

# JUDE: The Way of Cain

*JUDE, The Call to Stand*

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**Bible Text:** Jude 11; Genesis 4:1-8

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I would encourage you this morning to open your Bibles to two specific places that find themselves on almost exact opposite pages of your Bible. First and foremost, we're going to be in the book of Jude. If you're a first time guest or visitor with us, we've been going through the book of Jude. Though it's only 25 verses in length, one of the things that we've discovered is it's incredibly powerful as far as quality is concerned and the message that we need to hear. The book of Jude is the second to the last book of your Bible. We're also going to find ourselves today in the book of Genesis, the very first book of the Bible in chapter 4.

As I mentioned, over the course of the last few weeks, we've been walking systematically through the book of Jude with this understanding: that you and I as believers in Jesus Christ, as those who have obtained faith through Jesus Christ and salvation through him, that we have been called to take a stand. We have been called, as verse 3 in the book of Jude says, to stand or to contend for that which is the faith that was first given unto the saints. We have been called to stand for that which is godly and against that which is godless and over the last couple of weeks, we've been walking through different parameters and understandings of what this means and last week was a pivotal week because last week we began to kind of shift gears in our study of the book of Jude because we addressed in verses 8-10 this idea of how we are to stand. What we discovered last week is that behind all of the rhetoric, behind all of the chaos, behind everything that we see and may perceive, there is an underlying spiritual reality and that underneath and behind all that is against the things of God as we addressed last week, is this entity known as the devil himself and we spoke of the fact that our standing, our speaking up on behalf of our living our faith on behalf of Jesus Christ, is a spiritual battle.

Today, as we make our way into verse 11, you may find this surprising but we're going to spend three weeks in one single verse. Here's the good news though: every one of the statements that we're going to see in verse 11 of the book of Jude actually has an entire Old Testament story wrapped around it and what we're going to see over these next couple of weeks is how do we practically implement standing in our life, how do we take a stand for the things that are of God. And today as we go into verse 11, there is a word that I want to utilize that will help us understand this journey: it is the word "potential." Now, please understand, we're not speaking about the word "potential." We all have high

thoughts and ideas regarding it but let me give you my high school baseball coach's definition of "potential." Are you ready: you ain't done it yet. Isn't that what potential is? You haven't done it yet.

Just this week, we saw one of the greatest definitions of "potential" in our culture and in our society for this week, when it comes to NCAA football, this was national signing day and all across the country from coast to coast universities far and wide spent hundreds of millions of dollars: they made promises, they manipulated, they tweaked and they turned all with the aspects of getting the best 17-18 year old recruits that they could on their team because they all have the aspirations of being like LSU. They all have the aspirations. I'm working on it, folks, come on, give me some credit there. They all aspire to hold the trophy at the end of the year. Here's the problem with national signing day: hundreds of young men, thousands, hundreds of millions of dollars on 17-18 year old young men who have yet to take a snap at the collegiate level. How many of those young men will never, ever materialize? And how very few of them will we actually remember their name 5-10 years from now?

You see, that's what potential is. Potential means you have all of the skills, you have all the ability, you have all the resources at your disposal, you just haven't implemented it as of yet. Today, when we speak about the church of Jesus Christ taking a stand, let me share with you: we have all the individuals we need, we have all the access we need, we have all the resources we need but what we're going to see in a moment is this; very rarely does the church of Jesus Christ actually implement the stand that we were called to stand. And I want you to see through the book of Jude today and in the book of Genesis that we have all the potential in the world if we'll just implement it.

As you turn to the book of Jude, for the sake of context today, I am going to begin in verse 10. Remember, this was a story we dealt with last week where the devil and Michael fight over the body of Moses. In verse 10 it says,

“10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain.”

And over the course of the next couple of weeks we'll deal with these other phrases better utilized but here in verse 11, it says "woe unto these because they have gone the way of Cain." Now, I understand that very specifically here in the book of Jude, it is addressing those in verses 3-4: it's addressing those who have crept in unawares, it is addressing those that are dismissing the faith, it's addressing those who are destroying the faith. But today, when we turn to Genesis 4 and look at this idea of going the way of Cain and the potential that believers in Jesus Christ actually have, let me share with you from the very beginning, I want to lay a paradigm over the message today that though we, the church of Jesus Christ, may not technically be in the way of Cain, how often more than not do we act more like the world than we do the word.

So, today's message is to share with us the potential that is within us as believers of Jesus Christ if we begin to act the way of the word versus the way of the world. That being said, I would encourage you to go to the book of Genesis 4. As you're turning to Genesis 4 and this will be very important in just a moment, obviously 4 comes after chapter 3. In chapter 3, we have Adam and Eve, they partake of the fruit of the Garden, that which the Lord said not to do, the punishments are laid out, they are cast out of the Garden of Eden, they are now relegated to a life that much like ours is encompassed with sin and rebellion. We pick up in chapter 4, this is critical in a moment: we don't know the time frame, we don't know all the communication that has transpired but what we do know is that in chapter 4, there are two sons of Adam and Eve who are going to have an opportunity to have a relationship with God and we get to see what that looks like. Beginning in verse 1 of chapter 4, it says,

“1 And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. 2 And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. 3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. 6 And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? 7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. 8 And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.”

Now, as we get back to the book of Jude, the thing I want us to understand is simply this: that there are two concerns or two issues that we need to grasp about the way of Cain and the story of Cain and Abel in the book of Genesis. We need to understand: 1. how we need and sure respond to God and then later we're going to deal with the reality that you and I are actually living in. So, let's begin with the first one: how you and I are responding to God. We have two opportunities, there are two chances, there are two prospects for you and I when it comes into our responding to God. The first one is this: we can respond by worshiping. Now, I know what some of you are thinking, “Well, didn't we just get through doing that?” Well, kinda, sorta, yes. You see, unfortunately, oftentimes we restrict the definition of worship too tightly. We think that worship is simply just singing or maybe we say worship, it could possibly include Bible study and maybe even some decent preaching, that's worship. Let me give you a working definition of worship: worship is our willing response to a self-revealing God. In other words, when God reveals something to us, we respond to that. When he reveals and we respond, that is worship.

Now, when we sing together, what we're doing when we understand his grace and his mercy and his love and we sing the songs we sing, what are we doing? We're responding

to how he's revealed himself. When we study the word of God and we get insights and understanding from it and say, "Oh, that's going to change something." What are we doing? We're responding to what he's revealed to us. But worship does not contain itself within just a few moments on a Sunday or a Wednesday. Understand: Tuesday afternoon, when you're at the workplace and there is an opportunity for temptation and you resist it, God has revealed it out and you respond by fleeing. That is worship.

You say, "Well, why is that so significant to the story?" Let me describe for you the setting in Genesis 4. Cain and Abel: we don't know their ages, we don't know the time frame between chapter 3 and 4. We don't even know who it was or how it took place or where it happened that they learned or discovered how they were supposed to respond to God but obviously God revealed something to them. God revealed that on this day, at this time, I expect this to come from you and they responded. One of them, as we'll see in a moment, Abel responded with worship. He responded appropriately. In fact, the Bible makes it very clear if you go into Hebrews 11:4, it says that Abel "offered a better sacrifice," that he was righteous in what he did. You go to 1 John 3:12, it says that what Cain did was called evil.

But this worship that took place, in fact, many times people said, "This is really the first worship service in the Bible." This is the first time that the people of God after sin entered the world, present themselves before God. I want you to notice what's not there: singing. Nobody leads anybody in a song in Genesis 4. There is no preaching. There is no Bible study. So, what we see happening here is the first act of public worship that happens after sin enters the world, is that the people of God give back to the one who created them. Yet how many times do we see that aspect of our life as something on the side or something that just takes place here? It's just a brief amount of time? You see, oftentimes what we do is we so restrict the definition of "worship" to too narrow of a focus that we miss the worship that we were designed to participate in. And here Abel, which is called a better sacrifice, comes and he gives. That's the description of this worship. That's Abel's side.

But then there's Cain's side. It's what I want to call the response of worldliness. You see, we've got two options to respond to God: we can either respond on how he's revealed and the way he has shared with us or we can do it the way the world encourages us and Cain's response looks a lot like what I see happening in the world today when it comes to responding to what God's call is on our life. I want to share with you three excuses that I hear all the time from different people and being used in different personalities regarding this aspect of responding to God as he has revealed to us in this aspect of worship. Not just music, not just preaching but in the giving of that which he's already given to us.

Here's excuse #1, are you ready? Excuse #1 for why "giving is not worship" is: it's mine. Folks, I've got some bad news for you: it's not yours. It's his. Now, I know what some of you think, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, Pastor Jeff, I work hard. I labor. I do the sweat of my brow. I use my brain. At the end of the week, at the end of the month, that which is given to me, that is mine." Let me ask you: who gave you your brain? Who gave you your muscles? Who gave you the job or whatever it may be that you have? It wasn't you. You

didn't make you. You didn't form you. You didn't fashion you. If it was not for God giving you the brains, giving you the brawn, you would have nothing that you could call yours. It's not yours. Let me give you a hint: it's all his. It's all his.

So, excuse #1 is: well, it's mine. Here's excuse #2, are you ready? Well, God doesn't need it. Well, you're absolutely right, he doesn't. There is not a thing on this earth that God actually needs. Why? Refer to point #1: it's his. You can't need something if you have everything and it's all his. People say, "Well, you know what? I don't need to give to the Lord because he doesn't need it." Let me ask you a question: in Genesis 4, the story we just read, at any point in the story, do you sense God saying, "If you don't bring that to me, I'm just not going to be completely God." Or, "If you don't bring what I need here, the heavens are just going to fall apart." No. Who needed it? Abel and Cain. You see, giving isn't because God needs it, giving is because we need it. It reminds us of our place. It reminds us of his place and that he formed, he fashioned and without him we would be nothing. Listen, I know that God doesn't need it, but I need to give because by doing so, it reminds me of his greatness and my not-so greatness.

But there is this excuse that I hear so often, particularly in the days in which we live, in the environment in which we live, in the society in which we live. Are you ready for this one? When it comes to worshiping through giving, so many times I've heard people say this, "Well, I'm just doing the best that I can." And that sounds good. I mean, doesn't that just kind of pull your heart-strings? With all the stuff going on in life, in all the tragedy, you know, you're doing the best you can. Atta boy. Come on, give it the best you can. Can I refer back to Genesis 4? Because the Lord comes to Cain and says, "Excuse me, sir, but that did not quite go the way I told you to." What did Cain say to him? Let me paraphrase it: "I'm doing the best I can. I mean, is that not good enough. Come on. I went out on a limb here. It's all I can do." What does God tell him? "Sin lies at the door."

You see, God's pronouncement to Cain was: if we're doing the best we can do but it's still not God's standard, sin lies at the door. Let me tell you what you can expect when you make an excuse. Are you ready? You can expect death. You say, "Death?" Isn't that what happens in the story? Because when Cain is confronted with his issue and he decides not to worship, to be worldly, what occurs? Death occurs. What does Romans 6:23 say? "The wages of sin is death." The byproduct of us doing the things the world's way is death. The byproduct of thinking that we know better than God is death. The byproduct of anytime we have the audacity to say, "But God, I'm doing the best that I can," the byproduct is death.

You see, that's the problem with worldliness versus worship and what we have presented before us here in the book of Jude 11 where we've been encouraged to take a stand, we've been encouraged to contend, we have one of two roads of which we can travel: we can travel the road of worship or we can travel the road of worldliness. One leads unto life, the other one leads unto death. One is responding to God, one is rebellion against God. That is the response that we must make.

But there's a second over-arching theme here. I want to give us a good dose of reality check. Y'all know about reality, right? Whether you like it or not it's there? Oftentimes we live in our fantasy world, we live in our animation world, we live in our compute generated world. Let me give you a stark picture of reality because I want to share with you something you need to understand about this concept we're talking about today and the first one is this: the agenda that comes with worldliness. The agenda. You say, "Well, what do you mean by agenda?" Let me give you my definition of "agenda": the game plan or the purpose or the plan of action that one has for doing what they're doing. You do understand that the reason that companies and corporations spend millions of dollars for a commercial at the Super Bowl is not just for you to smile, the purpose is for you to purchase their products. The idea or the purpose is for you to agree with their philosophy. Please hear me: anytime somebody tries to sell you something, pitch something to you or promote something to you, there is behind it an agenda. There's always a purpose behind it.

Remember what we read in verses 8-10 last week? Who is behind the ways of the world? The devil himself and his desire, his purpose, his goal, according to 1 Peter 5:8, is to destroy us. Let me tell you what the devil has destroyed in so many of our lives: he's destroyed the potential that we have in Christ Jesus to take a stand. Why? Because most of us spend more in the world than that we give to the Lord and we wonder why we have what we have. And we live in a world today that has an agenda that is being promoted. Let me tell you something: there are agencies out there that have all of the resources and all of the abilities to fix all the problems that we've got in this world and the reason they're not being fixed is because they don't really want to fix them. They really don't want them solved. Why? Because they profit by their not being a problem solved. As long as they can keep the wheel turning, then it continues to be the chaos. I'll tell you, my father-in-law had a great statement that I heard years ago. He said, "If it doesn't make sense, somebody's making money somewhere." It doesn't make sense to spend four million dollars on a 30 second commercial. Somebody is making money somewhere. I don't know how and I don't understand at all but it's occurring.

There is an agenda that is taking place and I'm going to tell you, in our life, my family's life, this is a difficult conviction that we have because over the last few months, over the last few years, through different events and different situations, the Lord has revealed to our family that there are some entities we probably just shouldn't support. There are some agencies that we probably we should not give them our dollars. And I know what you're thinking, you're saying, "Jeff, how does that make that big a difference with multi-billion dollar companies? Who cares if they miss the Meyers' family dollars?" Please understand: it's not about them, it's about God revealing and us responding. And do you know one of the most powerful weapons that you and I possess? Folks, the world won't listen much to our rhetoric, we can do boycotts, we can make banners, we can do all kinds of paraphernalia about what we believe, but let me tell you the one language the world gets, are you ready? They get the language of currency. They get where it goes. That's why it's currency, it's a current, it's flowing and when it stops flowing or starts flowing, they pay attention. That is why the Bible says, "The love of money is the root of all evil." And when we, listen, take that which God has given us, do you realize we have

the potential to make a huge impact? We have the potential. Maybe we cannot preach to them, maybe we cannot get an email to them, but when we either do buy or we don't buy, it makes a huge difference.

Let me give you a great example of what occurred about a year ago: there was a major corporation that services food products, that it was discovered that their stances on certain items were not well-received by the politically correct community. Now, not for the sake of advertising for them in particular but I'm just here to tell you, they've got the best chicken in the world and the two pickles on the top make all the difference. Not one pickle, two, gotta have two. What happened in the days following? They could not keep the chicken coming to us because those who had the resources started buying and purchasing and what happens? There was a statement made all across this world that was based on what people's beliefs and their philosophies were and it didn't involve a sermon, it didn't involve a song. It involved us being just like Abel: God revealed something and the people of God responded.

Which translates into the second thing: not just the agenda of the worldliness but the reality check of the action of worship. How do we actually put this to the test? How do we actually put in place the things that I'm speaking of today? How do we not fall into the way of Cain? How do we become a person of Abel? How does our sacrifice become pleasing in the eyes of God and not distasteful in the eyes of God? Here's what I'm going to address today: I'm going to deal with some numbers, I'm going to deal with some statistics and what I'm using basic over-simplified math. I have consulted resources that are more apt than I am, they are smarter than I am, and we're going to use just some basic, simple numbers so that you and I, the people who claim to be believers in Jesus Christ, can recognize the potential stand that we can take in this world that we live in.

Let's look at America as a whole. The United States of America only has about 3-4% of the world's population but if you take every dollar that Christians own in the world, out of \$100, \$99 are in American. 99% of "Christian wealth" is in the United States of America. You say, "Why is that so critical?" Because according to every source out there, that the average person who goes to church in an average year gives roughly 2.5% of the resources to the Lord. Do you know what that is? "I'm doing the best I can. He doesn't need it. It's mine." Why? Because that falls far short of the simple standard that God gave us. Now, I'm going to use just simple math: the Lord set up 10%, we're giving 2 1/2%. That means that out of every dollar that ought to be there, we're only giving a quarter. Is that right? That's proper math, right?

So, what does that translate into? That means that last year in the United States of America, every type or style of "church" that we've got, about 82 1/2 billion, that's with a "b," not an "m," 82 1/2 billion dollars were given through churches. Now, I know what you're thinking, "That is a huge amount of money." Yes, it is but it's 75% smaller than it should be. If we, the people of God, would just respond to how's he revealed, it's pretty simple, then we, the people of God, would have given 330 billion dollars. That means, roughly, we left 250 billion dollars on the table. Money that the Lord gave to us, money

that the Lord entrusted us with and money that we said, "You don't need it, God, it's mine and I'm doing the best I can." Let me tell you: how is it getting us?

Now, here are the scary statistics: there are things in our society that are completely upside down, there are things in our world that have gone completely chaotic and I'm just here to be honest with you that some of these things, the government was never meant to handle. Let's just talk about a few of them today. I could go on for hours but we're all going to get hungry eventually. Speaking of hunger, one of them is food, making proper nutrition. One of them is clean water. And one of them is making sure that people get a proper education so that they can get out of the mess that some people are in. Those are just three simple things. Now, the statistics that I'm giving you are by agencies that are smarter than I and these are global stats. This is the amount of money that it would take to solve and address these issues, to solve them over a period of 5-7 years. This does not include the personnel that it would require, it does not include the logistics that we'd have to get together to make it happen, this is just raw amounts of dollars over 5-7 years, what would it take. To solve the global hunger problem: about 35 billion dollars a year. To solve the bad water problem that are in some places in the world: about 15 billion a year. To address educational needs around the world in 5-7 years: 12 billion a year. That's 57 billion dollars per year that it would take over 5-7 years to solve three of humanity's basic concerns which were never meant to be the concerns of the government to begin with and yet, what have we done? We've said, "You know what? It's mine. God, you don't need it anyway. I'm doing the best I can. Let them take care of it." Let me tell you: 57 billion dollars, they spend more than that on toilet seats and hammers ever year and yet that's all it takes.

You see, that's the agenda, folks. You do realize that when it comes to the budge of just our entity known as our country, that is really small potatoes. I mean, 57 billion, what's that compared to 17 trillion that we owe? 57 billion dollars a year. Let me tell you why hunger, water and education is not getting solved: they don't want to solve it. That's not their purpose. You know whose purpose that is? Ours. I know what you're thinking, "Then let's get to it." Hello? Where have you been? If we would just be and do what we're supposed to do, this problem would have never arisen, much less needed to be solved. Do you realize that 57 billion a year is only 20% of the amount that we should be giving that we're not. This is an easy problem to solve. Do you know what the hard problem is? It's the heart. Because do you know what we like to say, "It's mine. God, you don't need it. I'm doing the best I can." What's the byproduct? Death. Every one of those issues somewhere down the road, somehow, ultimately, unfortunately, can and oftentimes produces death.

You see, folks, that's the numbers on a global or national level. But you know what? I want to talk about potential and if you're a first time guest or visitor today, let me share with you something that you need to hear from my mouth. I want you to know that I am pleased as pleased can be to be the Senior Pastor here. I am thrilled to be a part of Greenwell Springs Baptist Church and I dare say you're not going to find another place better so if you're a guest, you might as well just go in today. Okay, got that speech over with. Speech is done. Let's talk about us. Let's have a family discussion here, are you



ready? Here we go. We're going to take the gloves off for just a moment and have a reality check: the budget that we pass this year is about 2.8 million dollars. I wish it was a "b" but it's an "m." 2.8 million. Don't get me wrong, substantial amount of money. Let's utilize the same statistics that we're seeing globally which, by the way, isn't it ironic that in our country, those who went to church actually gave more during the Depression than they do today? And they say that a better economy means better giving? Not necessarily. Let's take the same statistics of 2.5%. That means that if you lay that grid over this incredible church, that our giving this year if we just do what God told us to do, is 11.2 million dollars. That's 2.8 x 4, that's where you get it.

You say, "Well, Pastor Jeff, what does that mean?" Let me break it down for you. Let me give you a Christmas present, do you want an early Christmas present? Here it is, here is your early Christmas present, this is what we would see happen in our church family, in our lives, if you and I just did what we're supposed to do. Listen, we don't have to have any pledge drives, we don't have to have rubber chicken dinners, we don't have to coerce, we don't have to have cards. We've just got to respond to what God's been revealing for thousands of years, okay? It's real simple, let me tell you what's going to happen. Are you ready for your Christmas present? If we respond to God as he's already revealed to us, then by Christmas, the budget that we pass, it would be taken care of no problem, got it covered. Here's the other issue: that because our missions giving is a percentage of what comes in not just a budgeted item, that means not only would we meet our budget, we would give an additional 1.5 million to missions. Then after we did that, by Christmas, we'd call the bank and pay the note off. Hallelujah, that's gone. Meet the budget, give more to missions, pay the building off and are you ready for this? This is my favorite part. We'd have to find a way to spend the 3 million dollars left over. Find a way! Let me tell you what: that makes for one happy business meeting. We've got to find a way to spend this extra 3 million dollars.

You say, "Man, how do we do it? Man, let's get a campaign together." We don't need a campaign. You say, "Let's have a big dinner." We don't need rubber chicken. Do you know what we need? We need people to simply say, "Do you know what? God's revealed it and I'm supposed to respond to it." Our problem is we say, "Yeah, but it's mine. He doesn't need it. I'm doing the best I can." You see, the problem is that it's producing death. It's producing death in our lives. It's producing death in our homes. It's producing death in our community. And we have been designed, we have been purposed to have life.

I want to share one final story with you before our time of invitation. It'll be 18 years ago in a few weeks that my wife and I will celebrate our 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary and through those years, you know, there's an old joke but I'm grateful, "You marry the wife, you marry the family." She married me, she married my family. I got the better end of the stick there but that's okay. That being said, over those years there have been times where there have been conversations, there's been information that's been revealed to me that has just been earth-shattering. The story that I'm about to share with you took place in my wife's family's life long before we ever knew each other existed. This was a time period when my wife was in junior high, high school days. If you're not aware, her father, her dad is a

retired attorney and there is an old joke among attorneys: the last thing you want as an attorney is to be sued. Well, that happened in his life and he found himself in a place where not only was he sued over a business deal that went bad but after he left the proceedings, he had to drive back home and share some information with his family that no man ever wants to share. He had to share with his wife, my mother-in-law, that the lifestyle that they'd been living would be no longer. Why? Because they didn't have anything. I mean, he got absolutely wiped clean. He wasn't at zero, he was below zero. It was gone. Everything they had worked for. Everything that they had entrusted, everything that they had put up. It was gone. Then he had to tell his two daughters of which I married the youngest, that the things that they were very used to in life, they better get un-used to them real quick because things weren't going to be the same they used to be.

The house that she grew up in, the house that I remember when we dated and where it was located in town, there was this huge hill that you had to go under and through and above to get to their house and at the very bottom, it went all the way down and then it came up real high. At the bottom was a stop sign. He shared with me a story one day that if this doesn't resonate in your heart, I don't know if anything will. The story he shared with me is he's coming back from those proceedings, he actually has nothing, he's in the negative, he's got to share with his family where life is about to take them and he sits at the bottom of the stop sign, he's there on the road and he said he began to cry, just tears. I mean, how do you do what you're about to have to do? The news he's about to share? And so he said he heard the Lord say this to him, are you ready? Here's what he heard the Lord say, "You trust me with your soul and you can't trust me with your money?"

Now, I want you to think about that for a moment. If we can trust him to save us and to keep us from hell, can we not trust him with 10%. If we trust him to put our seat in the heavenlies, can we not trust him with our bank account? You see, folks, the issue is this: when we've trusted him with our soul, then we can come to understand we can trust him with everything else.

Let's pray with our heads bowed and eyes closed. Maybe you're that individual today, maybe you're here as a guest, maybe you're here and you've been here for years and years and years, maybe you're watching on tv or listening on the internet, but maybe you're here today and you realize that in spite of all that you've heard from the word of God, in fact, all that has been expressed today, there has never been a time and a place where you've entrusted the Lord with your soul. There has never been a time where you've turned your eternity over to the one who formed and fashioned you. Maybe you're here today and you say you know you need to take care of business with God. Let me encourage you to do something, right where you are. Maybe you're here in our worship center, maybe you're at home on the sofa, maybe you're driving in your car and you need to pull over. Wherever you are, if you understand right now that you're in a place in life that you don't want to be anymore and God has got something greater for you, he has forgiveness and he has salvation and he can take care of your soul. Let me encourage you just to have a conversation with him, technically we call it prayer. Maybe not out loud but maybe this is what your prayer would sound like to God right now. You say, "God, I

realize today that I have never entrusted my soul to you. I've been so busy doing other things. I've been distracted but I've never settled eternity. I understand that I'm the problem and you're the answer. I understand that I'm the one who has sinned. You revealed yourself to me. I'm the one who has responded wrongly and I realize that the wages of that, the results of that is death. So, I'm coming right now, God, and I want to confess that the only answer to my sin problem is the person of Jesus Christ. The only answer to my rebellion is Jesus Christ. I believe that he was sent for me. I believe he went to the cross for me. I believe he rose three days later so he could save me and forgive me of my sins. Lord, I confess this morning, I don't know all the answers but I know that Jesus Christ is the answer to my sin problem and I'm asking you to save me. In the best way I know how, I want to turn my life over to you."

With our heads still bowed and our eyes still closed. Maybe you're that person this morning, here physically in our worship center and in a moment we're going to stand and sing and Brother Jeremy is going to lead us and we're going to have people here at the front. Maybe you're the person who needs to step out and step forward because the condition of your soul is of greater value than any other item. Maybe you're here this morning and you've got your soul "taken care of" years ago. The problem is, the world has crept in unawares just like the book of Jude says and maybe today as your head is bowed and your eyes are closed you say, "I may be a believer but it looks like I've been traveling the path of Cain." Maybe this will be the day of confession and repentance and change.

*Heavenly Father, as we come to this time of invitation, we recognize that is exactly what it is. You have revealed to us what needs to happen and now we have the invitation to respond. Father, I pray that it not just be our words as we sing but our feet, our hands, whatever aspect. Lord, we pray that you would move in our midst, that we would respond in worship to you today. It is in the name of Jesus Christ we pray.*