

Recently, I was given a marvelous little tract about a gentleman known as Jack the Huckster. I researched this character and discovered that Spurgeon made frequent mention of his story. This week I have compiled and amalgamated all that Spurgeon tells us about him and then I make a brief application. Here is Jack's story.

The Wednesday Word, Feb. 11, 2009: Jack the Huckster

Many years ago, in England, there was a poor man known to all as 'Jack the Huckster'. Some thought he was a half-wit, but as the story shows his mind was sound enough. Jack, a notorious, swearing drunkard, made his living by selling cheap goods and trinkets from door to door and one day, as God would have it, he listened to a poor woman, who was singing—

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All"

As he went home he kept repeating these words to himself and God's Spirit engraved them on his heart. Jack trusted in the crucified Savior and was saved. His neighbors now became astonished at his constant serenity. Some of them had a world of doubts and fears about their own salvation and eventually they asked him if he ever doubted. "Well," he said, "I can't doubt but that I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all, for I know that, and feel it every day. And why should I doubt that Jesus Christ is my all in all? for He says He is."

Although he was a huckster and always traveling about, Jack wanted to join the church. So he went to the church and said, "I want to join." But the Elders had other ideas and challenged him with the words, "Jack you have been such a great sinner and you are unconverted," "Well," said Jack, "I don't know if I'm unconverted and I confess I am a great sinner—but—

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All"

"Well then" they demanded "give testimony to your conversion experience" Jack quietly said, "All my experience is that "I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all, and Jesus Christ is my all in all." Try as they would, they could get no other testimony from him only,

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All."

"Well," they said, "when you come before the church-meeting, the minister may ask you questions." "I can't help it," said Jack, "all I know I will tell you; and this is all I know-

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all in all."

He was admitted into the church, and continued with the brethren, walking in holiness; but that was still all his experience, and you could not get him beyond it. "Jack," said one brother, "I

sometimes feel so full of grace, I feel so advanced in sanctification, that I begin to be very happy." "I never do," said Jack; "I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all." "But then," said the brother, "I go down again, and think I am not saved, because I am not as sanctified as I used to be." "But I never doubt my salvation," said Jack, "because Jesus Christ is my all in all, and He never alters." That's all well and good!" said his questioner, "but I have my ups and downs." "I don't," said Jack; "I can never go up, for in myself I am a poor sinner, and nothing at all; and I cannot go down, for Jesus Christ is my all in all."

Then another Christian man said to him, "But you always seem so happy and pleased, Jack. How is it?" "Well" said he, "I ought to be happy, for—

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All."

"But," said the gentleman, "I can't see how you can be always so happy and sure. I sometimes lose my evidences of salvation." "I don't," said Jack, "for nothing can rob me if I am nothing at all — and in the second place, `Jesus Christ is my all in all,'— and who can rob Him? He is in Heaven; I never get richer or poorer, for I am always nothing, but I always have everything for

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is in my All in All"

"Another friend said, "I am at times miserable because I remember my sad sinfulness even since conversion." "Ah," said Jack, "you have not begun to sing—

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All' "

Then another man asked, "How do you get rid of your doubts and fears? My faith frequently fails and I miss my sure hope in Christ. My frame of mind is so variable and my feelings so contradictory, what do you think of that?" "Think," said poor Jack, "Why sir I have nothing to worry about for,

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All."

We can learn much from Jack the Huckster, especially the grand truth that Christ is all we need. Our trouble is, however, that Christ is usually not all that we want. Since we are constantly being offered new experiences and well packaged sanctification techniques, we must continually guard against growing tired of Christ Jesus our High Priest, Prophet and King and trading him for something else. Christ alone remains our only recommendation for perfection and heaven. We, no matter how much we advance in doctrine, must, like Jack, remain broken and dependant. The gospel will keep us in this sure place.

Yet, we so quickly forget the gospel. Instead of being satisfied with the acceptance of Christ we yearn for the applause of men and the recommendation of others. We even, at times, labor to

commend ourselves to God and to each other. We boast of our attainments rather than glorying in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. We grow in grace and then congratulate ourselves! We make some spiritual advances then think everyone is just waiting to hear from us so that they may drink from our wisdom. We often puff ourselves up with pride. John Bunyan the writer of Pilgrim's Progress knew these dangers of pride too well. He tells of how on one occasion, just after he had preached he was approached by a brother who said, "You have preached a wonderful sermon." "Ah!" said Bunyan, "you are too late; the devil told me the same thing before I got down the pulpit stairs."

Unlike Bunyan, we quickly forget that we are nothing and that Christ Jesus is everything.

I'll leave you with three words of wisdom.

"Whatever comes in, when you go to God for acceptance, besides Christ, call it Antichrist; bid it be gone; make only Christ's righteousness triumphant."

Thomas Wilcox

"It is a proud spirit, that will not let grace be exalted, but puts self, in the throne of Christ, and his righteousness. It is a filthy and abominable spirit, and pollutes the man more and more: and God abhors it, as that which contradicts his most glorious plot."

Ralph Erskine

"I'm a poor sinner and nothing at all;
But Jesus Christ is my All in All."
Jack the Huckster

And that's the Gospel Truth!