

R-rated Christian Film Debuted Friday

The Christian horror film 'House', which stirred controversy after it received an R rating, released in theaters across the country.



[] The makers of a Christian horror movie which released in more than 350 theaters across the country Friday are waiting to see whether its unexpected R rating will scare away the audience.

House, the movie adaptation of the 2006 Thomas Nelson novel written jointly by Frank Peretti and Ted Dekker, two of Christian publishing's best-selling authors, earned the viewing age restriction from the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) for "terror and violence."

Starring Michael Madsen, the film follows two young couples that face their fears and hidden secrets as they spend a night trapped in a remote guesthouse with a killer. The promotional poster features a pentagram with the writing, "The wages of sin is death."

The release has sparked debate among fans of the authors and industry professionals. The trailer available at [has](#) prompted scores of postings, with some criticizing the film for being too dark and others arguing that it strongly presents a biblical message.

Christian retailers like Darren Kehrer, manager of The Carpenter's Son, a Parable store, in Lafayette, Ind., suspect that the R rating could have a dampening effect on its reception. "My guess is that it will (have an impact)," he said. "People will see the R rating and I think that will prevent some people (from seeing it)."

Dekker said that he had mixed feelings about the MPAA

decision, which had left everyone “scratching their heads.” However, keeping younger audiences from seeing the film in theaters should produce strong sales when it is released on DVD. No date has yet been set for that.

House was “wholly redemptive,” Dekker said. The poster featured a pentagram seen in the film and was “a clear indictment of the evil in the house,” he said. “There’s no power in the symbol alone, but I’m sure some will find it offensive so this concerns me somewhat.” –**Christian Retailing**