

FOREWORD

What you are about to read is not a history of that marvellous outpouring of God's Holy Spirit in Ireland which has come to be called the Charismatic Renewal — even though Charles Lamb was among the first to respond to what the Lord was doing through it. It is a testimony, a witness to what the Lord has done in one man's life and what he has learned from it. "The truth on the lips of certain people becomes falsehood," wrote that great Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, "and only that which is lived with passionate conviction can be proclaimed as truth." What is written here has been lived and lived passionately. Anyone who knows Charles Lamb will confirm that. A Quaker whose simple regular principled life reflects all that is in the Quaker tradition, an Evangelical¹ Christian, totally committed to the Lord Jesus as He is revealed in the Scriptures, a man filled with the Holy Spirit, obedient to His leading, full of love for his Lord and his brothers and sisters in Him. What he has written here is not written to impress, nor to inform but to inspire and encourage others to walk in the same path.

It is not particularly well written. Charles is more at home with machinery and figures than word and phrases. When I first read the manuscript, my one thought was — if only we could get a Jamie Buckingham or Len le Sourd to work on this — it would make a tremendous book. A couple of months with some inspired Christian editor-writer would turn these rough nuggets into a work of art. But Charles is not in the business of writing works of art, nor even in the business of writing books. His main concern is to share with others what the Lord has taught him as simply, directly and as quickly as possible. As I re-read the manuscript, I began to appreciate the value of his approach. A professional editor-writer would undoubtedly

¹ No doubt when David wrote this I appeared to him as an Evangelical Christian, and would have thought of myself as one, yet I looked and look to Jesus Christ as the Word of God, John 1 who brought the message of the Kingdom Luke 16:16 the new and living way God had planned. Hebrews 10:20. I understand the significance of this more now than I did then, more will be added about this in appendix

produce a smooth, better constructed book, but he would iron out the personal quality, the rugged individual style of the writer. As it stands, this book is rather 'rough and ready' but it is direct and personal and totally authentic. It is simply, Charles speaking.

Charles is more a prophet than a preacher or teacher. He shares briefly yet powerfully what the Lord has given him to say. He is not given to speeches. He writes in the same way. His style is compressed yet powerful. It is not to be read quickly or superficially. It demands slow, careful, meditative reading. Every page represents months and often years of living faithfully with the Lord. The long passages of Scripture are not intended as padding (no book ever required less padding) nor are they used merely to illustrate a point made already in the text. In many places they are the text. Charles, in the tradition of St. Patrick whose writings he admires so much, lets the scriptures speak for him. If they are read carefully as an integral part of the text, they come alive. And that is part of his intention, to familiarise his readers with a living Word.

Charles wrote this book because he feels the Lord is calling him away from Ireland. For those of us who have been blessed by knowing him and his wife Marj, it is a sad parting. Perhaps that is why the Lord impressed him to leave this testimony to us. It will continue his ministry among us. Through it, may we and many others who have never met Charles and Marj Lamb, come to know Jesus more and more deeply both as our Saviour and as our Lord.

David Blake

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