Called

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 23 February 2026

Preacher: Tom Holland

[0:00] As the Chancellor of the Master's University and Seminary, Dr.

! He had taken his takings in all of his 50 years plus of faithful service to Grace Community Church and to the Master's Seminary and University.
Some years earlier, he had appointed a group of very learned professors from that institution, Bible scholars, language experts in the biblical languages, the three biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek.
And then there's 269 verses in Aramaic in the Old Testament. And he appointed these guys and he made the head of this committee and I saw him interviewed by Dr.
MacArthur. He's a sharp young man. It was a translation project for a new Bible headed up by Dr.
[1:31] Abner Chow. Now, he holds two PhDs in certain aspects of ancient biblical languages. It was funny.

Of course, John was in his 80s and Abner's, you know, a 30 something. So John could get away with that. And he said, now, as I understand it, Abner, you have two PhDs.
And what are they in? And he knew, you know, he said, well, they're in Aramaic and the language of Mesopotamia. So he said, so you've got two PhDs in two dead languages that nobody can speak.
And he just cracked up, you know, the audience cracked up. Dr. MacArthur gave the committee of scholars the task of producing a Bible.
That was as close as is possible to the original Bible. We call that first Bible the original autograph.
[2:39] And we don't have any. We all know that that Bible was lost in history. No archaeologist has dug one up to this point.

So how was that committee going to proceed? Well, they made a detailed examination of the original languages of the Holy Bible to ensure that the translation was as accurate as possible.
Of course, in the Old Testament, that's Hebrew. And in the case of the New Testament, the language was Greek. And then Aramaic includes 269 verses from Daniel, Ezra, and Jeremiah.
The Bible that the committee produced was published is named the Legacy Standard Bible. I have a copy at home.
That does not mean that you rush out and throw out your ESV or NASB. And actually, MacArthur followed the NASB with some corrections in language.
[3:56] He applauded both those translations. And ESV, we use a lot here, and they're in our pulpit. And they're good translations. Let me read all three of the translations just to get a feel for what I'm talking about.

And these are all from the first verse of Jude, verse 1. In the NASB, it says, Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ.
Jude, a bondservant. ESV says, Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ. Well, what the committee did on this translation is they looked at the Greek.
They looked at the words. And now in the LSB, the Legacy Standard Bible, it accurately says, Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ.
That's what that word is. And you can't get around it. Doulos. Where the Bible really comes alive for me, it translates the Old Testament word, Yahweh, the sacred covenant name of God, which appears some 6,800 times in the old translations.
[5:29] And this is sacred to the Jews. It should be to us. And if you have a copy of the LSB, you'll notice that the Psalms have many references to Yahweh.

In the New Testament, the translators did not employ Yahweh, choosing instead to use the word Lord. And a lot of that comes from the fact that so many times in there it says, Jesus is Lord.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

So they kept that in there, but they did us a big favor by translating Doulos correctly to read it a slave. For decades it said bond servant or servant, but that's not what Doulos means.
Slave in Greek means owned by another. Now, as Americans, we have to be careful here. When you hear or read the word slave, do not think of that tragic period in American history in the mid-19th century called the American Civil War.
We fought a war over slavery. 600,000 Americans died. More Americans than died in World War II and World War I and all our wars put together.
[7:01] That brand of slavery is not alluded to in the New Testament translation of slave when it stands for Christ. If you've never asked the Lord Jesus to make you His slave, you ought to do that on your knees.

There's no higher calling for us than to be a slave of Christ. Now, why is all this important to us living out our lives in the 21st century?
Well, because it was important to the Holy Spirit. The ultimate author of the book of Jude. And he begins this great book of a mere 25 verses like this.
Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and brother of James. Now, we want to make sure that we have the author of the book correctly identified.
He's referred to as Jude. And there are eight individuals, at least eight individuals in the New Testament referred to as Jude or Judas or Judah.
[8:16] In order to get to the correct Jude, we have to search the Scriptures. And one place that is extremely helpful is the Gospel of Mark.

And we read this in the Gospel of Mark chapter 6, beginning in verse 1. And Jesus went out from there and came into His hometown.
And His disciples followed Him. And when the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many listeners were astonished, saying, Where did this man get these things?
And what is this wisdom given to this man? And such miracles as these performed by His hands. Is this man not the carpenter?
The son of Mary? The brother of James? And I guess it's Joseph. I would have pronounced it Jose, but it's J-O-S-E-S.
[9:29] And Judas and Simon. And are not His sisters here with us? And they were taking offense at Him.

And Jesus was saying to them, A prophet is not without honor except in His hometown and among His own relatives in His own household.
That's where you don't have any honor. And He could do no miracle there except He did lay His hands on a few sick people and healed them. But Jesus was marveling at their unbelief.
Well, two of those men listed there are half-brothers of Jesus, at least two. Mary was their mother. The James mentioned here was later the leader of the Jerusalem church. You remember that? Acts the 15th chapter. He was also the author of the book of James.
[10:39] Now, we've already read how Jude started his book. This is how James begins the book that bears his name.

James, a slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have two half-brothers of Jesus, but nowhere does James or Jude identify themselves in that way.
I mean, when Jude wrote Jude, he didn't say, pay attention, I'm the half-brother of Jesus. You're going to be in a lot of trouble if you don't listen to me. I'll report you.
In fact, they make no mention of themselves in such a close, personal relationship with the Lord. A number of reasons have been put forward by scholars over the centuries.
I think myself, both James and Jude were saying, biological relationships don't matter. What they were saying is that we have faith and have come into an eternal relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior.
[12:02] that's the only relationship that matters. It is not blood and it is not DNA. Now, according to the New Testament, neither of these men were saved until after the resurrection of Christ.

It was almost disastrous. At one point, the whole family showed up and wanted to take him home. they thought he was mentally unstable. He had claimed to be the Messiah.
Well, they watched him grow up. You know? They played ball with him. And this guy is claiming to be the Son of God. But after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, that is when they understood that they were slaves that they were slaves of Jesus.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

That is important for our understanding of the book of Jude. Jude tells us he is now a slave. He is now a slave of Jesus.
You know, in our language, that sounds like a step backward. But it's not. It's not. Rather, that means he has been brought from darkness to light.
[13:29] It means you've been rescued from the clutches of sin and hell and delivered from the adversary who is named Satan.

I'll tell you something else about being a slave of Jesus Christ. You can rest in that truth. You can have comfort.
The Lord knows you have purpose in this world. He knows that you've been called to serve. Everyone in here. Everyone in here have been called to serve.
There's no greater rest than the rest in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thomas Brooks, who lived from 1608 to 1680, was an English non-conformist Puritan preacher and author.
When it says he's a non-conformist, he didn't conform to the government or to the Anglican church and you couldn't really separate those two anyway. He said this in one of his books and this may be his book entitled Heaven on Earth.
[14:51] I have a copy of it. I haven't read it yet. He says this, Here is a wonder. God is on high and yet the higher a man lifts himself up, the farther he is from God.

The lower a man humbles himself, the nearer he is to God. That's describing a slave to the Lord.
In his book entitled The Book of Jude, the author Jude wrote to a church or maybe it was a group of churches that were in a mess.
These guys are in a mess. Why were they in a mess? They were in a mess because false teachers and false prophets had entered their ranks and were spreading heresy and deception at all levels of the church.
Now Jude has a favorite term for false teachers in the church. Six times in just three verses Jude says these false teachers are ungodly persons.
[16:19] That's his favorite term for them. These men are ungodly. And I can assure you that is what false teachers are in our day as well.

We can refer to them as ungodly. We have clearance to do that if we know they are false teachers.
Now I'm getting way ahead of myself.
After identifying himself as a slave to Christ Jude next says the following. And those mentioned here in Jude's audience have been in his audience for 2,000 years.
Because that's how long the book has been around. Here's what he said. to those who are the called beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.
May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you. That is all part of the salutation that the Holy Spirit crafted in authoring this book.
[17:39] Of course the Spirit did through the writing skill of Jude. He didn't compromise any of Jude's skills but ultimately the Holy Spirit is the author.

And do you see how Jude identifies true believers? That was in contradistinction to false believers. true believers are designated by some wonderful titles.
He says true believers are the called. True believers are the beloved in God the Father and we'll be interchanging that with love or beloved.
True believers are those kept for Jesus Christ and true believers are those who receive the blessings of mercy grace and peace and these are multiplied to them during their Christian walk.
They increase when you're walking with the Lord. Now why are these characteristics so important in our day? I think the only answer I can give is this.
[19:00] From all appearances and I'm making quite a study of this we are the generation that must contend with growing apostasy as we approach the end of the church age.

doesn't mean it's going to end tomorrow next year or a hundred years from now. I don't know when that's going to happen. Even though apostasy is increasing we can take comfort that we will remain safe and secure in the sovereign purpose of God.
Brothers we're safe. Don't think we're not. We're safe. So first Christians are those who are the called.
That is a word widely popular in the original Greek language. It's the Greek verb kaleo and it means to call.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

It's not rocket science. we're the called because we're the kaleo the called. And this conveys the thought that all true Christians have been chosen by God and selected by God and therefore God has set them apart as his children.
[20:42] God now we could spend ten weeks on the called easily. This is true because there's two calls.

There's an external call and that call emanates from God but it's external and there is an internal call that comes from God.
No one has ever been saved based upon the external call. No one. It is a call that is comprised of a general invitation and typically that call goes unheeded and rejected.
And often in history the external call is often even mocked by unbelievers. I've had family members mock it. Sadly.
But there's good news. There is an internal call that comes from God alone and by which God converts lost sinners to Himself.
[22:13] God uses the internal call to awaken the human will and once awakened God will then grant them spiritual life.

That is the only way that once dead sinners are moved to embrace the gospel by faith. Jesus spoke of this in the gospel of John.
Let me read it to you. John 6 44. One of my favorite chapters in all the Bible. John 6 44. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him and I will raise him up on the last day.
And later in the same chapter the Lord Jesus said this John 6 65 for this reason I have said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted him from the Father.
And we certainly don't want to leave out the apostle Paul. Let's include him in this discussion. These are his inspired words.
[23:36] in 2 Timothy chapter 1 verses 8 to 9. Therefore do not be ashamed of either the witness about our Lord or me his prisoner but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God who has saved us now we got a word coming up and called us with a holy calling not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

Now going back to our passage Jude there is an internal call that is the result of God's sovereign wisdom. Remember that God chose every person who would ever believe before time began.
That's how long you've been loved. He chose you before time began. And God did not choose anyone because he foresaw that one day they would believe.
believe. We had this discussion in my class yesterday. God didn't look down the corridors of time and see someone pray the sinner's prayer and say I'm going to elect them.
No, that's not how it works. He chose them so that they would believe. But God's actions were and they always are rooted in grace.
[25:30] Rooted in grace. And again I say that it never occurs based on something that God saw in an individual. Well, I got to save this guy.

I can't be without him. He didn't think that with me I can promise. God's choosing of individuals is never based on foreseen merit.
You look down and say oh how meritorious are these people. So what is God's motivation to save someone?
It is solely by his grace and for his glory. Tom Nettles from Southern Seminary is now retired.
He wrote a book by his grace and for his glory. It's a great book. God saves individuals for his own good pleasure.
[26:38] Let me tell you about a person that is saved this way which by the way is the only way that you're saved. When a person is saved in this manner now mark this thought down when a person is saved the way God does it that person they place on display forever the mercy of God.

Even when they get to heaven they are walking around putting on display the mercy of God.
There's a passage and I didn't write it down that angels in heaven will come up and marvel and say what was it like that Jesus came to earth and died for your sins and saved you and tell them because see they didn't experience that.
They're not lost they're not saved. Jesus didn't die for angels. They'll be with the Lord for eternity.
But we put on display the mercy of God to a dying world out here and to angels in heaven. this is summarized in a great passage found in the book of Romans.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Romans chapter 9 verse 23 to 24 in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon the vessels of mercy.
[28:22] We're vessels of mercy. That's who we are. Vessels of mercy which he prepared beforehand for glory. Even us here we go whom he also called not from among Jews only but also from among Gentiles.

And the Jews would take a deep gasp and say Gentiles? They had a disconnect with that but it's true. when a person is truly called they are truly saved.
If God calls you you've been saved. And if God has called you he will keep you truly saved.
You're not going to fall away. if he's put the call on you. At no time did we earn God's favor. It was all granted by grace and thus it will never be taken away.
We live in a time predicted by Peter and Jude and John and Paul and other men who labored in the word.
[29:55] It is a time of danger with false teachers spreading their lies but for our part we can rest in the security of God's gracious call.

Have you ever heard Jesus call you? And I'm assuming I'm talking to believers okay? now obviously I'm not talking about hearing Jesus with your ears but if Jesus has called you to eternal! life then he arranged for you to hear that call and let me prove it from scripture this is Jesus speaking John chapter 10 verse 27 to 30 my sheep hear my voice that's a call that we can hear my sheep not with our ears with our eyes and our brain my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give eternal life to them and they will never perish!
Ever! And no one will snatch them out of my hand! My father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the father's hand I and the father are one I got in a big debate in a group setting with guys that thought you could lose your salvation and I read that and they said well I understand that no one can snatch us out but maybe we could jump out I said why would you want to jump out anyway when the Jews heard Jesus say this they reacted in an amazing way they picked up stones to kill the Lord didn't get by with it covered called tonight next Monday we're going to talk about being loved or beloved and being kept and then at some point we're going to review an exhortation that Jude provides for us he's going to give us an exhortation in closing my wife found this quote and she didn't know what I was working on she had no clue but she said look what I found and she brought it to me and I said I'm going to include that in my lesson she found this quote from Charles Spurgeon we call him the prince of preachers Englishman Baptist not southern Baptist we weren't around then and just close with reverence filling our hearts as we hear Reverend Spurgeon speaking of our need for grace think of these words beloved
[33:33] Christian reader in matters of grace you need a daily supply you have no store of strength day by day you must seek help from above it is a very sweet assurance that a daily portion is provided for you in the word through the ministry by meditation in prayer and waiting upon God you shall receive renewed strength in Jesus all needful things are laid up for you then enjoy your continual allowance never go hungry while daily bread of grace is on the table of mercy you should never go hungry

Thank you.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host