

'Fireproof' debuts at No. 4

Fireproof—a drama starring Kirk Cameron as a firefighter who turns to God to help save his marriage—premiered at No. 4 over the weekend with \$6.5 million total receipts.



Boosted by grass-roots support and bulk ticket purchases from churchgoers as well as some Christian retailers, *Fireproof*—a drama starring Kirk Cameron as a firefighter who turns to God to help save his marriage—premiered at No. 4 at the weekend with \$6.5 million total receipts, the Associated Press reported. *Variety* said *Fireproof* was “the biggest surprise” of the weekend's box office, noting that the movie saw the strongest opening among recent faith-based films.

Kris Fuhr, who heads up operations at Provident Films, which released *Fireproof* with Sherwood Pictures, said that the film's fourth place debut “exceeded our expectations.” “I knew last week when I saw the box office that there was a chance if we had a big weekend, we had a chance to be in the top five,” said Fuhr, who added that the fifth place movie last week made approximately \$6 million. “God showed up and opened the door at No. 5, and He pushed us through to No. 4 this week.”

Media by Numbers said that on a per-screen basis, the film was second only to the weekend's top film, *Eagle Eye*, E! Online reported. With a

\$500,000

budget, *Fireproof* was shown in just 839 theaters nationwide, compared to

3,510 theaters for the Shia LaBeouf thriller that cost \$80 million to make.

Media by Numbers added that *Fireproof* had the year's highest grossing

opening weekend return of any film—except 3-D *Hannah Montana*—released on

1,000 screens or less.

Fireproof's opening was “nearly double some expectations,” the *Los*

Angeles Times observed. “Their faith-based, grass-roots marketing campaign

really paid off,” Paul Dergarabedian, president of Media by Numbers, told the

newspaper.

Fireproof saw its best business in America's heartland and in the

Southeast, according to Samuel Goldwyn Films, which distributed the film, E!

Online reported. Goldwyn launched its grass-roots marketing campaign for the

film nearly a year ago, reaching out to churches and screening the movie.

Michael Silberman, Goldwyn's distribution chief, said *Fireproof* will

likely expand to more than 1,000 theaters.

Although *Fireproof* just opened, churches and Christian counseling

centers have already made the book that's a focal point of the movie into a

best-seller. *The Love Dare*, a marriage book

written by the film's co-producing brothers Stephen and Alex Kendrick, is now in

its fifth printing with more than 500,000 copies.

-Christian Retailing