

Praise, Prophecy and Prayer Abound at 'War Room' Premiere

I was invited to the Altamonte, Florida, premiere of *War Room* two weeks ago, hosted by Liberty Counsel. What followed was an evening full of praise, prophecy and prayer for our nation.

The movie didn't open with commercials or trailers like a normal movie. When I reached the theater, I was greeted by the sound of exuberant worship. The theater was packed full with a diverse crowd all unified in a song of praise.

At that moment, I knew it was going to be a special night.

The worship concluded and the presenters recognized senior intercessors in the crowd. The prophetic voices spoke up as well. One prophet fired up the crowd with a word about how America would be saved: "It's not Donald Trump. It's not a democrat. It's not anyone else. It's the blood of Jesus!"

Liberty Counsel's Mat and Anita Staver personally introduced the film. Anita acknowledged the importance of prayer every day in their workplace. Whenever Liberty Counsel is confronted by difficult legal cases, Anita said she's reminded of the need for God's people to pray.

Mat said that the country was on a grim track and compared the U.S. to ancient Persia. He said, "We can't turn this country around any more than Esther and Mordecai could change the irrevocable decree. ... [Deliverance] came about because Esther and Mordecai led their people in ... fasting and prayer. And God did a miracle."

With the Spirit moving and anticipation buzzing, the theater lights dimmed and the movie began.

Many wonderful columnists have already written about the film itself. I may be slightly more bullish about the movie's potential shortcomings than others, but in general I agree with other Christians. If you enjoyed *Fireproof* or *Courageous*, I have no doubt you'll enjoy *War Room*. The first half is a little sluggish and overly expository, but the movie ends with a strong second half. Alex Kendrick is clearly becoming a better director. And as a whole, the cast for *War Room* is probably the best yet in a Kendrick Brothers production.

After two hours, the credits rolled and Steven Curtis Chapman's catchy "Warrior" filled the theater. The lights rose, and a new singer stepped forward. She brought the crowd to their feet with a song that challenged prayer warriors to stand up for their beliefs.

Finally, the night was closed as I imagine the Kendricks would have wanted it: a fervent prayer for believers in Florida, for believers nationwide and for the fate of the United States. Others who saw the film have told me similar stories of spontaneous prayer that caps their screening. Even if your theater doesn't do this, I encourage Christians to take a few minutes at the end to pray.

As people left the theater, I overheard excited comments and giggles as people talked about their favorite moments from the film. A woman standing near me was absolutely effusive in her praise as we exited; she gushed to her friend, "It was so good," as if unable to contain herself.

"I was skeptical of how they could make a movie about prayer, and they hit it out of the ballpark," Mat Staver said afterward. "I think it will inspire everyone."

Taylor Berglund is the assistant online editor for Charisma Media. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in 2015 with double majors in Radio-TV-Film and English. In his spare time, Taylor applies his active mind to rabidly

consuming pop culture, whether it be books, video games or television series.