



Foreword

AS A SEASONED LEADER WHO WORKED CLOSELY WITH PASTOR DAVID Wilkerson at Times Square Church, Charles Simpson invites us all to come behind the scenes with him to see what he saw and learn what he learned. From 1991 to 1995, I had the privilege of speaking at Times Square Church between forty and fifty times, often getting to fellowship with Pastor Dave before or after the service. Those were unforgettable times, and my esteem for him only increased as the years went on. I already knew Pastor Dave to be a real man of God, one of the great leaders of our generation. But the more time I spent with him, the more I was impressed with the depth of his spirituality—his prophetic insight, his wisdom, his love for Jesus, his hunger for the Spirit, his generosity, and his compassion.

Although he welcomed me warmly and treated me graciously, giving me carte blanche to preach from his pulpit, I never felt totally relaxed in his presence. I told some friends that hanging out with Pastor Dave was like fellowshiping with a razor blade! His eyes were so piercing you felt like he was looking right through you. And even though there was no condemnation in his speech, you wanted to be sure you didn't sit down with him having any unconfessed sin in your life. Somehow, you thought, he would know if you did. When

he would bring a prophetic warning from the pulpit, his heart broken in two and his spirit deeply grieved, everything in me exploded with affirmation. His burden was my burden too.

While ministering at Times Square Church, I met Charles Simpson, who was then serving as the pastor of prayer. And boy, can Charles pray! (Times Square Church was a praying church so you had to be a praying person to be appointed the pastor of prayer.) Charles also has a tremendously sincere love for the Lord that is not hardened by New York City and not stained by professional ministry. He has a humble servant's heart and an unfeigned love for Jesus and His people. Charles and I quickly became good friends.

Several years later, when my leadership team opened a branch of FIRE School of Ministry in Manhattan, we asked Charles to be one of the main teachers there, and he helped pastor our small student body. This brought us together even closer, and for good reason, our students fell in love with Charles and his wife, Lynn. Although we had to close our New York branch after a few years, I've continued to follow Charles's ministry, especially his writing ministry. When he told me about this book, I was thrilled. What better way to gain insight into the life of a giant of the faith like David Wilkerson than through the firsthand accounts of one of his spiritual sons? And what better way to learn practical ministry lessons—really, practical life lessons—than from the personal experiences of a devoted servant like Charles Simpson?

As I was preparing to write this foreword, I found a YouTube video of what was reported to be Pastor Dave's last recorded message, not long before he died in a tragic car accident at the age of eighty. As I watched that sermon (he had to teach sitting in a chair because of some health issues), I was stirred and challenged again, saying to myself, "We don't have anyone like him today." (At least, there is no one I know of personally who carries what he carried.) The good news is that through this book, you can sit at the feet of this departed man of God, hearing things that he never preached in

public and learning lessons that he shared only with those who were close to him.

I'm so glad that Charles has shared his own story here, one that is deeply interwoven with the life of David Wilkerson. The pages that follow will surely bless and enrich you!

—DR. MICHAEL L. BROWN

Host of *The Line of Fire* Radio Broadcast