

Induction of Rev.Thomas Davis

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Preacher: Rev. David Macleod

[0 : 0 0] Good evening and a warm welcome to this service, this induction service this evening. We gathered together to worship God and we gathered together for the induction of the Reverend Thomas Stalys to the Pastel Charge of Carlyle Free Church of Scotland. So a warm welcome to those who are in the building, there's a few in the building and a warm welcome to those who are tuning in online, I'm not sure where the camera is but it's good to know also that there are those from different places around the country who are joining together to worship God. So let's begin this time of worship and we'll sing to God's praise. We sing to God's praise from Psalm 24 verses 1 to verse 5 of the Psalm. Psalm 24 verses 1 to 5, the earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundations thereof, he uniseased it lay and he hath it established upon the floods to stay and down to the end of verse 5 and we stand to sing and we sing to God's praise.

Psalm 24 verses 1 to 5, the earth belongs unto the Lord and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and all that there remains for the foundation of the world that is inhabited and righteousness in from the core of its salvation.

Let's unite our hearts and pray, our heavenly Father we thank you that this evening we have the invitation, we have the call, we have the desire to come together in this place and we thank you that we gather with that desire to worship you.

We praise you Lord for who you are, you are the God who has revealed yourself to us and we thank you even as we meditate upon the words of the the Psalm that we have sung we see something Lord of your majesty and of your glory. We praise you that you are our maker, you are our creator, the God who made everything that we see everything that we are the earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains. Lord we confess that as we meditate upon these words our minds our finite minds are not as sufficient to be able to grasp the the reality in the wonder of it but we thank you for the faith that you give to us where we're able to take hold of these truths and accept them and bow before you as the God who who made us. We thank you Lord that you made us for a reason you have made us so that we can be in relationship with you you made us for yourself and we think of the words of Augustine who said our hearts are restless until they find rest in me and we pray that we would know that rest even this evening as we bow in your presence. We confess

Lord that because of our sin we have no rest because of our sin we are enemies of God we are distant from God but we thank you Lord that you have made it possible for us to be saved you're the God of our salvation. We thank you for Jesus your Son our Savior. We thank you for all that he did on that cross to take our sin away and we pray Lord that we would never drift from that cross that we would never tire of looking to the hill of Calvary. Now plus we pray Lord to to know the wonder of the cross day by day as we return to it and cleanse us we pray in the blood that was shed at Calvary wash us in the blood of Jesus that we may be made clean. So Lord as we confess our sin we pray that you would forgive us as we look in faith to Jesus we pray that you would receive us and Lord as we trust in your word we pray that we may sense your presence amongst us we commit this service to you lead us and guide us and worship open your word to us that we may hear and understand and believe and guide us Lord in all that we have to do all that we rejoice to do this evening in the induction of Thomas back into this place we pray for your blessing and your guidance on every aspect of this evening for that you would guide us and that your hand would be upon us for good. So hear our prayers and lead us as we look to you and we pray this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. If you could turn with me please now to the book of Proverbs we've got two readings the first reading is from Proverbs chapter 3 and the second reading from John chapter 15. So Proverbs chapter 3 and we'll read from verse 1 down to verse 12. This is God's word.

[8 : 44] My son do not forget my teaching but let your heart keep my commands for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you.

Bind them round your neck write them on the tablet of your heart so you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths be not wise in your own eyes. Fear the Lord and turn away from evil it will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce then your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will be bursting with wine.

My son do not despise the Lord's discipline or be weary of his reproof for the Lord reproves him whom he loves as a father the son in whom he delights. And we'll turn now to to John chapter 15.

John chapter 15 and we will read from verse 1 down to verse 11. Jesus said I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser every branch of mine that does not bear fruit he takes away and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes that it may bear more fruit already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine neither can you unless you abide in me I am the vine you are the branches whoever abides in me and I in him he it is that bears much fruit for apart from me you can do nothing if anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered thrown into the fire and burned if you abide in me and my words abide in you ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you by this my father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples as the father has loved me so have I loved you abide in my life if you keep my commandments you will abide in my love just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love these things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full amen and may god add his blessing to these readings of this word let's pray for just a moment again our heavenly father we thank you for your word we thank you that you have given us the gift of your word that's food for our souls man cannot live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God and so we pray that you would feed our souls just now give us that sense of expectation that you will meet with us and speak to us and clear from our minds anything that would distract us from the sense of your presence with us and the belief that you will that you will speak lord we pray for your help we know that unless the holy spirit is our teacher we cannot see and hear and understand and so we pray for the help of the holy spirit that the words that we read would not simply be heard in our ears and would not simply make sense in our minds but we pray that you would touch our hearts lord that you would transform us we pray for anyone who's here tonight or who's listening who has not yet trusted in christ we pray that they would know that sense of Jesus calling even through the scriptures that we have read and for those lords who are following you those in the building those who are at a distance we pray that you would speak into our hearts and enable us to hear your voice and we pray this in Jesus name and for his sake amen

I want to think for just a few moments tonight about wisdom if you've got Proverbs chapter 3 open in front of you that would be that would be helpful we're going to think just for a few moments about about wisdom it's one of these one of these things it's a very precious commodity that we spend much of our life reaching for searching for but we never fully grasp it John Calvin said this is our wisdom to be learners to the end so we never get to a point where we have grasped everything that we need to know in terms of wisdom we always have the L place on we're always learning we're always seeking to receive wisdom as Thomas and Una and the family begin a new chapter in ministry in a place that's familiar they need wisdom and for every believer who gathers here and elsewhere we we need wisdom we're called to be salt and light we're called to be those who are in the world but not of the world and we need wisdom to know how how to live that out and even in our culture as we're conscious of things becoming more secular and Christians becoming more vulnerable we need wisdom and this Jesus sent out the disciples and in Matthew chapter 10 verse 16 he said behold I am sending you out the sheep in the midst of wolves so be wise as serpents and innocent as dogs we need wisdom so where does wisdom come from well Calvin tells us wisdom is not the growth of human genius it must be sought from above James chapter 3 verse 17 says wisdom comes from heaven and Proverbs is a book and scripture where the wisdom from heaven is imparted to those who are on earth below and what I want to do in the time that we have is consider two verses from the book of wisdom and there are worse there are verses that probably many of you will know off by heart even the youngest we may know these verses verses five and six from Proverbs chapter three trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths so from these verses three points for wise living and the first point that we come to is we're called as those who are to live wisely we're called to trust in the Lord that's the first thing and then the second thing is we're called to be humble and the third thing is we're called to acknowledge the Lord so first of all our primary calling is to trust the Lord trust in the Lord verse five with all your heart and these are things these are words that we often say and we often hear but what actually doesn't mean in practical terms to trust in the Lord well the word in verse five literally means to yield oneself one of the commentators says it's to live face down helpless there's that whole idea of submission of of lying face down helpless before

[17 : 41] the Lord the picture that's used from the the biblical context is that of a servant waiting for for a master's command or for a soldier yielding himself to a general so to trust in the Lord to bow down we we yield to one who we recognize is is more worthy than we are we see the greatness of God we see the smallness of ourselves and to trust in the Lord we bow down before him which is an easy thing to say but sometimes it can be hard to do it was Mark Twain who said it ain't those parts of the Bible that I can't understand that bother me it's the parts that I do understand this is one of them we understand what it means to trust the Lord in our heads but we struggle to live this out in day-to-day life we struggle at times at junctures to lie down and submit before God as he speaks to us as he challenges us as he meets with us so there's two things that we are to remember when we find that we are being stubborn we're being slow to trust slow to yield the first thing is we're to we're to remember who it is we're trusting we're called to to trust in the Lord so who is the Lord well even if we have the

Psalm that we sang in front of us open we see that he's the author he's the founder he's the establisher the sustainer of all creation that's the Lord he is the holy God he is the the king of glory he's the one who is strong and mighty in battle he's the Lord Almighty this is who we're called to trust or think about Isaiah 40 that familiar passage we we learn there that there's no there's no comparable there's no one who compares to God the one we're called to trust says in verse 18 of Isaiah 40 to whom then will you compare God what image will you compare him to as for an idol a craftsman casts it and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and fashions silver chains for it a man too poor to present such an offering selects wood that will not rot he looks for a skilled craftsman to set up an idol that will not topple do you not know have you not heard has it not been told you from the beginning have you not understood since the earth was founded he sits and thrown above the circle of the earth and its people are like grasshoppers he stretches out the heavens like a canopy and spreads them out like a tent to live in he brings princes to naught he reduces the rulers of this world to nothing and we could go a thousand other places in search to see the greatness the power the majesty the might of the Lord and this is who calls us to trust him this is the one who reveals himself to us we don't get to decide what what God looks like we don't get to craft our own God who comes in a manageable form as we read there in Isaiah we see in scripture that the Lord he reveals himself to us and his power and his majesty and his might as we even get a glimpse of that surely we bow before him if a servant falls before a master if a soldier falls before a general surely we little grasshoppers that we are will fall down and yield ourselves in faith to the Lord trust in the Lord and to do that we remember first of all who it is we're trusting and as we see him we're encouraged to trust him but the second thing we can do when we find ourselves struggling to trust in the Lord is we remember what he's done for us we remember who he is that we remember secondly what he's done for us you've probably heard the story there's a few young folks here tonight so let me tell you a story that you might have heard before it's about a a man who was called Blondin and he was a tightrope walker and he was famous for all kinds of stunts all kinds of tricks you know what a tightrope is you see them in circuses suspended at high level and these people who balance and they try and walk

across this tightrope well that's what this man did and in his most famous stunt he he got a tightrope and he suspended it high over the Niagara Falls if you don't know what they are you can google them later on now there's this crashing waters underneath this tightrope that's suspended at high level there's no safety ropes there's no safety nets he's just standing there he was in another age and he said do you think I can cross they weren't sure and off he went he walked across do you think I can jog across and then he starts jogging across this tightrope he dances even across the tightrope and then he says do you think I can take this wheelbarrow full of bricks across the tightrope not sure about that but there he went no problem over he went and back he went they were amazed they were cheering and then he says to the crowd do you think I could take a man and put him in the wheelbarrow and carry him over on the tightrope and they all said yes hands went up cheering yes of course he can and he says that's good let's have a volunteer please and all the hands that were up went straight down nobody was willing to trust themselves to Blondin and that's a picture of us sometimes before God sometimes in our lives we find it hard we may be not willing to trust God when he asks us to do something and yet the reality is we trust lots of other people my daughter was at the dentist this morning and when she sat in the chair she asked to trust the dentist sometimes we go to the doctor and sometimes we go to the bank with our money and we trust these people we trust family we trust friends even though sometimes we let each other down but I think the irony is that we trust other people who we know will let us down as we let other people down and yet we struggle to trust the Lord who will never let us down and who has never let us down and when did the Lord last fail us when did he ever prove himself to be untrustworthy and the answer to that question is never and the writer in Proverbs he knew that and he could look back over the salvation history of

God's people he could think back to the Exodus from Egypt he could think back to the conquest of the land of Canaan or the journey through the wilderness and not once had God let them down we could go to Psalm 22 where the psalmist wrote in you our fathers put their trust they trusted and you delivered them they cried to you and were saved in you they trusted and were not disappointed so the old testament writers they could look back to all that God had done for them and they knew that he was absolutely trustworthy so what about us where do we go where do we look to to be reminded of the fact that God is trustworthy well we look to the cross we remember what the Lord Jesus did for us for our salvation that's where we see the full extent of how trustworthy the Lord is we survey the wondrous cross as Isaac watch put it as he points us to Jesus he says see from his head his hands his feet sorrow and love flow mingled down did ever such love and sorrow meet our thorns compose so rich a crime when we are struggling to trust the Lord when we had a crisis point in our lives we must look again to the cross we must look to Jesus we must see how he laid down his life for us to take our sin from us to take the punishment of God's wrath for us and to give eternal life to us and when we see what he has done for us surely surely surely we can trust him so the first thing we see here is we are called as those who seek to live wisely and we are to trust in the Lord and the second thing here much more briefly is we are to be humble verse 5 still do not lean on your own understanding it's what we are called to do here we are not to lean on our own understanding and we might ask the question well who was this written to originally who was this intended to be to be heard by why was this for pagans was this for faithless people was this a message that was to be sent out to those who were who were unbelievers well well no this was a message that was to be delivered to faithful people to believers and God says to this do not lean on your own understanding one of the commentators atkin says the call to trust in the Lord is not an evangelistic call to outsiders but it is addressed to those who already know what it means to have faith in God and I don't know everyone in this room here tonight but I expect that many of us will be those who have put our faith in God many of us here will have already trusted in the Lord Jesus for salvation we know that we cannot save ourselves not by good works not by religion so we've put our faith in Christ

I think most of us could open up Ephesians chapter 2 verses 8 and 9 and say it's by grace we've been saved through faith not from ourselves it's a gift of God not by works so that no one boasts we can put our amen to that we rejoice from that we're not leaning on ourselves for for salvation we're leaning on God for salvation but the nonsensical thing is that sometimes a we who have trusted the Lord for salvation can revert to leaning on our own understanding for many other things we think about the eternal things this huge issue we trust Christ and we come to our day by day lives and we revert to leaning on our own understanding is that not true are we not guilty of this on occasions of leaning on our own understanding failing to trust God in the day-to-day things of life and ministry well how will we know is there a test that we can take to show us if we are prone to be leaning on our own understanding well there is a test that we can take it's called the worry test some of us can remember the chemistry class some of you perhaps are in the chemistry class from time to time remember if you were given a beaker full of liquid and you were asked the question what's in it you could take the the ph paper and you could dip the ph paper in and it would tell you if the liquid was was water or if it was acid it's a spiritual test that will show us if the acid of leaning on our own understanding is it is prevalent in our hearts well it is it's called the worry test the worry that preoccupies us through the day the worry that that keeps us up in the middle of the night that indicates what's going on in our hearts worry is one of these signals that indicates when we're not trusting the Lord enough and when we're perhaps leaning on our own understanding too much remember what Jesus says to us in Matthew 6 he said it to the first disciples he says it to us through them he says oh you have little faith do not worry and you know that's a that's a word to take into a new chapter in ministry whether it's Thomas and family or whether it's the office payers whoever it is that's a word that we take with us into to ministry wherever we are do not worry don't lean on your own understanding because it's pride that causes us to lean on our own understanding and it leads us further and further into sin remember that's what it all began in the garden Adam and Eve decided that they would lean on their own understanding rather than trusting in the Lord and look what it took them and us after them

[34 : 31] see our calling as simple as it is as children of God we're trusting in Christ our calling is is to be humble and to trust God and when a wave of worry crashes in as it does often we're to treat that as an alarm a signal that tells us it's time to pray every worry that comes in take it as an alarm that says it's time to pray whatever it is whatever situation whatever scene whatever person whatever burden it comes in it weighs us down it's a signal take it to the Lord in prayer today's day one of the summer holidays that's why the young ones are smiling and when we see children at the beginning of the summer holidays especially there's such a sense of freedom six or seven weeks stretching out ahead of them they wake up at six o'clock in the morning not at nine they've got a spring in their step they've got all these adventures to go to they've got such joy about them they're not walking around with the weight of the world on their shoulders they're not worried about anything very much because they trust their parents they'll take care of them and so after they go on an adventure that's a picture of how we should be as Christians or to be childlike in our in our faith or to be those who who trust in our Heavenly Father and lean not on our own understanding trust in the Lord lean not on your own understanding and the final thing very briefly is we're to acknowledge the

Lord. Testament verse six in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your path straight or he will make straight your paths and and just notice the detail there in the verse it doesn't say in some of your ways acknowledge him doesn't say take the spiritual and compartmentalize that and acknowledge that bring that to the Lord it says in all your ways acknowledge him and the word acknowledge there in the original language it's a word that can also it can also mean to be intimate with so in that sense of acknowledging the Lord there's a call there to to be close with the Lord we sometimes sing of him offer a closer walk with God a calm and heavenly frame a light to shine upon the road that leads me to the Lamb and you know that's the key the Christian life and ministry to walk close with the Lord so I would add John 15 our primary calling is disciples as those who are ministers every Christian is called to be a minister it's given a different kind of ministry but our calling our primary calling is is to remain in him it's to be close to the Lord that's the key to the fruitfulness in ministry it's to abide in the vine it's to be close to Jesus because apart from him you and I and everyone we can do nothing nothing to our primary calling I'll say it again is to acknowledge it's to be intimate with Jesus in all our ways on all our days and when we live like this we have this promise and he will make your your path straight and the picture again in the original is a picture of God going before us hammering out an even way sometimes you see these big big diggers and and they hammer out a road where there was no road they they've got such power that they they paved the way ahead that they make a straight road where before it was just a big bog and that's what God does when we trust him we stay close to him we follow him he makes our path straight to when we lean on our own understanding literally it's lean on our own insight we go down wrong ways because we're short sighted you know I'm short sighted I can

I can see up close that's fine but if you were to ask me to take you off in the distance without the specs who knows what I'd take you but the Lord that we're called to trust he's not short sighted he sees all things he has an eternal perspective he sees the end from the beginning and he's sovereign overall and he loves us and he promises that he's working all things all things all things together for the good of those who love him so we can trust him I need to finish trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths let's pray our heavenly Father we we thank you for the the simplicity really of of what we're called to as Christians we thank you that you're the God who has taken us from the far country into the place where we can be close to you we thank you once more for for all that was done to make that possible how can sinners come close to God but we can't unless our sin is dealt with and so we we thank you again for the cross we thank you again Father for for sending your Son we thank you for the blood of Jesus that that purifies us from all sin we thank you for that curtain that tore from top to bottom to show it the way into the presence of God is now open because of the death and the resurrection of Jesus and help us we pray to look often to the cross help us we pray in a world that is so preoccupied with ourselves and help us to lift our eyes and to be in awe of the wonder and the majesty and the might of who you are we confess Lord that we are so easily distracted and when we are distracted our faith can fail but help us we pray to look to you to fix our eyes upon Jesus help us to to walk close with the Lord Jesus help us to heed that primary calling to the disciples to be with him and we thank you Lord that when we are with you you are the one who makes us fruitful in the measure that you determine that you will have us be fruitful and we pray that you would use us to bring glory to your name to hear our prayers help us to trust you with all our hearts help us not to lean on our own understanding and forgive us for the times that we do help us to acknowledge you to come close to you in all our ways to hide nothing and we pray Lord that you would do what you promise that you will do you will make straight our paths as we look to you and we pray that you would do that in Jesus name we ask these things

I mean we'll be