

How the Men Behind 'War Room' Turned Psalm 127 Into a Movie

What is the secret to good parenting? The new film, *Like Arrows*, from Alex and Stephen Kendrick (*War Room*, *Courageous*) and FamilyLife's Dennis and Barbara Rainey and Bob Lepine, tackles this question by following the 50-year journey of main characters Charlie and Alice. Premiering as a Fathom Event in theaters across the country on May 1 and 3, the film will be followed by a panel discussion with the filmmakers and producers.

For Alex Kendrick, the project is an important way to communicate parenting tools. In this Q&A, he also explains the origin of the film and what's next from the Kendrick brothers.

How did this project come about?

In the summer of 2016, Bob Lepine from Family Life Radio and I began talking about a curriculum called The Art of Parenting. As part of that idea, they had this concept of doing six short mini-movies that would help illustrate the points of each section of the curriculum and that begin morphing into one overall story. And we realized we could take these six mini movies and shoot them in a way where they fit together as one feature film.

And so we filmed *Like Arrows* in 2017. It follows one family's journey from learning that they are expecting their first child all the way that their 50th wedding anniversary. They have four children along the way. One of them is adopted. We follow this family's journey of how they learned how to parent and of course, not always doing it the right way, but there's lots of humor, lots of emotion. There are very relatable circumstances, prodigals, social media. We walked through this 50-year journey, and at the end of that, you see the legacy

these parents leave behind, even though they didn't always do it right. We believe that this movie *Like Arrows* is going to influence and inspire a lot of people.

Where is the title taken from?

There's a [Psalm] that talks about children are like arrows in a man's quiver and blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. And so we took the title *Like Arrows* from that and are excited to show the film on May 1 and May 3, those two nights in theaters across America.

Why do you think a message about parenting is an important one for people to hear today?

As the father of six children, I began learning that when I have a sincere love for God that plays out in my parenting, and when my kids know that I sincerely love them, it's easier for them to believe that God loves them. There tends to be a correlation between our view of God and our view of our earthly father or parents. And so it's crucial that parents first chase after God and have a sincere love and devotion to God because their kids are going to see that.

As you know, our actions speak much louder than our words. And so when you're parenting the heart of your child, and they know you love them because you love the Lord, they'll listen to you. We all tend to listen to the people we believe love us the most and so as a parent, wanting your child to first seek the Lord on their own, but secondly, wanting your child to listen and respect what you say. If they question whether you truly love them, then they will question what you say, but if they know you love them, then they will more likely to listen to you instead of ... running off to their friends to get advice or, or life perspective. That's why we say in this movie for parents, "Love God first and love your children and when your children see that, then sincerely it will rub off on their lives."

Why have you and your brother focused on movies to deliver these types of messages to the world?

As you know, Jesus told parables ... to get the truth across, and everybody still loves an engaging story. And so when we are presenting truth, and we do it through an engaging story, and especially when it leaves the audience with something redemptive, something that transforms their life, you know, you get so much more out of it than just an entertaining two hours or two hours full of eye candy. And so for us, we see storytelling as a way to not only present a truth but also model how that it might play out in your life from certainly the lives of the characters in our film. And so I think a lot of people still resonate with that.

They not only want an entertaining escape, but they want to be left with something and there's something redemptive, something inspirational, something challenging or um, you know, thought provoking. And so we do that with our films, and of course we also pray heavily over our films asking God to bless them and used them to touch people's lives. And so we don't just go after the funny bone or, or the eyes for entertainment. We want to go after the heart, we want to go after the mind and draw people to a closer walk with God. And so if we could do that, that would signify success for us.

Are you ready to talk about the next project, the follow-up to *War Room*?

We're shooting a movie all summer long and it will come out next fall, and I'm not revealing too much about it yet, but we're very excited about it. It's the biggest one we've done yet, and I'm going to have a lot of action, a lot of heart in it. And so we shoot all summer long, and anybody willing to pray for us, we would want God's hand all over it and His direction and favor and protection all over it. That's what we would ask for prayer for. We're going to be busy all summer.

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