

Does ‘Woodlawn’ Hold the Secret to Defeating Racism in America?

Southern Evangelical Seminary President Dr. Richard Land has a new favorite film this fall. And it’s not because of its beautiful sports shots or its inspiring team message, but because *Woodlawn* is evidence of the reconciling and transforming power of the gospel.

In fact, Land, who’s already seen the film twice, is ready to see it again.

“If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a movie is worth a hundred thousand words,” Land said. “When members of nearly an entire football team gave their lives to Christ, it not only changed the team, but also their opponents and the entire city of Birmingham, Alabama, which was one of the most segregated cities in the nation at that time. That decision to follow their Savior helped the team move beyond the city’s hostile, violent and racially divided past. And as we live in perhaps an even more violent time, we desperately need the message that the gospel truly can change a culture.”

Land is not alone in his love for the film. *Woodlawn*, which tells the true story of a 1970s Alabama high school football team that came to Jesus Christ during a time of racial injustice, has made approximately \$8 million since its Oct. 16 debut and continued to do well at the box office in its second week of release.

“This is a must-see movie for every Christian family, whether you like football or not,” said Land in a recent installment of his “Bringing Every Thought Captive” daily radio feature. “If you do like football, as I do, then that’s an added bonus. CinemaScore, which measures movies based on actual moviegoers’

ratings, gave *Woodlawn* the only A+ any new release received in that opening weekend.

“This is a great movie about the reconciling and transforming power of the gospel in people’s lives and in a broken society,” Land continued. “In light of recent events in Ferguson and Charleston, this movie is especially important in showing that Dr. Martin Luther King’s dream of a society where you are judged not by the color of your skin but by the content of your character is not dead and is achievable through the reconciliation of the gospel.”