom blessings promised to the world. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good! for his mercy endureth forever." It is the mercy of God toward us and toward all who need his mercy and who desire it that is the ground for thanksgiving. True, praise must come from thankful hearts. and in order to be properly thankful, one must see more than is now visible to those who have not the eye of fulth revelation respecting things to come. But it is these very opportunities that "Riessed are your eyes, for they see one's eyes see and his ears hear of

God in vain, whether more or less (II Corinthians vi, 11. God's people not only give thanks

for the blessings of the future which they receive by faith, but additionally they appreciate blessings granted to them in advance in the present life and give thanks for these. The first of these is the knowledge, the appreciation, of the goodness of God in granting us a release from sin and its penalty by faith, so that we can (without waiting for actualities, now rejoice in the mercy which has justified us freely by Divine grace through faith In the blood of Christ. The realization of the rolling away of our load of sin, a realization of our forgiveness by the Father, calls for gratifude, for thanksgiving, and this cause continuing, our thanks continue. We were lifted from the borrible plt and the miry clay of sin and condemnation and our feet were placed upon the Rock Christ Jesus. It was in conse quence of this that a new song was put into our mouth, even the lovingkindness of our God. And this is the first cause for our thankfulness. All other blessings rest upon this blessing and all other thanksgivings should properly, therefore, include thanks for this blessing.

Additionally after being justified we were inducted into a still further grace or privilege, namely, the privilege of becoming members of the Body of Christ, members of the "mystery" class. The invitation to this class the Apostle expresses thus, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercles of God (your justification; that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans xii, 1). Through this grace or privilege, if accepted, we gain the opportunity of a change of nature-from human to Divine. Our human nature justified, cleansed, made acceptable to God as a sacrifice through the merit of Christ, if sacrificed by us faithfully, will be replaced by a spirit nature and glory, honor, immortality, joint-heirship, with our Lord and Head. What cause we have in this for thanksgiving! What shall we render unto the Lord our God for all his benefits towards us? "We will take the cup of salvation (his cup, the cup of self-sacrifice, and call upon the name of the Lord (for assistance to drink of the Master's cupi. We will pay our vows of consecration unto the Lord-publicly before all his people' (Psaim exvi. 12-14).

"Every joy he sends me

Comes a sweet and glad surprise." The very fact that we do not know everything; the fact that we are ever learning as pupils in the School of Christ, so far from being a cause of faith-union and communion with the Lord learns something more daily reand care, and each fresh Item of knowledge is a new well-spring of pleasure. "He satisfieth the longing soul." "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be tilled," "Goodness and mercy These are the experiences of those ripe Christians called upon by the Apostle to give thanks unto God in every matter and to know that this is God's will in respect to all those who are members of Christ-"in Christ Jesus" (Psalm cvii, 9; Matthew v. 6; Psalm

### Thanks Through Tears.

Let us not overlook the fact that our text indicates that we are to give thanks for our sorrows, our trials, our disappointments, as well as for our Joys and pleasures, for everything includes all things. Nor is this the only Scripture to this effect. Hearken to the Apostle's words which urge the members of Christ to rejoice in tribulation, not because tribulation is a joy producer, but, as he explains, Tribulation works out additional patience and patience brings additional experience and larger experience brings larger hope, until we are not asbamed of our tribulations, because of increased love of God shed abroad in our hearts. thereby (Romans v, 3; viii, 35).

The basis of all these blessings and rejoicings both as respects the future and the present experiences is faith. First, in the fact that there is a God. Second, in the fact that he has a noble character. Third, in the fact that his Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power are perfect and thoroughly coordinated. Fourth, in the fact that all of those powers are enlisted in the salvation of the world. Fifth, in the fact that that salvation began to be worked out by our Lord at his First Advent. Sixth. in the fact that it is still working out in the selection of his Church. Seventh, in the fact that shortly it will begin to take practical shape in the establishment of Christ's Millennial Kings dom. Eighth, in the fact that through ised "Paradise regained" - restored that Kingdom a blessing shall extend to every creature of our race.

So, then, let every man to the extent of his enlightenment appreciate and confess the Almbrhty God and give thanks unto his name, because he is good and because his mercy endureth forever. And let those who have tasted of his grace pursue on, that they may grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in faith and grow in character-likeness to our God. And let his saints addressed in this text more and more appreciate their wonderful privilege, their high calling of God in Christ Jesus-to be heirs of God and jointheirs with Jesus Christ our Lord-If so be that they suffer with him, that they may be also glorified together. And knowing that they have need of faith and patience and character development, let these firmly trust the Great Teacher, come what may, and give thanks for every experience of life. knowing that our Father is too wise to err and remembering the Master's words. "The Father himself loveth you" (John xvl. 27k

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