

LifeWay Pulls 'Blind Side' DVD, Military Logos From Bibles

LifeWay Christian Stores will no longer sell the hit inspirational movie *The Blind Side* after a Florida pastor proposed a resolution for this week's Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting, expressing "dissatisfaction" with the continued sale of the DVD.

Officials at LifeWay Christian Resources decided to pull the film to avoid controversy during the June 19-20 SBC meeting in New Orleans, according to *The Florida Baptist Witness*. Rated PG-13 for profanity and a racial slur, the 2009 movie—which stars Sandra Bullock, who won an Oscar for her role—tells the true story of a white Christian family who adopted a homeless black teenager who later went on to play in the NFL.

LifeWay Christian Resources (LCR) "does not wish to create another issue that would divide the convention," LifeWay spokesman Marty King told the *Witness*. "Therefore, LifeWay Christian Stores and will no longer sell the movie. ... The movie does include instances of street language [that] we would have preferred not have been included."

The decision came after Rodney Baker, pastor of Hopeful Baptist Church in Lake City, Fla., submitted a resolution to the SBC Resolutions Committee, voicing concerns he first raised with LifeWay two years ago.

When *The Blind Side* was released on video in 2010, it sparked controversy with some independent Christian retailers frustrated that Word Distribution made an exclusive Christian retail distribution agreement with Family Christian Stores. Word officials said that they had offered the film to "key Christian retailers," who had declined to carry it because of

concerns about some of the PG-13-rated content. However, other retailers said they had not been contacted about carrying the film and were upset about being excluded.

Meanwhile, B&H Publishing Group—a division of LCR—said its Bibles can no longer be emblazoned with the official insignia of branches of the U.S. military, Associated Press (AP) reported. LifeWay's King said the military branches have revoked their prior authorization to use the official service emblems on the *Soldier's Bible*, *Sailor's Bible*, *Marine's Bible* and *Airman's Bible*. He added that permission to use the insignia was granted in 2003, but was withdrawn last year.

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation had threatened to sue over what it regarded as an unconstitutional violation of the separation of church and state, AP reported. King said military versions of the Holman Christian Standard Bible now bear generic insignia instead of the official service emblems.