

Successful Film Takes Kingdom War to Cultural Tragedy

The “Sound of Freedom” has passed \$163 million in box office ticket sales, outgrossing big-budget competitors and becoming the surprise hit of the summer. All this despite early criticism of the movie by detractors who mislabeled it “Q-anon adjacent” and called out the politics of star Jim Caviezel.

For anti-trafficking advocates who have sought for decades to shine a spotlight on the exploitation of sex trafficking victims, the movie has provided welcomed awareness.

“Our website numbers have just skyrocketed with people being interested,” said Linda Smith, founder of Shared Hope International.

“My phone is blowing up every single day with all the questions and people wanting to ask those questions and seek greater understanding,” said Brittany Dunn, founder of Safe House Project.

Anti-trafficking advocates acknowledge that controversy over the film has politicized the issue in some ways, complicating their messaging. Still, they recognize that “Sound of Freedom” has provided an opportunity to educate moviegoers who want to better understand what’s happening in their own communities and take action.

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Trafficking survivor Lisa Michelle founded Untethered Ministries in San Antonio, Texas, and says she’s been overwhelmed with an outpouring of inquiries since the movie debuted.

"We've been inundated with phone calls and meeting up with potential donors and people very interested to learn what's happening right now, here in the United States," she told CBN News.

Michelle said she almost didn't see the movie, fearing it would hit too close to home. "The little girl in the film actually depicts a lot of what happened to me me," she said. "Except it was a trusted businessman in our neighborhood. It wasn't somebody who kidnapped me."

Along with other advocates in the U.S., Michelle regrets that "Sound of Freedom" focused on trafficking overseas, rather than here at home. Still, she says this summer provides a unique opportunity.

✘ "I felt like the baton was passed to me after that film. Everyone's calling," she said. "People are wanting to volunteer, to donate, and all of that, so it's giving the voice back to me and helping me to navigate the conversation into our real-life trafficking cases that we're seeing today."

"Our hope is, as the film gains popularity and builds momentum that people take the next step to really understand how trafficking impacts local communities," said Dunn.

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In their book "Horror to Hope," David and Beth Grant share inspiring stories of Project Rescue and a global movement to bring freedom to survivors of sexual exploitation. {eo}

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