

How 'God's Not Dead' Continues Billy Graham's Legacy

For Duncan Phillips, *God's Not Dead* is bigger than he initially imagined.

This latest project from Pure Flix is about a college freshman tasked with defending his Christian faith. The film also weaves together multiple stories of faith and doubt and culminates into a powerful call to action by the conclusion of the movie.

As the percussionist for the Newsboys, Phillips and his three other bandmates were asked to be a part of the film, which opened last weekend. The scene for the culmination of *God's Not Dead* is set at a Newsboys concert.

"It is a really good movie," Phillips, the animated drummer, says. "It is well-acted, well-produced, and we are stoked to be a part of it."

"We learned our lines and got ready to do our parts when the time came. We were doing a show in Texas, which is when they showed up to do the filming. When we got there, we saw about 50 crewpeople with all these cameras and equipment, and then I realized: This is the real deal."

The movie title was inspired by one of their most popular songs—with the same title—released in 2011.

"The song was written by a good friend of ours. We saw a diamond in the rough. The lyrics are fantastic and the melody is great. We knew this was something worth working on," Phillips says. "Still, to this day, probably because of the movie, it still outsells anything we have ever released."

Phillips also believes the song and movie are continuations of Billy Graham's legacy.

In 1959, Billy Graham traveled to Phillips' native Australia for one of his more memorable evangelistic crusades. Phillips' parents—very young Christians at the time—attended the crusade.

"It was a real pivotal point in the spiritual lives of my mom and dad," Phillips says. "It had a massive impact on them. They have told me how that crusade really galvanized their faith. It was the first time they had ever seen a mass of people gathered together under the banner of Christ.

"So, the wonderful story here is that because Billy Graham was used to ignite their faith, and I had the privilege of growing up under that mantle of faith, if it had not been for Billy Graham, I might not have been in the Newsboys, the song might not have been recorded, and thus the movie may not have been made. It's all really crazy to think about."

Phillips also calls it "an absolute honor and privilege" to have come alongside the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) in other ways. The Newsboys' song "We Believe" is the first track on the My Hope CD.

The band has also joined forces with BGEA to share the gospel, as they played at recent festivals in Lithuania, Latvia, and Rochester, N.Y., along with the Will Graham Jersey Shore Celebration.

Phillips wants to see *God's Not Dead* used in the lives of the next generation, much like Billy Graham's message was used to stir the hearts of his parents.

"Our youth get hit with things like this kid does in the movie," he says. "A time will come where each person who calls himself or herself a Christian will have to defend the faith. We should all be equipped to do that.

“My hope is that people will go to see this movie and that they will bring their friends along. Most importantly, I hope this movie will be used to galvanize their faith, just like Billy Graham was used with my parents—and ultimately, with me.”

To find out where *God's Not Dead* is playing near you, click [here](#).

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