

# Ordination of Rupert Hunt-Taylor & Charge

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Preacher: William Philip/Dick Lucas

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Now some words of introduction. We are a church in the Presbyterian tradition. That means that although we, of course, believe that the focus of ordinary church life is within the local congregation, nevertheless, each congregation, at least each true gospel congregation, is not independent, but is rather interdependent, along with all other gospel churches, and mutually accountable to the rule of Christ himself.

That's the pattern that we see in the New Testament, when in cities like in Jerusalem or Ephesus or Corinth, the church no doubt consisted of many house churches, but their leaders could nevertheless be gathered in one place and addressed together as the oversight of the church in that place, in Corinth or Ephesus or wherever, united in interdependence under the apostolic teaching.

Now this interdependence and this mutual accountability was especially important in the issue of recognizing and accepting genuine teaching ministry, because, of course, that ministry had to be consistent and true and trusted among all the churches where teachers might travel to teach.

And so we see in Acts chapter 16, for example, that when Paul chose Timothy as his co-worker, we're told that Timothy had the approval and the support of the brothers in Lystra and Iconium.

That is a plurality of churches and leaders. And in 1 Timothy 4, Paul tells us that it was a body of presbyters, the leaders of these various churches who, along with Paul, laid hands on Timothy to ordain him, to publicly recognize him, and indeed to enable him thereby for his ministry throughout these many churches.

[ 2 : 0 0 ] And this is all bound up with a matter of authority and accountability. To be ordained like that by a group of leaders is to be accountable to them, because these men are responsible for conferring that pastoral office and task upon you.

That's why Paul is able later to write, to exhort Timothy in the pastoral epistles, to encourage him in his calling, appealing back to that ordination. And he does so because ordination in that way creates that relationship of accountability.

And of course, tied to that accountability is also authority. As the centurion remarked to Jesus, it is those recognized to be under authority who also can carry authority and who can exercise authority among others.

So Timothy is told he is to teach the truth, rebuking and reproving and exhorting, whether what he says is popular or not.

And he can only do that because his authority is recognized to come from beyond simply the congregation where he's ministering at that time, where perhaps many people do not want to hear what he is saying.

[ 3 : 2 1 ] If his authority was conferred only from within that congregation, if the pulpit was therefore effectively controlled entirely by the pew, then if the pulpit teaches what is unpopular and unwanted, that authority can simply be removed.

And indeed that pastor can simply be removed. And sadly, that is often the story in some churches where there is only entirely independent and congregational authority, where there's no recognition of any interdependence and mutual accountability among those in the wider church, among those who claim the truly apostolic succession of being preachers of the gospel of truth.

But no, churches must know that their teachers have authority. And therefore that they are to heed that teaching and submit to that teaching when perhaps sometimes they do not want to.

But part of the trust involved in that is that they also know that their teachers are held accountable to a body of trusted others who keep them and indeed who keep one another to the biblical truth and to the genuine apostolic faith.

They need to know also that if he is in error in either life or doctrine, others will hold him to account. But they also need to know that as he walks in godliness and truth and faithful ministry, he will also have the support and the force of others behind him as he may have to teach unpalatable truths, as he may have to tackle error in the life and doctrine of the church among them, both for their own good and for the wider good of the church of Jesus Christ in every place.

[ 5 : 18 ] And that, in essence, is the great value that such wider extra-congregational accountability brings to the church. Now, in the past, as we know, such presbyterial oversight for us was made up when we were bound structurally as part of the Church of Scotland.

But, of course, as that situation made abundantly clear, it is possible to be bound up structurally with those whom you might agree with on a few issues of church government and the like, but might differ with greatly on almost every matter of importance as far as the truth of the gospel is concerned.

However, real unity and therefore effective accountability comes not from structural unity, but from unity in the truth of the apostolic gospel.

And as the statement of the West of Scotland Gospel Partnership puts it, gospel unity can only be effective and meaningful where there is clear agreement on core truths, such as the person and work of Jesus Christ, the grace of God in salvation, the inerrancy of the scriptures.

And so, as part of the newly formed West of Scotland Gospel Partnership, we have bound ourselves with others locally in such gospel unity. Our churches and as leaders, well, we may differ on a few incidentals, namely concerning quantities of water, to be quite frank.

[ 6 : 50 ] But we are united in fundamentals. And we are committed to keeping one another to the historic, biblical, apostolic faith, indeed the Reformation faith of our forefathers here in Scotland.

And further, as a congregation here at the Tron, we have publicly bound ourselves to a body of presbyters in Scotland and beyond, our council of reference, to whom we and to whom I, personally, as a senior minister here, look for counsel and for accountability.

And the truth is, there is nothing in the New Testament to limit biblical, presbyterial accountability to a small geographical locality, or even to a single nation.

Indeed, the reverse is the case. The New Testament churches were utterly international in their relationships. And so it is that we today, with the benefits that modern communication and travel can give us, we are able to be part of a truly worldwide presbytery, a truly gospel worldwide fellowship with those with whom we are at one in the gospel truth, and with whom we share bonds that are real, and accountability that is therefore realistic, as we keep one another to the faith of our fathers in gospel work.

And so that is why this ordination service this evening is not just a congregational matter, but a presbyterial one. We have a presbytery here.

[ 8 : 25 ] We have a body of presbyters, of pastor teachers of the church who know us and who know Rupert and who are at one with us in the gospel. And together, they will act to ordain our brother Rupert to the ministry of Christ's church, a ministry that they all recognize and they all therefore will have a part in.

And so we have brothers from the West of Scotland Gospel Partnership. Craig Dyer is with us from Harper Church and John Mowatt is with us from Greenview Church. We have some representatives of our own church's Council of Reference.

We have Dick Lucas and Peter Dixon and we have Martin Allen. And we also have Richard who has been preaching to us from the Florida Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the USA and also from New York Presbytery Tom Oates who's with us for the conference next week.

And of course, we also have our senior associate pastors from our own church here. And also, I might tell you, we have greetings, some of which you'll hear a little later from various others who, in their absence, are nevertheless associating themselves with the ordination taking place this evening.

And so I'm going to invite all of our visiting Presbyters here to come forward. And Rupert, would you come forward here and stand on the step up here? Rupert, it is a great personal joy for me, as I'm sure it is for our whole congregation this evening, for you to come before us and to be ordained.

[ 9 : 59 ] I will never forget when you came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ here some eight years ago at a time of great personal struggle and darkness for me, for which I thank God.

I had the joy of marrying you to this wonderful lady who is at your side. I've baptized your two little ones, and I hope we'll do the next 15 as well.

That bit wasn't in the script. But I have watched you and worked with you over these last five years as you've trained with us, first as an apprentice in ministry, then as an assistant on our staff.

I have rejoiced with others in seeing the development of your gifts, and now I gladly sit under your ministry of teaching and learn many things from you, for which I thank God.

And so it's a great joy that I have this privilege of overseeing your ordination this evening. And so in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sole king and head of the church, who being ascended on high has given gifts for the edifying of the body of Christ, we're met as a body of pastor teachers to ordain Rupert Hunt Taylor to the office of the holy ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands by presbyters to whom it belongs, and to confirm him in his appointment as associate minister in this congregation, the Tron Church, and also to rejoice in due time that he will become a part-time tutor at our Cornhill training course.

[ 11 : 38 ] And in this act, this congregation as part of the Holy Catholic or Universal Church worshipping one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit affirms anew its belief in the gospel of the sovereign grace and love of God, wherein through Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, incarnate, crucified, and risen.

He freely offers to all people upon repentance and faith the forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, and calls them to labor in the fellowship of faith for the advancement of the kingdom of God throughout the world.

The Tron Church acknowledges the word of God written in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme rule of faith and life and avows the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith founded thereupon.

It holds, as its subordinate standard, the Westminster Confession of Faith, containing the sum and substance of the faith of the Reformed Church, recognizing liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine as do not enter into the substance of the faith.

And for the avoidance of doubt, the substance of our faith includes, at least, everything expressed in the evangelical statement of belief of the West of Scotland Gospel Partnership, of which we are a founding church member.

[ 13 : 02 ] And so, Rupert, I put these vows to you. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus as your Savior and Lord?

I do. Do you believe the word of God, that is, the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme rule of faith and life? I do. Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

And are you determined out of the said scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge and to teach nothing as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the scripture?

I am so persuaded and have so determined by God's grace. Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away from the church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word and to use both public and private monitions and exhortations to the sick as to the whole as need shall require and occasion shall be given?

I will. The Lord being my helper. Will you be diligent in prayer and in the reading of the Holy Scriptures and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same laying aside the study of the world and the flesh?

[ 14 : 26 ] I will endeavor say to do the Lord being my helper. Will you be diligent to frame and fashion your own self and your family according to the doctrine of Christ and to make both yourself and them as much as in you lies wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?

I will apply myself there too. The Lord being my helper. Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the confession of faith of this church and do you acknowledge the government of this church to be agreeable to the word of God?

I do. Do you promise to be subject in the Lord to those to whom is committed the charge and government over you following with glad mind and will their godly admonitions and submitting yourself to their godly judgments?

I will be so. The Lord being my helper. Do you promise to seek the peace and unity of this church to uphold its doctrine worship and government and so cherish a spirit of love to all your brothers and sisters in Christ?

I do. Are not zeal for the glory of God love to the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire for the salvation of men so far as you know your own heart your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the office of the holy ministry?

[ 15 : 43 ] They are. Do you engage in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ to live a godly and circumspect life and faithfully diligently and cheerfully to discharge the duties of your ministry seeking in all things the advancement of the kingdom of God?

I do. Almighty God who has given you this will to do all these things grant also unto you strength and power to perform the same that he may accomplish his work which has begun in you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. You're now required to sign the appointed formula as a seal of the vows that you're made. While Rupert is signing I'll read what the formula states.

I, Rupert Hunt Taylor believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the statement of belief of the West of Scotland Gospel Partnership. I declare that I believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme rule of faith and life and I accept the system of doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith as the subordinate standard of this church and will uphold these teachings and proclaim them to the church and the world.

I acknowledge the government of this church to be agreeable to the word of God and I promise to observe the order of worship and the administration of all public ordinances as the same or are maybe allowed in this church.

[17:18] Will the congregation stand? Let us pray. Let us pray. God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ you call us in your mercy you sustain us by your power through every generation your wisdom supplies our need you sent your only son Jesus Christ to be the apostle and high priest of our faith and shepherd of our souls by his death and resurrection he has overcome death and having ascended into heaven has poured out his spirit making some apostles some prophets and evangelists some pastors and teachers to equip all for the work of ministry and to build up his body the church.

church and so we pray you now to pour out your Holy Spirit upon this your servant Rupert whom we now in your name and in obedience to your will by the laying on of hands ordain and appoint to the office of the holy ministry within one holy catholic and apostolic church committing to him authority to minister your word and sacraments and to share in the government of your church give him joy in serving you give him patience in affliction and keep him faithful in that he may be kept strong in your service until with all your servants you bring him to share in your eternal joy through Christ who died for us rose again and lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God now and forever amen and now Rupert

I declare you to be ordained to the office of the holy ministry in token of which we give you the right hand of fellowship the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you please everyone be seated I said that we had some other greetings from those who were not able to be with us and Tom McGill is going to come and just read some of those to us now we have had many messages of support and goodwill including from those of our council of reference who are unable to be with us this evening including Tim Keller the minister of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City and Alistair Begg the minister of Parkside Church in Ohio but I'd like to read to you two greetings in particular the first is from the Anglican Mission in England a new grouping of Anglican churches outwith the Church of England who have sent us a warm letter from the Reverend

Justin Mote the chairman and the Reverend Andy Lyons the general secretary who is also the director of Crosslinks and a colleague of Alan Purser who was with us a few weeks ago we are thrilled on behalf of the Anglican Mission in England to express our support and solidarity with you our brothers and sisters in Christ on the occasion of Rupert's ordination we in the Church of England are experiencing many of the same pressures that you're facing in Scotland and are very conscious of the importance of contending together for the same gospel once delivered please be assured of our love and prayers and of our desire to partner with you in the great cause of proclaiming salvation in Christ to the ends of the earth not least in Scotland and England for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus the second greeting is from Archbishop Peter Jensen secretary of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans and former Archbishop of Sydney and one of our

Council of Reference the apostle describes himself and his associates as competent to be ministers of the new covenant not of the letter but of the spirit this describes the glorious but honourous ministry of the word Rupert you are to be appointed as one who will fulfill this ministry I pray that you will do so not under compulsion but willingly as God would have you not for shameful gain but eagerly not domineering over those in your charge but being an example to the flock the leadership and the people of your church have made a sacrificial stand on the authority of the scriptures through which Christ the head of the church rules his flock for this I thank God with all my heart and dear brother I thank God for you as you continue to stand faithfully with them on the same great principle may the Lord bless you and all who are with you this day and always thank you Tom well we're going to sing before Dick Lucas comes and brings a charge to Rupert and to us number 597 preachers of the God of grace heralds of the dawning day fit them Lord for all they face prove their calling guide their way number 597

[ 23 : 21 ] Praising is the name but only in the knowledge is the May Lord is the odds are to Na said  
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CHOIR SINGS It is that famous exhortation contained in the ancient ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer and is a fine example of the standards of the 16th century Reformation.

Perhaps with family and many friends present, I was too occupied to listen properly to the long admonitions and solemn words. Had I done so, I might well have done a run-up.

As the heavy responsibilities of pastoral ministry were relentlessly set before me. Certainly the office of a minister, steward and watchman in the Church of God is a weighty one.

[ 26 : 46 ] And there will be many and numerous difficulties to be met with in the course of your service. But while it is a serious call, it is also a very happy one. It could be that in the old prayer book, Church, the note of joy was not sufficiently marked.

For have you not been summoned by God and his people to glorious work? Is not the Lord Jesus a wonderful Savior, friend, and Lord? Can you conceive of a greater privilege than to preach to the people the unsearchable riches of Christ?

So, my brother, whatever the pressures and perplexities that must lie ahead for any shepherd of Christ's flock in a hostile world, remember Paul.

Imprisoned in Rome, strangely surrounded by envy and rivalry in that infant church, and writing to comfort his Philippian friends in their most painful struggles, his message, as you will well recall, is to rejoice in the Lord.

And again he says, rejoice. And what of Christ? As he speaks to his anxious disciples about his own soon departure, he has this to say, As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.

[ 28 : 09 ] Now remain in my love. If you obey my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. Serve the Lord with gladness.

Next, I call upon you to serve the Lord with integrity. This again was emphasized by Paul as we discover in those initial words of his great farewell to the Ephesian elders.

You know, he writes, how I lived. Notice that. How I lived before he even talks about his preaching. You notice, he writes, how I lived the whole time I was with you.

I served the Lord with great humility and tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you.

[ 29 : 12 ] It is very easy to miss the point here. Paul is not bragging or asking for their admiration and applause. He is meeting head-on the smears and vile misrepresentations leveled against him by his enemies within as well as without the church.

They have accused him of arrogance, of being a control freak, of seeking personal gain, and of failing to preach the Christian gospel in all its fullness.

In reply, Paul says to the Ephesians, you know. Three times, he says, you know, you know, you know, my way of life and my work among you.

My brother, the visible church has never been without cheats and charlatans among its leaders and ministers. They cause great mischief amongst God's people.

You will have nothing to do with their appeal or methods, however alluring or apparently successful they may seem to be. For Christ's servants have renounced once and for all secret and shameful ways.

[ 30 : 25 ] I call you then to pastoral integrity. Finally, I charge you to serve the Lord with boldness. We who are older can recall the blessing of personal freedom in society, which freedom is now under real threat.

But the apostles must have faced far more threatening times. Yet how courageous they were. So you are not to be afraid. In recent days, we witnessed the 70th anniversary of D-Day and heard the fine tributes paid to the heroes from Britain, America, and other countries who dared to storm through those open beaches among the hail of bullets.

I think my particular hero is the late Lord Lovett with his trusty pipe-up, though I hate the noise, leading his commands into battle. Yet is it not the case that we Christians are in a greater battle and a more demanding warfare still?

Bunyan's Mr. Steadfast and Mr. Valiant for truth are going to be greatly needed in our time. If the gospel is to be proclaimed fearlessly, as it should be.

You, therefore, my friend, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the prayers of God's people will support you. So may joy, integrity, and courage mark your life and ministry, now and in the future, for Jesus' sake and for the good of his people.

[ 32 : 03 ] Amen and amen. One of the unmissable things in an occasion like this is the wideness of the fellowship that we have with the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ all throughout the world.

Those present with us this evening, the greetings that we've received reminds us of that joy in the communion of saints. But not only horizontally, as it were, across the world today, but our standing as one with the Church of Jesus Christ throughout all the ages.

For we're part of that great story that will not end until the coming of our Lord himself in glory. And we are part of that great company of saints who will meet him with joy on that day.

So as we end this evening, we are to sing together the hymn on the screens that reminds us of these things. For all the saints who from their labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confess thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.

Hallelujah. O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold, fight as the saints who nobly fought of old and win with them the victor's crown of gold.

[ 33 : 39 ] Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hello.

Hallelujah. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you. Alleluia, alleluia.

The way our souls is given to our Lord, I have no Rodgers, who love in God ofétat.

And I am then, I am then, A great God's love of God. Alleluia, alleluia.

[ 35 : 10 ] This fall is a Egyptian dive. In the ■ wow, enameling provide, There's all our life.

In the Lord's name, O Lord, and the Lord, O Lord, and the Lord.

The rest of us, The rest of us, The rest of us, The rest of us, The rest of us, The rest of us, The rest of us, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Let's pray.

The peace of God, Which passes all understanding, God, your hearts and your minds, In Christ Jesus, And God will supply every need of yours, According to his riches in glory, In Christ Jesus.

To God, Our Father, be glory forever and ever. Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God, And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with you all.

[ 37 : 06 ] Amen. Amen. And if any of you want to come and greet, Rupert and Jen at the front after the service, I'm sure they'll be very glad for you to do so. Thank you for being with us.

Do stay for tea and coffee. And I hope we'll see you again soon. Soon. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Bye. Thank you.

Thank you.