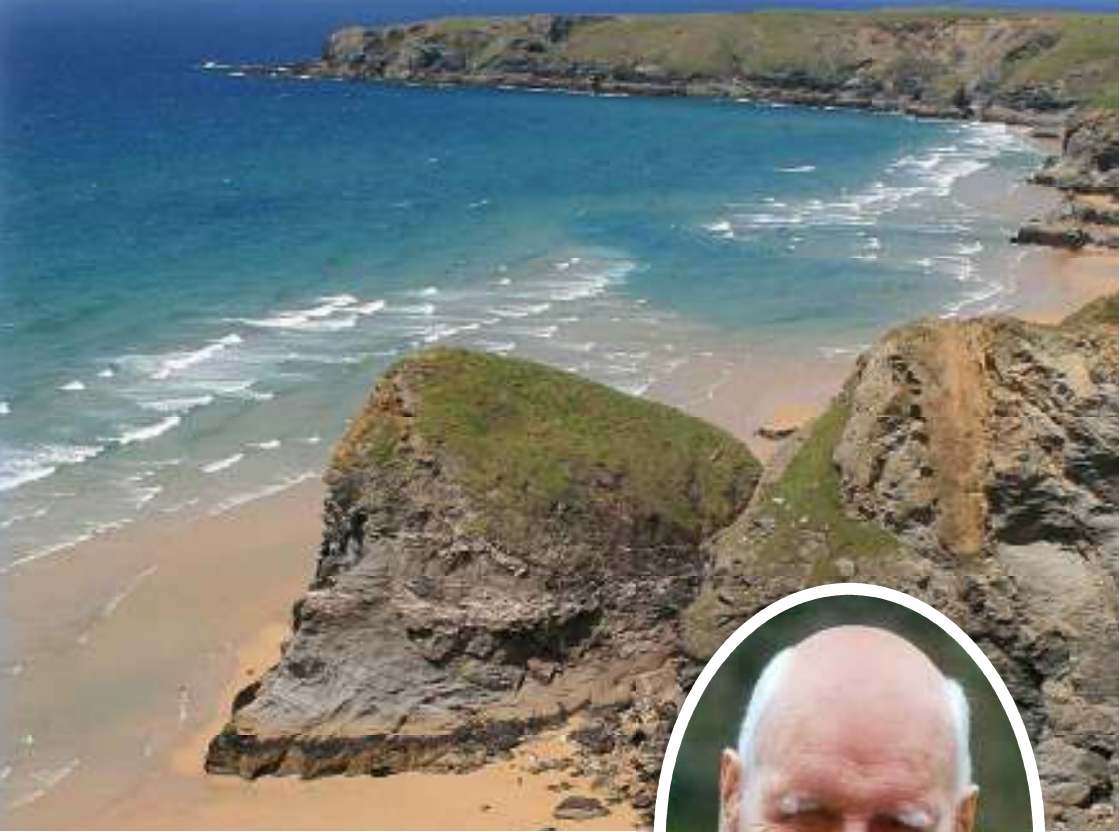
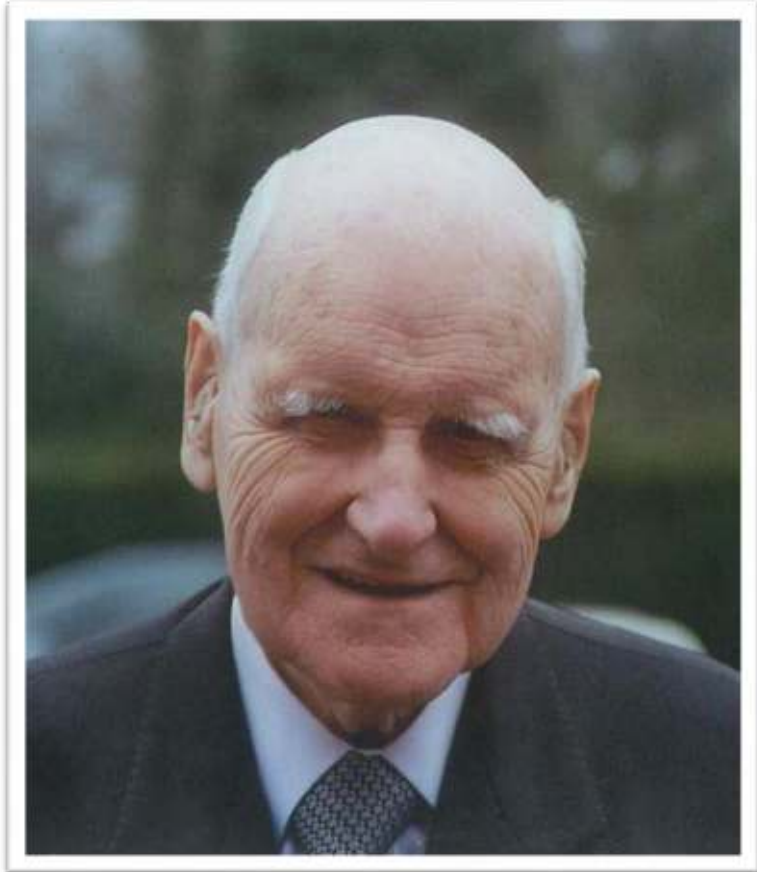


The Life and Ministry of Clement Wood



The Life and Ministry
of
Clement Wood



Clement Wood

The Life and Ministry
of
Clement Wood
1920-2010

Pastor of Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon, 1961-2005

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The front cover picture is of Bedruthan Steps, between Padstow and Newquay in Cornwall, a place Clement Wood often visited.

The back cover picture shows the interior of Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon.

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Preface

Almighty God, speaking through His servant, the prophet, Jeremiah, said: "I will give you pastors according to Mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jeremiah 3:15). Throughout the history of His Church on earth, God has remained faithful to His promise, even to our own generation. The subject of this memoir, Clement Wood, was one of those "pastors, according to God's heart" as the succeeding pages show.

It was one's privilege to know Clement, firstly as a much-loved minister of the gospel, as a hearer, and then as a fellow-labourer among the Gospel Standard Churches and others, which he served so faithfully, loyally and lovingly over the long years of his ministry.

The three things which stood out in our late friend's testimony are:

Firstly, his deep love for Christ and His gospel. Clement preached from the heart of things he had "handled of the Word of life" (1 John 1:1).

Secondly, his great love for the people of God, not only his flock at Tamworth Road, whom he dearly loved, but also for all in whom he could discern the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, he had a yearning for the increase of Christ's kingdom in the ingathering of souls from the ruin of the fall in Adam. In this, his wholehearted active support and involvement in the Trinitarian Bible Society, supporting its aims and principles, was but one example of his desire to see Christ's other sheep brought in.

His loyal and valuable service on several denominational committees often brought a faithful, balanced understanding of the many problems that faced the churches in his generation.

On a personal level, his friendship, counsel and loving concern, not just to oneself, but many others, young and old, has left a sweet savour of how a Christian should live in this world.

That he was a sinner, needing a complete Saviour, he felt most deeply, to the end of his days. He came to the grave as a shock of corn

fully ripe, prepared to sing the praises of the Lamb, in the immediate presence of a Triune God, in which sacred occupation he is now engaged, enjoying the immeasurable, fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, which he delighted to extol here below.

“The memory of the just is blessed” (Proverbs 10:7).

May we be “followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Hebrews 6:12).

Gerald D Buss

February 2018



Publisher's Note

The desire of all those involved in the preparation of this book has been to produce a fitting record of the life and ministry of the late Clement Wood to the honour and glory of God, whom he was enabled to serve for many years. His writings about his life were confined to his call by grace, to the ministry and to the pastorate. However, his family and friends have been able to provide some further memories of his life, and he made references to special occasions in one or two sermons. Extracts from all of these have been brought together to form the account of his life in which, for clarification, anything from his own writings is printed in a bigger, indented font. The funeral address preached by Mr G D Buss is also included, together with an account which Mr Wood himself wrote of his wife.

From the records available, a selection of his sermons, addresses and Bible studies follow, which it is hoped will provide a profitable cross-section of his ministry.

As a reflection of his love for children, and his gracious ability to speak to them simply of Bible truths, there are a few of his Bible studies for the young and an address to the Sunday School at Tamworth Road Chapel.

A selection of his Annual Letters to the Church and Congregation at Tamworth Road has also been included, showing the deep Christian love between the Pastor and his flock.

References to Scripture quotations have been included where necessary to make the sense complete, and sometimes if they were already in the text from a source already in print. Where hymns are quoted, the number in Gadsby's Hymnbook has been given, if the hymn is in that book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The family wish to express their grateful thanks to the many friends who have helped in different ways with the preparation of this book.

The Life of Clement Wood

Clement Arthur Wood was born on 27 June 1920 at Tunbridge Wells, Kent. His parents were Arthur George Wood (1891-1966), an esteemed minister of the gospel, and Elizabeth Sarah, nee Prall (1898-1964), from Matfield, Kent. Clement had one sister, Miriam Elizabeth (1922-2011), to whom he was very close and remained so throughout his life. Of his earliest days he records:

When I was an infant, only a few days old, my life was despaired of, and I was handed by the nurse to my mother for what was considered to be the last time, but the Lord had decreed that my life was to be spared. I have pondered over this, and hope I have been enabled to see the Lord's purpose in it.



1 - Clement Wood as a Young Boy

During his childhood years, Clement attended Rosehill School, Tunbridge Wells. He referred to the school as having had a good influence on him. Looking back, he appreciated the firm and fair discipline. The family attended Rehoboth Strict Baptist Chapel, Tunbridge Wells, to which he became much attached. He spoke of benefiting from his godly pastor, Mr Ernest Brooker, and gracious Sunday School and Bible Class teachers, and it seems that the seed of divine grace was planted in his heart when quite young, and its growth, though imperceptible to himself, could not be completely hidden. His own account continues:

I was favoured with godly parents, and, I believe, as far

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as memory will take me, that I was always glad to attend the sanctuary services. The Lord has dealt very gently with me, and this is often the source of deep exercise of soul lest my religion should consist of upbringing and natural affection, for I cannot speak as some, of a certain day, time or place, when the work was begun in my soul. But looking back, I believe I can trace, through mercy and grace, His dealings with me, for I was, in boyhood years, made to feel and know that I was a sinner in the sight of Almighty God, and when at day school we used to sing these lines, I believe the Lord fastened them as a prayer in my heart:

“Then, O my God, prepare
My soul for that great day;
O wash me in that precious blood,
And take my sins away.”

This caused me, under a felt burden of sin, to seek His face, especially that the Lord would reveal Himself to me in His Word and in the services of the sanctuary. There was now a desire, a seeking for mercy, a panting after Christ, and there were times when a little hope was raised up in my poor heart. I then attended the weeknight services and prayer meetings, and one Wednesday (30 December 1936), the Lord blessed my soul with a little hope as my late beloved Pastor (whose ministry was blessed to my soul) preached from these words: “For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name’s sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people” (1 Sam. 12:22).

Clement was 19 years old when the Second World War broke out, and he was posted to the RAF, where his first desire was to enter the Medical Corps. This was thwarted at first, as there were no vacancies. He then sought to enter Aircrew but was sent for a test and his mind went completely blank, preventing him from completing it. He felt that the Lord had stopped this and then opened, in a wonderful way, a vacancy in the Medical Corps. He was to see this as the Lord’s

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appointment as a preparation for his many years of visiting the sick in their homes and in hospitals at Croydon and elsewhere. He continues:



2 - Clement Wood in RAF Uniform

The war years followed, and I was away from home for over five years. The night before leaving home, I begged the Lord for a word, and that it should be confirmed before leaving home. I shall never forget that night – the wrestling and pleading for the Lord to appear. These words were given in the night, and were confirmed as my father read them at breakfast in the morning: “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.” (Psalm 32:8). I proved the promise true! It would not be possible for me to write of all the experiences of those five years, which included a year in Canada and a year in Singapore. The Lord laid His afflicting hand upon me when in North Wales and thus opened my eyes and stopped me in a friendship with a girl who was not one of our people. O the mercy that the Lord does not leave us to ourselves!

Just before the war, I had wondered whether we, as a people, were too strict, too “narrow.” The Lord took me

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away from our people practically the whole time I was away from home, and as I mixed with other denominations I was made to long for the old paths. I was not left entirely, for (at a church service) in Winnipeg one New Year's eve I felt much sweetness, softening, and nearness in these words:

“There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.” (160)

Canada and the Rocky Mountains was an area that often brought back memories to Clement of the Lord's care over him.

Of one occasion during the war years he recalls:

There are times when we have thanked Him for His correction, for stopping us. I look back on my life: I could trace out spots and places where the Lord has stopped me. Once under severe affliction in the war years when, following an illness in hospital, I was on convalescence: I had a “flare up” of the trouble and I went to the church service in the Air Force and the service was as dead as the seat I sat on; I felt as hard as that seat. I felt my God was angry with me, but He came, it was the last hymn:

“Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night if Thou art near.”

He came, friends, with forgiving love.

While away on military duty, changes had been taking place at home, and in one, particularly, he was to prove the Lord's kindness to him in the years that followed. At the end of the war, in the providence of God, Mr and Mrs Harold Tyler and their family, Phyllis, Reg and Ron moved to Tunbridge Wells from the Bedford area. They had spent time looking at houses for sale in Tunbridge Wells and were about to return home and to look elsewhere, when their car broke down. This resulted in a stay that night in Tunbridge Wells and so, the next

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morning, they decided to look at just one more house, which proved to be the Lord's provision for them.

When Clement returned from his time away during the war, this new family had started attending Rehoboth Chapel. Clement and Phyllis felt drawn to each other and on 6 December 1947, Phyllis became his wife. It was a very happy marriage and she was a great help to him, proving, "My life's minutest circumstance is subject to His eye."



3 - Mr and Mrs Wood's Wedding

Clement had found employment at the firm of Gilkes, a paint and wallpaper suppliers in Brighton. He spent many happy years as a commercial traveller for them, until his call to the pastorate at Tamworth Road Strict Baptist Chapel, Croydon. He writes:

After the war, I commenced working for a firm in Brighton, and as I was not then married, I lodged in Brighton during the week with an elderly friend who attended Galeed,

and I used to accompany her to the week evening services. I believe the Lord at this time deepened His work in my soul, for I felt increasingly the power of sin. I felt at times cut off, yet at other times I felt caused to hope again. I once heard the late Mr Frost preach from the early verses of John 15 and felt I had no real religion! I remember going home

after the service that night unable to speak – yet I felt more and more drawn to the Lord’s dear people, both at home and at Galeed, and was again encouraged in the hearing of Mr J H Gosden in speaking from: “And now Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee.” (Psalm 39:7).

I received many tokens and helps by the way, but O, I wanted the Lord to speak the word of peace to my soul. Early in 1947, I was thus favoured under the ministry of my Pastor from this word: “Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine.” (Isaiah 43:1). It was that assurance my soul sought after, and I felt, though such an unworthy sinner, I had an interest in His atoning blood and love; that I, though of sinners the chief, was my Beloved’s and my Beloved was mine. I could hold back no longer, but under the constraints of His love was enabled –

“... To tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I had found;
To point to His redeeming blood,
And say, ‘Behold the way to God’.” (144)

When I was baptized, I felt it to be one of the most solemn moments of my life. O for grace, much needed grace, to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. O the need of being kept! Prior to this, I had also been tried concerning the Lord’s supper, for I felt I could never take the cup, but this was sweetly broken down as I witnessed a communion service about two months before I came before the church, when it was revealed to me that it was for sinners, leading me back to those lines that had, some years previous, been sweet to me:

“And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.”

The word given me upon joining the church was, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19), and I have proved this word true in providence and in grace. It was about this time that, one Sabbath evening, the Lord so blessed my soul with token upon token of His love to me that I had to say, "Stay Thy hand, O Lord, my full soul can hold no more." But O the darkness, inward conflict and low places since then! I believe I know the experience set forth in Gadsby's hymn 295, especially the words of verse four:

"Instead of this He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,"

having often to groan and cry, "Can ever God dwell here?" and to see (the Lord knows!) dirt in my tears.

Once, when very tried in coming to the Lord's Table, I was greatly encouraged with Gadsby's hymn 447, and felt that among the children, there was room for unworthy me. Later, being elected deacon brought added weight. I felt the death of my Pastor most deeply, but I was made submissive in hearing these words preached by the late Mr Pilgrem: "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me."

Mr Brooker's death on 26 December 1953, after a short illness, was a great shock. He had been Pastor almost 25 years and the church had planned a service to mark the 25th Anniversary of the pastorate on 6 January 1954; they little realised his work was almost finished. Clement continues:

For some years I had been exercised concerning the ministry, and yet I shrank from it. But I could get no peace, and I felt the burden to grow heavier. One or two godly friends spoke to me about the matter, although I had not uttered a word of my secret exercises to them. I felt led to seek the Lord that He would confirm me in the matter, being encouraged as I read of Gideon that he said, "I am the

least," and that he desired clear signs (Judges 6:36-40). I too desired to seek the Lord that I might be granted grace to know and do His will alone. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" was my constant prayer. At the same time, I found that the Scriptures were being opened up to me in private meditation, particularly the doctrine of election and the eternal Sonship. And yet I felt increasingly the power of indwelling sin, and unfitness to stand in His name. There was a hanging back because of this, and yet there was a desire to be made obedient to His voice. The solemnity of the work of the ministry, in that it has to do with souls and eternity, then brought added weight, and all this increased with the passing of time.

In the providence of God, when spending a few days rest on the coast, Mr R J Honeysett of Cranbrook was staying at the same place, and I felt led to speak to him of these exercises. He counselled me to wait still upon the Lord. He also told me that he himself had been exercised concerning me in the matter of the ministry, and furthermore, that he had been waiting for this. A year then intervened, in which time I felt that I received from the Lord tokens that He was in the exercises of my soul, and yet I could not move in the matter. We met again the following year (August 1957), and Mr. Honeysett told me that it had been much laid upon his mind that I should take a Sunday for him at Cranbrook the following October. He wrote accordingly to me on 16 September 1957 to ask if I would preach for him at Providence, Cranbrook, on 20 October that year. I felt I could do no other than spread the letter before the Lord, for in his letter he wrote, "I am perplexed and cannot understand why I have had so many months of prayerful concern about yourself and this date. Do not think that I am trying to hurry matters. I desire grace still to commit it into

the Lord's hands, leaving the issue with Him who works all in unerring wisdom and love ..."

Going to the prayer meeting, I desired again that, if this exercise was of the Lord, there would be a word for me. I felt there was in the last hymn (Gadsby's Hymn 1066) – just when I thought it was all coming to nothing. Especially did I feel it in the last verse:

"Hast Thou a lamb in all Thy flock,
I would disdain to feed?
Hast Thou a foe, before whose face
I'd fear Thy cause to plead?"

I read through the second Epistle to the Corinthians, and I had to stop at this word: "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:16), and yet felt encouraged as I read further on: "But our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5). But the words, "A door was opened unto me of the Lord" (2 Cor. 2:12) were applied with divine power, and I felt that I could, in going back over all, say "of the Lord," for I believe the Lord had indeed opened the door. Yet, how I trembled, and still do, lest I should be a dry breast to Zion. O the tossings and exercises of soul, and yet I had to go back again to the lines:

"E'er since by faith I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die." (160)

I spoke to my fellow deacons, and arrangements were made that I should give my call to the ministry before the church, on Monday 14 October, Mr J W Tyler of the Dicker being asked to take the chair. How I begged of the Lord that, if it was not His will, He would stop me and shut my mouth. I desired to commit all unto the Lord, and to say

“Not my will, but Thine, be done,” and to be as nothing, as clay in His hands.

It was a deep concern to me that it appeared that I should be likely to attempt to preach at Cranbrook before speaking before the church at Rehoboth, but this was overruled in a remarkable way. Just before the church meeting, Mr Tyler said that if the church accepted my call to the ministry, then would I speak before them? This had not entered my mind but, in a moment, I could see the Lord’s hand and, although faced with the possibility of attempting to speak, yet I felt an inward calm, and I believe I was enabled to commit it all to the Lord. In much fear and trembling, I felt help afforded as I attempted to tell the friends of my exercises concerning the solemn work of the ministry, after which I was asked to retire to the vestry. My heart then went up to the Lord that He would appear for me and give me a word to speak. I was then put into deeper concern as two scriptures were brought to my mind. First, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37), and then, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.” This led me to further groanings before the Lord that He would appear and show me from which word I was to speak. I believe He did it for me in an unusual way. I well knew the second scripture in Hebrews, yet as I opened my Bible, I could not find it! I believe it was hidden from me, so I attempted to speak from John 6:37. As I spoke before the church, I felt I had not chosen this path, but that the Lord was in it. This was confirmed in the help afforded, as the word was applied to my soul with sweet comfort that I, though so unworthy, was one of those given by the Father to the Son in eternity past, and that He would never cast me out as He drew me to Himself. My call to the ministry, and the word spoken, was unanimously accepted by the church.

And yet I still desired the Lord that He would grant me yet one more token from Himself.

The following Friday, whilst driving on business in Sussex, these three words were spoken with divine power: "This same Jesus," and they were opened up to me in a sweet meditation. I could not understand why they were given, because I felt the Lord had laid a word on my mind for the service at Cranbrook. That same evening, the minister expected at Rehoboth on the Lord's Day telephoned to say that, owing to an illness, he would be unable to come. The deacons then asked me to take the evening service, and then I could see why those words were spoken to me with such power that day.

It is not possible to write of all these exercises, particularly concerning the ministry, which covered many years of waiting, watching, and praying. All along the path, it has been a gentle leading - "here a little, and there a little." And now I mourn my poverty more than ever, going into a pulpit with nothing and as nothing, often tried when in the pulpit as to whether I should be there, and coming out of the pulpit ashamed of self, and yet, at the same time, amazed at the help given at the time of speaking, knowing fully that it could only be the Lord that has, at times (I speak to His glory) filled my empty vessel and enabled me to speak. This, and this alone, sometimes gives me a little hope and sweet confirmation that He has placed me where I am. Especially have I proved this at Tamworth Road.

So in the providence of God, Clement first preached at Cranbrook on 20 October 1957 and in the evening at Rehoboth, Tunbridge Wells. Shortly after this, he had the privilege of baptizing his dear wife, Phyllis, on 24 November 1957 and about the same time he received his first request from the church at Tamworth Road, Croydon, asking if he could preach there. He gave a fuller account of this and his subsequent

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exercises in eventually taking up the pastorate in an address to the congregation at a service on Thursday 23 March 1961:

The first invitation to preach I received from this church was at the end of November of that year, 1957, asking if I would help them for a Sunday or two. The way was opened in a very remarkable way (again, time would not permit me to go into the full detail) that I should be able to come on a Sunday in May of the following year. I had never before entered this chapel. I had heard much of it, but I had never been there as a hearer. Well do I remember that Sabbath morning as I left home. It was not until I was just about to leave home that the Lord gave me a word and it was a very solemn word: "But the wise took oil in their vessels in their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." I felt, despite my fears, gracious help. I felt the spirit of prayer there. Sitting in the minister's vestry before the evening service, our dear friend one of the deacons, as is the custom, spoke in prayer before the service, and he made this allusion: "Lord, we know not Thy will concerning Thy servant, but Thy will be done." It brought a little measure of concern, but nothing more, and like Mary of old I desired to keep this thing and ponder it in my heart. My next visit was a Sunday evening in the following month. Again, a very searching word seemed to be laid on my mind just before the service: "But gather the wheat into my barn." Once more, I felt the Lord appeared and graciously helped me. I do desire, my friends, to speak of this to the glory of God.

One week evening in the autumn, I spoke from the words, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me." As I came here, I felt hymn 968 so laid upon my heart:

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"Hark, my soul, it is the Lord;
'Tis thy Saviour, hear His word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee:
'Say, poor sinner, lovest thou Me?'"

and it was a very sweet confirmation when our dear friend concluded the service with that hymn.

Somewhat unexpectedly, owing to the illness of one of the Lord's dear servants, I was asked to come here on the Christmas morning. This was a memorable morning for me. The word was this: "And we beheld His glory." In speaking, I believe, I was favoured with a little liberty and sweet consciousness of the presence of the dear Redeemer. At this time, I found that there was a concern in my heart, which was increasing, making me to consider - "Was the Lord directing my path here?" This was a thing that I had never even contemplated previously, but it was that which could not now be shaken off. It was that which grew in intensity, very gradually. There was nothing spoken to entice me in any way by any friend here. There was certainly a demonstration of love and I believe, through the goodness of God, I was made acceptable to the brethren.

With this increasing burden I was due to come here on 19 February 1959 on a Thursday evening. I felt I had to wrestle with God. If this was of the Lord (and remember the word - "A door was opened to me of the Lord"), if this was of Him, I desired that He would at this time give me some clear token that He was in it; and if not, that He would draw my thoughts and exercises and prayers away. Shortly after this, this word was as it were, spoken to my soul: "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." I felt "How could I go with that word?" This brought increased prayer - "Lord, if it is Thy word for me to take, give me help to speak from it, or else take it from me and

lay another word upon my mind." No other word came. (I shall speak of this in some detail, because much rested upon it). That day I was on business in Hailsham driving in comparatively thick fog, and whilst there, I had a severe attack of sinusitis. Feeling very low physically and very weary in body, I returned to Tunbridge Wells and felt almost unequal to venture forth, but there seemed to be a persuasion that I must go. My dear parents accompanied me on my journey and two very wonderful things happened. The fog completely lifted, but a friend in the ministry, who was speaking that night in a coastal district, had the greatest difficulty in getting home. Secondly, it seemed as though all physical weakness was lost sight of, but particularly and most important of all (and this is a great thing for a poor sinner to say), I felt the power of the Holy Spirit. Naturally I am somewhat of a cautious disposition, but when I concluded that night, I felt a distinct persuasion that it was not in vain. I believe, my friends (and I humbly say it) I looked for evidence because it was so marked as to the help given, and as I journeyed home that night, sweet peace came into my soul. I felt quiet; I fell at His feet humbled to think that the Lord should so help such an unworthy worm.

Shortly after, I received a letter from my friend the deacon here, asking me if I had any leadings towards them. He stated in the letter that the following night one of the dear friends here¹ could no longer hold back but felt she must come forth to tell of her hope in a precious Christ. Further, I was told that this had been a great exercise to some and that some here had been led to pray before that particular night for direction in this matter, that if I should

¹ This was Miss Mary Beadle. She later married the minister, Mr John Broome, and moved to Trowbridge, Wiltshire, but remained a member of Tamworth Road until she died at the early age of 37 on 25 June 1976.

come among them the Lord would grant a seal. So, unknown to each other, we had together been at the throne of grace, unitedly seeking for the same token and the Lord was pleased to grant it. After this, I wrote back saying that I could not say clearly that I had "leadings" towards them, but that I did feel that I certainly had "leanings." Through the Lord's goodness I was favoured to baptize our friend here in the April and again proved that help. This exercise and weight increased and in the early May (1959), my father handed me a text off his calendar. It seemed to sum up my desire before the Lord: "Teach me Thy way, O Lord." and under that word there was this: "Where there is God's will, there is God's way." Shortly after, I received a communication from the church inviting me to serve them with a view to the pastorate. O my friends, what conflict this brought! What concern! What anxiety! It is not possible to speak of that particular week, of the tossings up and down, but in it I felt and saw clearly that a door closed and a door opened. In contemplating it I felt I could do no other, though so unworthy, but to venture forth, and thus I wrote to the church.

The day after, I visited my dear friend and brother who is shortly to speak to you. (Mr Tyler, Pastor at The Dicker, Sussex.) He knew nothing of my visit or the reason for it. I told him a little of what had transpired. He told me (and I believe it was given unto him of the Lord as a token for my poor soul) that he had the day before been speaking at Special Services. At the tea table, a company of ministers had been talking together, one of whom spoke of something which he had seen in the countryside and could not understand. It was this. A lorry loaded with branches of fruit trees, but the mysterious part was that the branches were in full blossom! One or two fruit growers there (experienced men) gave this reason, that the branches were

being taken from their orchard to another field to pollinate another orchard. Our friend did not allude to it in the evening service, but next morning, and mark this, not knowing that I should go and see him he was meditating upon this. He felt that those branches were likened to the Lord's servants, cut down and taken from that field to another to be used. As he spoke to me, I believe I could say this, that for a moment we looked at each other in amazement. I felt it was a token from the Lord.

Just after this I was brought into deep soul trouble. The adversary's power was strong; I felt stripped of all. "Now what are you going to do? You have accepted to go and you are expected there on the coming Thursday." Great anxiety of spirit, but in the midst of it all, as I have told some of you, these words dropped in with power: "Jesus only." First, the hope of my never-dying soul and then, the only name by the grace of God that I desire to speak, and then, very sweetly, the only Name that people here would desire to hear. I came; I did not say anything whatsoever to my friend here of what I was going through. As I came up the pulpit stairs, he stood up and gave out the first hymn and this was what he read – and how precious the words were!

"There's not a name beneath the skies,
Nor is there one in heaven above,
But that of Jesus, can suffice
The sinner's burden to remove." (949)

Once more I felt it was of the Lord. Quietly we went forth through that year (1959), and then on the first Sunday of the next year (1960), for the first time I came with a view to the pastorate. O the weight and the burden which was on my soul that day! The word I felt directed to was this: "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a

city of habitation." It was not easy to preach that day. Do not misunderstand me, friends, I think you will know what I mean. There are times when a little liberty is given, but no preaching is easy as such. When I had finished in the morning, I felt so bound and burdened. Our dear brother, the deacon here, had suffered bereavement; his dear wife had been taken home. He ventured out in the evening to the service but he sat in the vestry. I begged of the Lord that I might speak a word of comfort to his heart. The Lord saw fit otherwise. That dear man was used to comfort me! He came in and said that in the early hours of the morning he had read that very Psalm and the very words that I had tried to speak from had been such a comfort to him. Once more I felt it was of the Lord. One could say, perhaps, a little more of those three months, but time will not permit. I would just sum it up in this way and say I felt a time of binding together, no lightness, but just a drawing together in sweet love and union.

The last engagement I had in the first three or four months of the year (1960) was on the Good Friday morning and my mind was directed to a word in Joshua for a text: "Give me a true token" - and the token, the line of scarlet thread. When the people here were singing the middle hymn, how strong was the adversary, how powerful. My heart went up in urgency to the Lord. "Lord, grant me some token. Show me that it is right. Show me that all this matter is right." I opened the pulpit Bible to find the place, and as I opened it, tucked in the centre beside the very place where the text was, was a little text, such as is given to the children in the Sunday School. How it was there I know not, but I believe our life's minutest circumstance is subject to His eye, and on this little text (which I have still got at home) were these words: "Lo, I am with you always." It seemed to be a sweet token and caused one fresh hope. It

was then in May that I received from our friends here a unanimous call to the pastorate and, again, I cannot speak much of it. Only those who walk in this path know a little of what is involved. There is the family and it meant giving up business, but the words given to my dear Pastor at the time when he was confronted with the same decision were sweet to me:

“While Christ is rich, I can’t be poor;
What can I want beside?” (247)

As I received the letter, I turned to the Word of God and this was the word I opened on (and it seemed particularly to come with power) in the 37th Psalm: “Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.” (Marginal rendering – “Be silent before the Lord.”) I felt that was all I could do. The Lord knew the whole case from the beginning to the end. I felt I could but wait upon Him and humbly seek grace to know and to do His will. I had agreed to let the church know within about fourteen days. The longer I waited the more I felt that I should not receive anything further from the Lord, but that I was to venture in faith, and in venturing I should receive some token from Him. I cannot say more than that. It was a persuasion in my spirit and true it was. Day by day passed and nothing was received until the morning of that particular day. Under this great weight and exercise I read these words concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: “If any man serve Me let him follow Me, and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me, him will my Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour.” A very solemn, sacred thing to say, but I believe that for just a few moments that morning I was favoured to have just a little sweetness in fellowship with Christ’s sufferings. Great as this hour was, that was before me, I felt how very small compared with

His; and yet I felt a sacred, sweet support. I felt I could hold back no longer and in humble hope ventured to write to the friends here. As I wrote out my final copy, I quoted these words which I have read for a text: "And a door was opened unto me of the Lord." "Of the Lord"; that is how it came just as I concluded the letter. I cannot tell you of the sweet power that came upon my spirit with those three words: "Of the Lord." I believe I was favoured to look back and see from the beginning up to that moment that I could say with humble faith, "Of the Lord."

In a wonderful way a home was provided for us in Addiscombe and so, my friends, we ventured and what else can we say? I believe the words I preached from on the first Sabbath here of this year (1961) are the desire of my heart: "For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." As time has passed, mutually I believe, we have felt knitting together in a wonderful way. Again I speak to His glory; I have felt a little help in this pulpit. It is not prudent to unbosom all the secrets of the heart, but hearers know very little sometimes of what the minister goes through. I have gone home humbly at the end of the Sabbath, humbled to feel that the Lord should so help and give a little liberty.

At the time of entering on the pastorate at Tamworth Road, Clement and Phyllis had two daughters who were born at Tunbridge Wells, Lynda and Rosemary. The family moved to Addiscombe, Croydon in September 1960. A home had wonderfully been provided in time for the beginning of the school year. Clement commenced his forty-five years as Pastor on 1 January 1961, their youngest daughter, Angela, being born two days later.

During Clement's pastorate, he was favoured to baptize thirty-six people, and a further twenty transferred from other churches. Over fifty babies were born, and he conducted thirty weddings, which included some young people who had been born during his pastorate. He had

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the highest esteem for his deacons, who were a great help to him. He regularly supported other chapels, and travelled extensively up and down the country, preaching on many Sunday afternoons and throughout the week. Over the years, he baptized seventeen people at other chapels.

Clement was lovingly and prayerfully supported by Phyllis, who was a gracious example as a Pastor's wife. She was the unseen support in the Lord's hand behind the scenes. He highly valued her



4 - Mr and Mrs Wood later in Life

advice and more than once was guided by her mature reflection on matters of concern to them.

He would often choose to walk from home to Tamworth Road chapel for the services, a distance of about two miles. He was able to meditate in preparation for the services, which was of great benefit. On one occasion, when driving in to chapel on a Sunday, he was feeling very low under the burden of the ministry. His daughters, sitting in the

back of the car and knowing nothing of their father's feelings, were singing hymns and came to the couplet:

"Jesus Christ your Father's Son,
Bids you undismayed go on." (267)

This greatly uplifted his spirit and he was enabled to continue.

The family home at Addiscombe had a small garden which Clement enjoyed tending in his spare time. Occasionally when preaching he would liken himself to his old watering can which needed to be filled up if it was to be of any use.

Throughout his life, even in holidays by the sea and on farms, which he much appreciated, he would seek to turn everyday things to spiritual profit. In later life, he would love to go on long walks on the sand that he might meditate on spiritual matters. The workings of a farm afforded him profitable meditations on what he saw and heard, later using these as illustrations in his sermons. He often spoke of talking to a shepherd who was feeding his ewes and lambs, and asking whether the lambs had different food from their mothers. The answer was that they both had the same food but it needed breaking up smaller for the lambs. This he was enabled to use in his ministry and many would testify to his God given ability to do just that with gospel truths.

Twice Clement and Phyllis visited the United States of America for Clement's preaching engagements at the chapels in Choteau, Sheboygan and Grand Rapids. The first visit was in October 1988 and the second in October 1994. He felt helped in the ministry, and they were very thankful to be kept safe in all their travels. They much enjoyed the experiences and deeply appreciated the kindness of the friends. In his annual letter to his congregation at the end of 1988, included later in this book, Clement gave a detailed account of his first visit.

In 1991 Clement underwent a serious heart operation, at which time he was greatly favoured in his soul, both on the day previous to his entering hospital when Mr Ramsbottom preached at the Harvest Thanksgiving services, and on the morning of the operation when the Lord blessed him with the sweet words of Solomon's Song 2:6: "His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me." This

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was a time of significant favour in his soul which he treasured to the end of his days. He spoke of this to his own people at Tamworth Road after the operation in a sermon from the text "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul" (Psalm 66:16). Some extracts from this will show his exercises.

I go back to that memorable morning, Friday 4 October 1991, when I left home at 8am. The day previous, our beloved friend Mr B A Ramsbottom had preached here. His text then was, "O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? or to Thy faithfulness round about Thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, Thou stillest them" (Psalm 89:8-9).

As far as I knew, I was only to have an investigation, but the ministry that day was so blessed to my soul, and I believe it was a preparation for the unknown future that lay before me. I said to our beloved friend just as he left the chapel that evening, and I say this with reverence, "I feel the ministry today had put a pillow under my head." By that, I mean support and help.

When that investigation that I have named was completed, the specialist immediately said, "I can see you stand in need of an operation," and shortly after that, he came and said, "Moreover, we are going to keep you here and the operation is booked for Monday morning." The Lord favoured me with quietness and rest, and with peace and trust in my God. "For I will declare what He hath done for my soul."

My mind turned to the ministry of that Thursday, when the Lord's dear servant named those two passages in Psalm 46. "The Lord of hosts," and "the God of Jacob" (Psalm 46:7). How sweet that was! Our God! Nothing too hard for Him! No path that you and I who fear Him will ever be brought into, but His grace is all sufficient. I had such a

sense of the omnipotent power of my God and of His wondrous love to this poor vile sinner, and yet it came in that striking contrast. "The Lord omnipotent, the God of Jacob." "Fear not, thou worm Jacob" (Isaiah 41:14). The great God of heaven, and that poor little worm on earth! But God cares for Him! God loves him! God will bring him through!

Monday morning dawned (7 October 1991). Early morning I was awake, the operation (a triple bypass heart operation) before me. I begged of the Lord, if it could please Him, that He might drop a word from heaven into my soul. At the same time, I believe faith was reaching forth, looking up, cleaving to, hanging upon those exceeding great and precious promises of my God. Without my thinking, suddenly it was as if a voice from heaven, "His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me" (Song of Solomon 2:6).

I said, "Lord, is that for me? Can such a word be like that for such a vile wretched sinner? O seal it! O confirm it! O do assure me it is mine! Let not the devil tempt me, snatch it away, gain the victory over my soul!"

I speak solemn things this morning. I speak of God and His dealings with this unworthy sinner. There flooded into my poor heart such sweet and sacred meditation that I felt, "Yes, this is of the Lord."

I hope I may be able, for the memory of that meditation is still very clear, to set a little before you of that which the Lord revealed to me in His Word. As we have read this morning, "My meditation of Him shall be sweet" (Psalm 104:34).

I thought of His hand. I thought first, how solemn if that hand is against a sinner. The finger of God of which we

read in Exodus came to my mind, that the magicians, who could not any further deceive the people, acknowledged that, as the lice came in the land, "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19). His power, His finger, bringing forth the plagues of Egypt.

But He says to His child, "His left hand ... and His right hand." I thought, "Lord, will the devil snatch this from me?" Then this came, how the Lord Jesus said that, "I with the finger of God cast out devils" (Luke 11:20). O poor sinner, thy God will fight thy battle. Thy God will be thy shield. Thy God will help thee through. "Thy hand ..."

And then my mind went from that, to the power of God seen in the universe. "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?" (Isaiah 40:12). To think of the mighty oceans. To think of this universe that He upholds by the word of His power! Poor sinner, do you think that your God will fail you now? Do you think that the path you are about to walk through will be more than your God can help you through?

Then those words sweetly came to mind: "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm; and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young" (Isaiah 40:11).

O friends, I cannot convey the sweetness of this meditation, the greatness of my God, and the tenderness of His love, and His care even over the lamb!

Then straight away dropped this word that you have often heard me quote: "Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." O those "There's"! I have some sacred spots in my life, but that morning hour I had another "There"!

“Ye have not passed this way heretofore.” But thy God will be with thee, thy God will help thee, thy God will hold thee up. He will be with thee and bring thee through. “For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee” (Isaiah 41:13).

Let me now just say, friends, as you listen to these words (and may every word be for the honour and glory of my God), I needed it, I needed it, for there was, about two days after the operation, a moment when I was so ill and felt so bad. All of a sudden the nurses were moving round the bed. Solemn moment, friend, and yet, “He was there!” His grace supporting! That word unfailing! That rest, though in weakness, in exhaustion. Thus we proved the goodness of God.

Then the Lord directed me. It was so blessed! It comes as though I am on that bed in that ward now, “Thou art graven upon the palms of My hands” (Isaiah 49:16). Think of it! Something that is graven, you cannot rub it out! It is there for ever, and it is in the palm of His hand! “O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me” (Isaiah 44:21). “O come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what the Lord hath done for my soul.”

And then the Lord directed me on to this sweet and precious word: “They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” (John 10:28). The nail-pierced hands of the Good Shepherd, who giveth His life for His sheep! They are His! His for ever! He loves them so greatly, He gave Himself for them. “I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for His sheep” (John 10:11). “His left hand is under my head, and His right hand doth embrace me.”

“Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on His gentle breast:

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There, by His love o'ershaded,
Sweetly my soul shall rest."

And so it was. Then with much heart searching, I asked, "Have I grieved Thy Spirit? Is Thy chastening hand upon me, O Lord? Reveal it to me. Give me submission. Grant me repentance, confession of my sin."

One's thoughts were then directed to David when he said he was in a "great straight." "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great" (2 Samuel 24:14) - fall into the chastening hand of God to those who fear Him, both small and great; those who are in the hand of His love. O that out of this may there be the yielding of the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto His praise and honour and glory.

"His left hand is under my head ..." - "Underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27). We at times sink very low, when there is none to help, but "Underneath ..." they are ever there. This is our comfort and assurance.

Then I think of that word "embrace." What, Lord, a wretch, a sinner so vile? Confessing my sin, as I have just named, my mind then went to the leper, full of leprosy, and how that the Lord touched him. The hand that did not turn away from him that sought the cleansing of the Saviour.

Further still, when dear Peter began to sink, the Lord stretched out His hand and caught him. O friend, how often have we come to that place, beginning to sink because we turn our eyes away from our dear Saviour and look at the waves? But Jesus is our Helper! But this word "embrace"!

"Dear Lord! and will Thy pardoning love,
Embrace a wretch so vile?"

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Wilt Thou my load of guilt remove,
And bless me with Thy smile?" (429)

The prodigal son was returning; he had lost everything. He began to be in want. He said, "I will arise and go to my father." What a reception, what an embrace, what wondrous love!

"My right hand shall embrace thee."

Friends, I have tried to name just a little of the blessing of Almighty God at that morning hour. I hope that all I have spoken has been for the glory of God.

I deeply value, with my dear one, who was wonderfully strengthened, your love, your prayers, your kindness in so many ways. Such a support, such strength. Now what am I to say? It was in our first hymn,

"While our days on earth are lengthened,
May we give them, Lord, to Thee." (1135)

We cannot speak well enough of our dear Lord, who never fails us nor forsakes us, ever loves us, ever keeps us.

"Had I ten thousand thousand tongues,
Not one would silent be.
Had I ten thousand thousand hearts,
I'd give them all to Thee."

Following his operation, he was wonderfully strengthened and enabled to continue with his pastorate and other preaching engagements. He was also to make another visit to preach at the chapels in the USA (October 1994).

Phyllis was taken suddenly to her eternal home on 11 December 1996, after a fall at Canterbury Chapel and a subsequent hip operation. She passed away very peacefully, and when Clement visited her in hospital on the evening before she died, he asked her if she had had a word and she said, "Safe in the arms of Jesus." They were both completely unaware that her death was imminent, and as they parted

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they each said, "Mizpah," prayerfully to each other. The loss was felt very keenly by Clement, the family, and by many friends, but they were supported and upheld. Clement was helped greatly by the kindness of his friends, for which he was very thankful. Although he kept active almost to his last days, he missed his loved one to the end.

After Phyllis passed away, Clement was able to remain in his home at Addiscombe for nearly nine years and appreciated the support of kind friends. When he started to become more frail, and after recovering from a fall in London in October 2005, he lodged with David and Esther Hickman in Croydon. This was a merciful provision, as he was enabled to continue at Tamworth Road Chapel. He was very happy and appreciated all their kindness, and also the help of many friends. He felt led to relinquish his pastorate at Tamworth Road at the end of 2005, due to age and infirmity, but was able to continue to preach at Tamworth Road and some other places on a reduced scale.

Towards the end of 2008, he suffered a period of illness and increasing weakness. It became evident, due to his deteriorating health and strength, that he would need residential care. He moved into the Studley Bethesda Home at the end of January 2009 and was very grateful for all the loving care that he received.

Following his move to Studley, Clement attended Chippenham Old Baptist Chapel, under the ministry of his close friend, Mr Gerald Buss. They made him feel very welcome, and, after a time, he felt led to transfer his church membership there. He also attended week night services at Studley Chapel, when able. During his twenty-two months at Studley Bethesda, he preached on most Sunday mornings, when health permitted, in the local chapels, until five weeks before his death. His final sermon was at Studley Chapel, where his text was Matthew 28:5-7. "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you." His last words of preaching were, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." This was spoken with much feeling and emphasis.

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Clement passed away very peacefully, aged 90, after a short illness, in the Studley Bethesda Home, early in the morning of 30 November 2010. A little while prior to his death, he had suffered a period of powerful temptation from the devil, and had felt very low, but he was mercifully brought completely out of it, and was able to rejoice again in the God of his salvation. During the last few days of his life, he was aware that the Lord was taking him home to glory. His daughters, sons-in-law and family were able to record many of his last sayings and they felt that it was truly a privilege to be with him. He proved that, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Many choice sayings fell from his lips, the last discernible words being: "O bless the Lord, my soul. How I love Thee. O bless my soul."

The funeral service was held at Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon on 9 December 2010, and was conducted by his dear friend, Mr Gerald Buss. It was attended by a large company of mourners. He was buried at Bandon Hill Cemetery, Wallington, with his late beloved wife, Phyllis.

Clement will be remembered for his special affection for children and young people, and for his deep concern for their spiritual welfare. He was willing, not just to give an address in the Sunday School, but also to take a class himself on occasions. He often quoted,

"Gentle Jesus meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee."

His grandchildren (five grandsons and five granddaughters) were very close to their grandparents and treasured their prayerful, loving concern. Phyllis was a much-loved teacher in the Sunday School for 24 years from 1968-1992. The family never felt they suffered from their father's frequent absences, as he always sought to give them time when he was free from ministerial engagements.

He was always willing and found time to visit any who were sick or in trouble, whether at home or in hospital. In consideration of the one who was sick, his practice was keep his visits short and to the point; a few relevant verses quoted and a brief prayer. He was always glad

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when he could glean some evidence of the Lord's blessing. Occasionally on a Sunday evening, when he was very tired after a full day of preaching, the phone would ring and he would go out immediately to someone in need. One of his former members commented, "He would always put others first and himself last."

Clement was devoted to the cause of God and of truth amongst the Gospel Standard Strict Baptist churches and further afield, serving for many years on the Gospel Standard Committee, the Gospel Standard Bethesda Fund Committee and also on the Executive Committee of the Trinitarian Bible Society, later becoming a vice-president. He was fair, faithful, wise and loving in his advice. "Without partiality" was his motto, following James 3:17. For ten years, he also contributed monthly Bible study articles to the "Friendly Companion" magazine.

He often strengthened the hands of fellow ministers in their work and was of special help to young pastors and ministers. He told them that in his early preaching days his texts and meditation came freely, but later there was much more labour for texts. So he encouraged younger ministers not to be dismayed when it was so with them, as the Lord would still be faithful. On one occasion (21 May 1995), he was engaged to preach at South Moreton and was told in the vestry, before the morning service, that it was to be announced that Mr Timothy Pocock had accepted the call to the pastorate. He felt it laid upon him that he should speak from the words, "Encourage him" (Deut. 3.28). This he was enabled to do to the benefit of those present.

Clement's ministry was very much his own, being both simple and yet profound. Often taking just a few words for a text, he had a gracious ability to bring forth from the context the mind of the Spirit. He preached from the heart with love for Christ and the souls of sinners. It can be said of him that he spoke the truth in love. He loved God's people and especially his flock at Tamworth Road, over whom he prayed, wept and rejoiced as all faithful pastors do, as a faithful under-shepherd. It will be remembered by his hearers that he always concluded his prayer in the pulpit with the text, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14). When he was sent

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out to preach in 1957, his mother suggested to him that this would be a good prayer.

Some occasions in preaching could not be forgotten. He recalled a time of preaching to a London congregation in the early part of his ministry where he was in great bondage in his own feelings. The door opened, and a lady crept in who had been unavoidably hindered, and immediately his bonds were loosed to preach a precious Christ. He said that the change was so marked that he felt that she was the only real hearer that night.

Once, when preaching in Sussex, he arrived at the chapel, in great distress, without a message to deliver from the Lord. He met his brother-in-law in the car park who greeted him with the words, "Is there any word from the Lord?" This greeting so laid hold of him that he went and preached from these words and found there was indeed a word from the Lord!

On another occasion, at Chippenham, in the early 1980's, he preached from, "Who is this that cometh up out of the wilderness leaning on her Beloved." He ended his exposition with his arms stretched out, saying, "Friends it will be up at the end. Not up and down but down and up finally!" He proved this emphatically in his own experience at the end of his life.



Funeral Address at Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon, by Mr G D Buss

Thursday 9th December 2010

Hymn: 11 verses from “The Sands of Time” (A R Cousin)

Readings: Acts 20:17-38, Hebrews 9:24-28, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Text: *“And as it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” – Hebrews 9:27–28.*

Firstly, this afternoon, I wish to direct your thoughts to the gospel that our dear late friend, Clement, preached for 45 years or more in this pulpit and in the many other pulpits God called him to preach. If he were here this afternoon he would say, “Put the crown on the right head,” and I hope we will not do any other than that in what we have to say. So for a few moments, first of all, I want to direct your thoughts to the words we read just now, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Beloved friends, we are here this afternoon by divine appointment. Our dear friend Clement has been called to that appointment we just read, “It is appointed unto men once to die,” and by God’s appointment you and I are gathered here this afternoon to consider that solemn and certain fact, an appointment made by your Creator and mine and the God of our dear departed friend. “It is appointed.” And though it may be that in man’s appointments, men may either miss them or be late for them, this is one appointment that you will keep, in the moment that God ordains it, for when He calls your soul hence from the body in which it now dwells, that will be a decree that none can resist. It will be your mercy and mine to be as prepared for that great change as our friend was.

You may say, but why? Why is it appointed unto man once to die? Why is that the one certain fact among us is that there will be a funeral that will not be somebody else’s, but yours, mine (and we don’t know

Funeral Address

how soon that will be)? Why is it? Oh, the evolutionists would tell us that it is just the natural order of events that has been carrying on ever since they falsely say man developed. My dear friends, the Word of God is our guide. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And the crown of His creation at that time was man, and He breathed into Adam the breath of life, we read, and "he became a living soul," and no other part of creation has that privilege, a soul. Yes, there is life in birds and beasts and fishes and other animals, but the life that is in man is unique. It is so unique that the word of God tells us that when we come into this world God gives a soul, and when it is His time we should depart from it God takes that soul back to Himself; a very solemn matter to consider. So that your last natural breath and mine is not the end of the matter; indeed it says here, "after this the judgment." So let us be very clear, we do not believe in an annihilation, we believe that there is an afterward, and our dear friend preached that many times from this pulpit. But then, why, you say, why should this be? Well, there is one small word, only three letters, which has consequences that we cannot begin to measure but has brought untold misery. It is that little word, sin. Were our dear friend, now departed, not a sinner we would not be gathering here for his funeral. "The wages of sin is death." Do remember that, the word of God says it. Why is sin so abhorrent to God that it causes this inevitable fact? God is holy, God is just, God is pure. Sin is rebellion, and sin is something God cannot look upon lightly; it is for the honour of His justice that it must be dealt with, and this is the solemn fact before you and I this afternoon. Sin must be dealt with, either (and here is the great dividing line between the lost and the saved), either it has been dealt with at Calvary where the dear substitute, the dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ stood a ransom for many, or dear friends, if our faith is not fixed there then we have no hope, and we must bear the solemn consequences of our sin to an endless eternity, in a lost eternity. This is not popular doctrine and we are exhorted by those who would smooth things over never to mention it, but Jesus mentioned it more than once, and that is why the solemn appointment is so weighty because we will enter our eternal destiny when it takes place.

But oh, blessed be God, there is a way of salvation. And you will notice that in the words in the context of our text this afternoon there

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are three "appearings"; there is the one that we expect yet, the Second Coming of the dear Saviour. There is another spoken of and that is in the previous verse, "once in the end of the world hath He (that is, Christ, God's only begotten, dearly beloved Son) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Yes, He took into union with His divine Person that holy human nature, body and soul and in the blessed temple, that impeccable temple of His body. He lived under the law that you and I are naturally born under; God's holy law. He magnified it and He honoured it, and friends, He exalted it, and fulfilled it in every jot and tittle, leaving not one stone unturned to bring a perfect obedience and a perfect righteousness in. Who for? Sinners.

A little verse that drew Clement to the Lord's Table at first was this:

"For sinners Lord thou cam'st to bleed,
And I'm a sinner vile indeed.
Lord I believe Thy grace is free;
O magnify that grace in me." (447)

The dear Saviour having lived out that perfect life, then laid it down, holy, harmless, undefiled, as He stood in the room and the place and the stead of that vast number, an innumerable company of sinners for whom He came to suffer, bleed and die. For their sakes He lay down His life a ransom for many, and God is well-pleased with that ransom price, we know, because now the dear Saviour appears, (another of the three appearings mentioned) as we read in verse 24, "in the presence of God," in the same risen body, bearing in His dear body the marks of His suffering, and presenting Himself and His merits, His righteousness, His precious blood on behalf of all who come to God by Him. And so it was when our dear friend left this earthly scene a few days ago, when he came before the judgment seat, "after this the judgment," he was well prepared, he had an Advocate, he had a Substitute, he had an High Priest, and he would have said with one of the godly puritans:

"Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die;
Another's life, another's death,
I hang my whole eternity."

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And that is why now, he is safe in the arms of Jesus and safe on His loving breast. Friends, Jesus was all in all to him, this was his hope, this was his foundation; the only remedy for sin, Jesus in the sinner's place. Oh lay this well to heart, dear friends, because if you and I come to the judgment seat in any other name, on any other foundation, in any other way, you will hear that solemn, dreadful, awesome word, "Depart from me for I never knew you."

But then it goes on, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," and what a burden that was. The burden of sin to our late dear friend was a very real one. You think of the innumerable company that man cannot number, whose sins He bore. It was only incarnate God could have borne such a weight, such a responsibility and such a burden as He bore in Gethsemane's garden, at the judgment seat of Pilate, and on Calvary's cross. But ah, friend, the burden is gone. When He returns, we read, He shall appear the second time without sin, that is, without His people's sin, without the sin that was imputed to His dear Person to bear away, it is gone, it is gone for ever, drowned in His precious blood, drowned in those unspeakable sorrows He endured. And now the Church of Christ is complete in Him, without spot, without wrinkle, or any such thing, a perfect garment, and a perfect atonement made for her. Oh friends, no wonder the anthem around the throne of God which our dear friend is now joining is this, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for Him"; yes, those who look unto Him for salvation, those who look unto His perfect obedience and His precious blood, and look unto His perfect intercession, and those who are looking for His appearing, "He shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation." And that not only means He will return in that glorified body of His, and what a blessed return it will be, but the whole election of grace, the whole Church that He redeemed with His own blood will rise with Him in a body made like unto His own. What a glory that will be! "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun." It will be a reflected glory, the glory of the dear Lamb of God reflected in all those glorified persons, "the spirits of just men made perfect." Then, in that great day, adorned with a body, fit for eternal happiness.

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So this is the gospel Clement often preached from this pulpit; these are the tidings for feeble and unworthy sinners he proclaimed, the one only way of salvation, yes. The first text he ever preached from was, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." We have just briefly hinted at the gospel he loved to preach, and dear friends, if you have the same spirit in your heart as dwelt in him, you will love to hear it. For no other tidings will suit you; no other gospel can save but that of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, yes, and the love of God who sent Him, and the blessed communion of the Holy Ghost who reveals Him. We need all three of those glorious Persons, because without quickening grace we have no knowledge of our sin, and without redeeming grace we have no atonement, and without the Father's love we have no prospect. Oh bless God for the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

We will now turn for a few moments to speak a little bit more personally of our dear friend, and what a dear friend he was to so many of us! The very large congregation gathered here this afternoon and the many who are not able to be with us, shows how deeply he was held in the affection in the church of God in his day.

He was born in Tunbridge Wells on June 27th 1920. Within a few days of his birth his life was despaired of, and he was handed to his mother for what was thought to be the last time, and those who were looking on fully expected that within a few moments his little life would breathe out and the soul so recently given taken swiftly. But no, it was not the Lord's will, as for 90 years he was to live on the face of this earth, and so he was remarkably healed. He grew up in a godly home, his parents being the late Mr and Mrs Arthur Wood, his father being an esteemed minister of the gospel. And from his very earliest days Clement was the subject of spiritual exercises and concerns; even while he was at school he was convinced of his sinful state. And it would be a great mercy if the little verse was sung and repeated in state schools or private schools or any school in fact, that was to become his prayer, he learnt it at school and the Holy Ghost wrote it in his heart. This was his prayer:

"Then oh my God prepare
My soul for that great day;

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Oh wash me in that precious blood,
And take my sins away."

In almost every pulpit prayer, that was what he prayed.

As he grew up his desire deepened and he began to attend all the services at what was then "Rehoboth" Chapel, Tunbridge Wells. The pastor there was the late Mr Ernest Brooker, and it was under the ministry of this favoured servant of God that Clement received his first ray of hope concerning salvation with those words in 1 Samuel 12, "For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake, because it pleased the Lord to make you His people." Then the Second World War broke out, with all the devastating consequences for that generation, and Clement was called up and had to leave home and soon to go abroad. The night before he went abroad he was very concerned that he should not go without some intimation of the Lord's favour, and the Lord gave him those words in Psalm 32 verse 8, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will guide thee with Mine eye." He was now however in a large measure to be left isolated from his godly home and chapel, and before he left home he began to wonder whether the Strict Baptists with whom he was associated were rather narrow in their outlook. However in those wilderness years away from loved ones and the chapel that he loved, he learned that the old paths were those to be desired, and he knew where his spiritual home was.

He recalls just one blessing he received in those years when he was in Winnipeg in Canada, when the following lines were sung at a church service:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains." (160)

It was the fact that it is sinners who are washed that he found comfort in.

After he returned from the war Clement began work in Brighton and attended regularly "Galeed" chapel. There, under a sermon of the late Mr Frost (Pastor of Drayton Gardens, Chelsea, London and later at

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Swindon) from John 15 he felt all the religion he had professed had been stripped away from him. However under the ministry of the late Mr J H Gosden, also in Brighton, he was encouraged by those words, "And now Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in Thee." At length, after much exercise of spirit, the Lord gave Clement words that were to be his anchor right to his death bed: "But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee O Jacob, and He that formed thee O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine." Soon after he was baptised by his dear Pastor at "Rehoboth," those words of Cowper again being so precious:

"And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

For a few weeks he was so wonderfully favoured in his soul that he had to ask the Lord to withdraw the favour, as he felt he could not physically endure the blessing that was so powerful in his soul. That may seem a strange thing to some of you, but some do know what that experience is. But then, like so many of God's children, he came into a wilderness condition, and had to prove what with indwelling sin, the world and the devil, the warfare had begun. It was about this time that the work of the ministry began to lay with great weight upon his spirit, he was very concerned that he should not go unsent. He did not want to get into a pulpit just because others said he ought to be there, or because he had what some would call "preaching fever," just to stand there to be entertaining others. That was not what he wanted. "How shall they preach except they be sent?" That was his great burden, had the Lord sent him? Otherwise he dare not go. But he was made willing in the words that have sometimes been sung in the House of God and in our churches,

"Hast thou a lamb in all Thy flock
I would disdain to feed?
Hast Thou a foe before whose face
I'd fear Thy cause to plead?" (1066)

And you know, dear friends, he had a great concern for the lambs, and he was also fearless when, with God's help, he confronted the errors of his generation. At the same time the Lord spoke a greatly confirming word, "And a door was opened to me of the Lord." So he

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went before the church at "Rehoboth" with his exercises and then preached with great liberty from the text I mentioned just now, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Thus began the ministry in 1957 that was so loved, for so long, by so many of us.

When he visited Tamworth Road here for the first time he immediately found a place in the hearts of the gracious discerning deacons of that generation and from the very beginning there were those who felt, here was a man, who rather like Epaphrus of whom we read in the Colossians, would be for them "a faithful minister of Jesus Christ." And as the Lord always works at both ends of a matter when He is in a matter, the Lord worked at the other end too, and gave Clement a love for the people, and after unexpectedly being called to preach here one Christmas Day morning, from the words: "and we beheld his glory" with such liberty that he felt was almost excessive, he felt that he must come to this people, and eventually in 1961 he began his 45 years of ministry here. The friends here will remember his faithfulness and his love. And the words of his own Pastor on his death-bed were often remarked upon to me by Clement, and if he were here this afternoon he would say, "Let there be no deviation," no deviation.

We read also in the word of God of those who were addicted to the ministry, and I think dear friends, it could be said, that our dear friend was addicted to the ministry. At times his wife and family hardly saw him, as Saturday after Saturday, as well as in the week in the summer months especially, he was out preaching at anniversary and at other services. It was indeed a sacrifice for Phyllis and the family, though he loved them dearly. But preaching was his life, and the joy to preach Christ was his endeavour. He travelled hundreds of thousands of miles, often by trains then by car in later years, and preached the length and breadth of the land, also in the USA and Canada, often wearied in his journey but never wearied of preaching. When he wrote to the Gospel Standard Committee of his call to the ministry, he concluded his writings by saying this, "he hoped when he laid his ministry down at the end of his days, he would be able to say, I am clear from the blood of all men, I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." I believe, dear friends, that was his desire; he certainly would

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not have commended himself as a perfect preacher, there is only one perfect preacher, our Lord Jesus, but dear friends, he was given a great measure of the spirit of Christ in his ministry.

He was not only useful as a minister, but he was very useful in other spheres. He served the cause of God and of truth well on the Gospel Standard Committee and the Bethesda Fund Committee for many years, and also was a most useful member on the Trinitarian Bible Society Executive Committee. This was a cause very dear to his heart right to the end and he eventually became one of its Vice Presidents. I am a witness when I have sat round the Committee table with him on the Gospel Standard Committee of his wisdom and his loving spirit and his consistent testimony, always ploughing a straight furrow when matters were discussed.

Now it was our privilege at Chippenham to welcome Clement as a member of the church when he retired from Tamworth Road. In the Bethesda Home where he was excellently looked after in his last days, while he had the strength, he held a little Bible Study in the lounge which was greatly appreciated by the residents. One of them said only the other day, "Oh what a gap there is now, we miss his prayers and we miss his presence." Until within five weeks of him being called home he usually preached on a Lord's Day morning among the local churches, and even in these last 18 months/2 years many testimonies have been received of the witness God gave even in those last days to his ministry. His last service was at "Little Zoar" Chapel, Studley, when he preached from the words in Matthew 28 verses 5-7. His last words in the pulpit were these, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." One of the congregation turned to her husband and said, "that is his last sermon," and so it proved to be. I think of Samuel Rutherford's words, "My one joy next to the flower of my joy is Christ, to preach my sweetest Master and the glory of His kingdom," and so it was. A blessed example to those of us who are following on. Oh that we might have a double portion of his spirit. Although it was evident that he was wearying of his earthly body, it was rather suddenly that he was brought down to the end. As soon as he knew he was suffering from an incurable disease, rather like Jacob, he gathered up his feet into the bed and prepared to die. He told the doctor, "I am not afraid to die." He had been very tried and dark in his spirit for

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several weeks, even at one time calling into question his call by grace and ministry. He got so low in his spirit, Satan was evidently having his last attack, but I think of those words about Gad, "a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last."

Here are some of his dying sayings recorded by his dear family, and some repeated with amazing strength, almost as if he was preaching from the pulpit. Listen to these words,

"I have been helped throughout life's journey thus far, and God bless you all. Amen." Five times he repeated, Amen.

"Lay Thy hands on me and bless me indeed."

"O Lord, Thou knowest who are Thine, bring them to Thyself. Oh blessed be Thy Name."

"Glory for ever and ever and ever. Amen."

"Oh my backslidings" (yes, like David, he felt, "although my house be not so with God").

"How blessed is my God who loves me and saved me. How sweet Thou art."

"O may the Lord bless you all in your souls, Amen."

How sweet were his last discernible words. Friends, if we come to our end like this, it will be very sweet. These were the last words from the lips of our dear departed friend:

"Oh bless the Lord my soul, how I love Thee, O bless my soul."

As I read that I thought of what good Samuel Rutherford said, and I just briefly quote from one of his well-known letters. Listen to this: "Let my Lord Jesus, since He is willing to do so, weave my span of time with white and black, well and woe, with the Bridegroom's coming and His sad departure, as warp and woof in one web, and let the rose be nailed with the thorn, yet, hope that maketh not ashamed hath written a letter in lines of hope to the mourners in Zion, it shall not be long so. When we are over the water, Christ shall cry down crosses and up heaven for evermore and down hell, and down death, and down sin, and down sorrow, and up glory, up life, up joy for evermore; in this

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hope I sleep quietly in Christ's bosom." I think our dear friend would have echoed those words.

Firstly we remember his honesty. He was a very honest man. I put that first, because that was one of the great features about his relationship with others and in this pulpit. He was an honest man and that is a mark of a great man, honesty coupled with humility. Secondly, his prayers, and I think those of us who heard him will remember to our dying day how he so often ended his pulpit prayers, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer." Thirdly, his love in Christ for all who loved Christ's name; wherever he could discern grace, friends, he loved it. Fourthly, a concern, a deep concern, for those who had strayed; yes, he was not indifferent to those who were on the broad road to destruction.

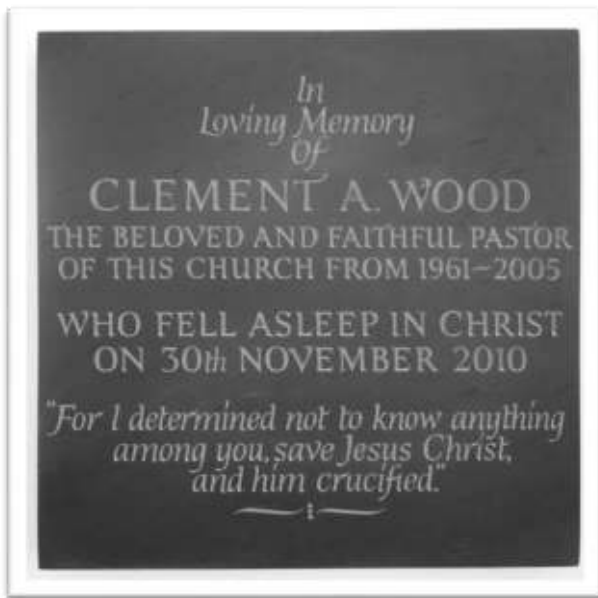
To many of us he has been a wonderful friend, a Pastor, to me a counsellor, and to those of us who stand in the pulpit a dear fellow-servant of Jesus Christ. Now he is gone to his eternal rest. What can we say? Well I read you Paul's farewell and their farewell to him. "We will see his face no more." But then I think of what we also have from good John Bunyan and I will close with this. You remember Greatheart? Well Clement was a man who was Mr Greatheart. As he came to the river of death he said: "This river has been a terror to many, yea, the thoughts of it also frightened me, now methinks I stand easy, my foot is fixed upon that upon which the priest that bare the ark of the covenant stood, while Israel went over this Jordan, the waters indeed are to the palate bitter and to the stomach cold, yet the thought of what I am going to and the conduct that waits the other side, lies a glowing coal at my heart. I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are ended, I am going to now see that head that was crowned with thorns and that face that was spit upon for me. I have often formerly lived by hearsay and faith but now I go where I shall live by sight and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself, I love to hear his voice spoken of and wherever I have seen the print of my Lord's shoe in the earth, there have I coveted to set my foot to. His name has been to me as a civet box, yea sweeter than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and his countenance more than I have

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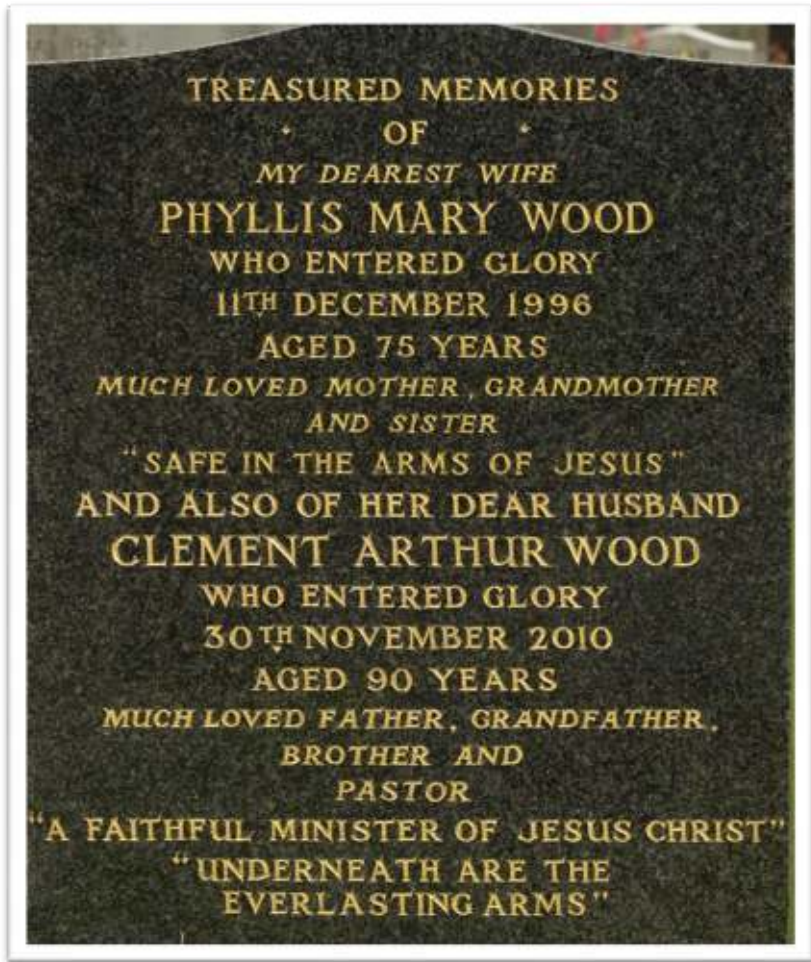
desired of the light of the sun. He has held me and kept me from mine iniquities, yea my steps hath been strengthened in his way."

Well, dear friends, we bid farewell, and we use that farewell in its best sense, not glibly. He fared well when he left this time state because by grace he fared well this side of the grave; may we likewise "fare well." "Considering the end of his conversation." "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

Amen.



5 - Memorial Tablet in Tamworth Road Chapel



6 - Gravestone

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7 - Framed Address from the Church at Tamworth Road on the Resignation of his Pastorate

A Short Account of Phyllis Wood, written by her Husband

Phyllis Mary Wood, member of the church at Tamworth Road, Croydon, beloved wife of the pastor, Clement Wood, passed away on December 11th, 1996, aged 75, in the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury.

My dear one was born at Morden, Surrey, on November 19th, 1921. She lived in Fetcham, and attended Leatherhead chapel until moving near to Bedford, as she writes:

I was favoured to be brought up in a Christian home and, from an early age, was taught to reverence the Lord's day and His Word. I can remember, when eight years old, having a fear of hell. When at school, I often felt the need of silent prayer and looked for Christian companions.

After I left school we went to live near Bedford during the war years. After a while I had a disappointment, but was comforted with these words: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." I felt that God was working His purposes out and I could trust Him. When leaving Bedford at the end of the war, I felt that God must choose where we should live. It was then that we moved to Tunbridge Wells, where I met my dear husband. I felt very much at home at Rehoboth under the ministry of the pastor, Mr E A Brooker.

My prayer for years was:

"Show me some token, Lord, for good,
Some token of Thy special love:
Show me that I am born of God,
And that my treasure is above," (736)

and felt encouraged when Mr. Brooker said that if this is truly our prayer, we are His. On another occasion he said that if we have two natures, one, our worst sinful nature, and one, leaning to God, longing to serve and love Him more, that this is the experience of a child of God. I know I have a sinful nature, and am often tempted and full of wicked thoughts, but I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Mr Brooker once said, "Can you do without Him?" I can truly say, "No!"

A Short Account of Phyllis Wood

At the time of the birth of our first daughter, these texts were with me and I felt strength from them: "Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness." "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee. Fear not; I will help thee."

Before our second daughter was born, we had a great anxiety as we were told by our doctor that things might not be all right. The following texts and verse were a great help to me during this time: "Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon Thee: Thou saidst, Fear not." "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

"Why should this anxious load
Press down your weary mind?
Go kneel before the throne of grace,
And sweet refreshment find."

These lines were often with me on my visits to the hospital:

"Why should my heart be filled with fear,
With Thee, my Saviour, ever near?"

Then, on one of those visits, I was told everything was normal, which even the doctor could not understand.

About a year later I developed skin trouble, and I could not understand how such a thing could be sent in love, until Mr Hickmott in one of his sermons said that those He loves, He afflicts. As we like to hear from our loved ones, so affliction makes us pray.

It was when my girls were young that I had a great fear of polio, but these words were of comfort and support:

"I am trusting Thee to guide me,
Thou alone shalt lead.
Every day and hour supplying
All my need."

These words also: "Be still, and know that I am God," and hymn 961.

I then began to be exercised about baptism. On holiday the text was: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath

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done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Mr. H. Dawson, later preaching at Rehoboth, said to this effect: "If you feel you have that good part in you, go and tell the church about it." A day or two later I was looking in the Bible, seeking confirmation, when my eyes fell on these words: "Praise ye the Lord. Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments." Then these words followed soon after:

"Then I will tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to Thy redeeming blood,
And say, 'Behold the way to God.'" (144)

The next evening I had prayed that God would show me what to do. When looking at the text on the calendar, I was very impressed when I read the following: "This do in remembrance of Me." "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." Then later I was afraid I should not feel the same, but feel dead and cold, but I was comforted with these words: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

The following morning my dear husband read these words: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." At first I felt I must not take these words as applied to myself, but they stayed on my mind, and I felt such a sweetness and melting from them that I did not want to think of everyday things. The words of the following hymn came also to my mind and stayed with me for a long time:

"On such love, my soul, still ponder
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, whilst lost in holy wonder,
Why, O Lord, such love to me?
Hallelujah!
Grace shall reign eternally." (766)

Then these words came to my mind: "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" So I knew I must be baptized, but when, how soon? The following Lord's day the text was: "Go quickly, and tell His disciples." I was then enabled to come before the church at Rehoboth, and was

A Short Account of Phyllis Wood

baptized by my dear husband, and Mr. G. Rose received me into the church (1957). After this I was quietly led along, sharing in my husband's exercises in his call to the pastorate at Tamworth Road, Croydon, having sweet confirmations as the way opened before us: the provision of a house; the birth of our youngest daughter; the children settling in here and at school; but we were especially happy in the chapel and Sunday school, appreciating the loving help of the kind friends here.

Later on, when in hospital, I had to wait a long time, and I felt worried, but these words were a help to me: "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Very soon after this my dear one quoted the same words to me, not knowing anything of this. Before the operation I was enabled to rest upon the promise in Isaiah 41:10, and I was sweetly helped through.

I was exercised about transferring my membership and prayed concerning it. My dear one, not knowing my exercise, preached from the text he had when he baptized me: "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master." Hardly a sermon passed without texts being mentioned which have been precious to me. I then felt constrained to come, and was confirmed when my dear one felt the same, not knowing each other's exercises. The text finally confirming me was: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Further brief extracts from her writings:

"My husband preached at Reading from: 'Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.' It was so helpful to me, Jesus seemed so very sweet. I could have cried and cried. These words came to my mind:

'Why should I now give place to fear
With Thee, my Saviour, ever near?'"

"Today things seem very difficult, my faith seemed to go, but this word was a comfort: 'My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him.' My prayer is still unanswered. The thorn in

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the flesh is still there. The Lord help us to wait patiently for Him. 'Be still, and know that I am God.'"

"I had such a sweet touch when hymn 450 was given out at our New Year Services with these words: 'Dearest Lord.'"

"One day when I was feeling very low, these words kept going through my mind:

'When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.'" (1106)

"This text was on the calendar this morning: 'Thy prayer is heard' (Acts 10:31). I know God has heard my prayers, but I also know: 'My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.' His ways are best. He knows the end from the beginning, so I must be patient and submissive to His will.

'For though our cup seems filled with gall,
There's something secret sweetens all.'" (307)

"One Lord's day morning, feeling low and sad with many perplexities, I prayed for my husband's ministry to be a help and encouragement, earnestly groaning inwardly, 'Lord, help me; Lord, help me.' In the sermon he spoke of the woman who came to Jesus, and how she worshipped Him saying, 'Lord, help me.' It was remarkable, after praying the same words."

"In my prayer yesterday I prayed for help, help for my husband in preaching, help for me, help in the church. Several times I prayed, 'Help, help, help.' When I looked on the calendar the text was, 'Our help is in the name of the Lord.'"

'I could not do without Thee,
I cannot stand alone,
I have no strength or goodness.
No wisdom of my own;
But Thou, beloved Saviour,
Art all in all to me.
And perfect strength in weakness
Is theirs who lean on Thee.'"

Her husband continues:

A Short Account of Phyllis Wood

On Lord's day morning, December 8th, 1996, I preached at Tamworth Road from 1 Corinthians 15:55-58: "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory... But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." At the end of the service, in pronouncing the benediction, I prayed;

"Death of deaths, and hell's Destruction
Land me safe on Canaan's side;
Songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee." (462)

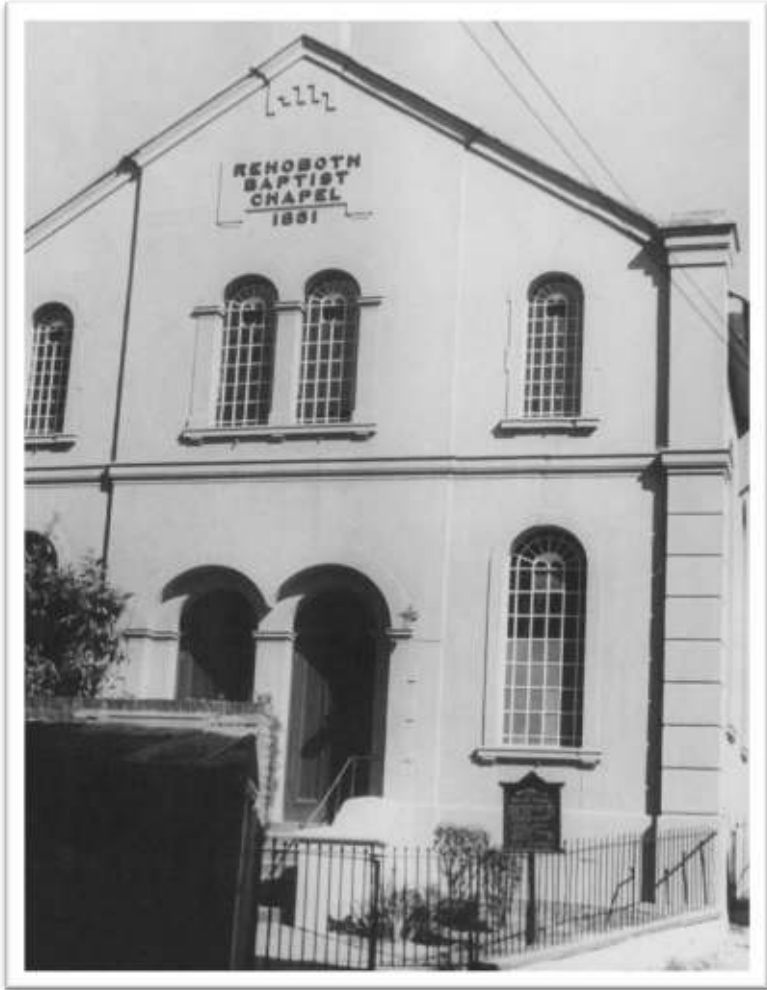
We did not know that this would be the last sermon and the last words she would hear in the house of God.

We journeyed to Canterbury for the evening service, but just prior to the commencement of the service she fell, and was taken at once to hospital by ambulance suffering from a fractured femur and wrist. My text (not knowing what would take place) was: "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." The last hymn already chosen was hymn 7: "God shall alone the refuge be."

An operation was performed very late on Monday. I visited her on Tuesday. She was able to tell me as I was leaving that she had been blessed and supported by these words: "Safe in the arms of Jesus." We said Mizpah prayerfully. These were her last words to me for, although appearing to be as well as could be expected, she passed away in the early hours of the following morning.

The funeral took place at Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon, on December 18th, followed by interment at Bandon Hill Cemetery, Croydon. The service was taken by Mr G D Buss.

I humbly acknowledge the Lord's goodness in the gift of a beloved, faithful wife for 49 years of happy married life. She was a true helpmeet to me in every way, encouraging, and of a loving, helpful disposition. Although limited physically in the latter years of her life, it can truly be said, "She hath done what she could." She knew well her sinnership, but also the love of her Saviour. She would spend some time every day seeking the Lord in secret prayer. May her many prayers for us all be answered.



8 - Rehoboth Strict Baptist Chapel, Tunbridge Wells

A Short Account of Phyllis Wood



9 - Tamworth Road Chapel, Croydon



10 - Interior of Tamworth Road Chapel