

Was the Timing of 'War Room' Movie Release Prophetic?

It was like Hollywood coming to town for Kannapolis, North Carolina—population 50,000—during a movie premiere of *War Room*. As the red carpet rolled into the historic Gem Theatre, something stronger than excitement could be felt in the air. Maybe it was the essence of the movie—after all, prayer is a powerful weapon.

The story of *War Room* reveals how prayer can be more than a few fleeting words to God; it can be a strategic battle against the enemy.

As a man named Tony Jordan cheats in his career and nearly cheats on his wife, Elizabeth, financial and marriage struggles surround the family. Enter a woman named Miss Clara, who challenges Elizabeth to set up a “war room,” a private place to pray for God’s help in life’s battles. Will this change things?

The makers of *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof* and *Courageous*, the Kendrick Brothers created this film on the power of prayer in hopes that people will leave the movie desiring a more active prayer life.

“It’s one thing to go to the movies and see eye candy ... but we want to leave them with something more eternal,” director Alex Kendrick said.

And those who are part of the movie have already witnessed eternal results.

A young man who led the jump rope sequences in the film, teaching kids how to double-dutch, came to the producers at the end of the movie and said: “I want what you’re talking about to be a part of my life. Would you pray for me?” The man

accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior.

Others, who already had a relationship with God, were also touched by the making of the film.

Best-selling author and speaker Priscilla Shirer took on the lead acting role as a novice. Shirer, who is a real-life mother of three boys, plays Elizabeth, the mom who goes from struggling to keep her family together to a woman who gives her burdens to God in a war room, where she lines her written prayers along the walls. Yet Shirer learned more than just acting techniques.

“(This movie) made me more strategic, deliberate and intentional with my prayers ... instead of just being consistent,” Shirer said.

But the reality of a war room extends far beyond the movie.

“Oh, my war room, it gets worn out,” said Karen Abercrombie of Mooresville, North Carolina. “And just working on this piece brought everything home in a deeper, meaningful way.”

Abercrombie plays Miss Clara, but was originally denied the part because she appeared too young for the role. She auditioned dressed in character and through her perseverance landed the role.

Alex Kendrick and the rest of the cast and crew also demonstrated perseverance in the making of the film, working 14-hour days week after week.

But despite the long days, he says he would do it again. And he’s especially grateful to the churches that came alongside them in filming.

The pastors around Charlotte, North Carolina, jumped in to help when they heard about a movie uniting people in prayer. Around 85 churches assisted in the making of *War Room*, providing transportation and homemade meals, such as “world

famous" ribs bigger than a paper plate.

"The Bible's clear we're supposed to love one another," co-producer Gary Wheeler said. "And really these churches in this area—that's what they did."

As *War Room* tells a story often too true in today's society—a family that seems to have it all from the outside but is crumbling within—it reveals the need for intervention. The kind of intervention that involves people asking God for help.

"I don't think it's by chance that God's going to use this movie to call people to their knees," said Shirer. "(Nor do) we really believe prayer works, because if we really did, we would actually pray and pray more. Prayer is what invites the power of heaven into the circumstances of earth."

War Room hit theaters Friday, Aug. 28.