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After reviewing the 2015 film *War Room*, I reflected on the movie. At first, it appears the family has it all. They live in a beautiful home. They both have successful jobs—a wonderful, intelligent little girl. It looks like an all-American family life. However, as the movie brings us into the home, we realize this is not so. The family is emotionally and spiritually bankrupt. The parents are both self-centered, and their daughter is being forgotten.

The mom Elizabeth and the dad Tony are in constant battle. Elizabeth resents Tony as he runs from it all. His priority is to please his bosses and make money. Neither of them communicates with one other without some sarcasm or impatient remark. They are constantly in a battle. The energy between the two is harsh and very heavy. Neither parent can control themselves. The daughter Danielle is ignored as the fighting goes on. The fighting is emotionally disturbing to their daughter. Tony is constantly traveling with his job. He is too busy to spend time with his family.

Elizabeth resents this and lets him know. He spends much of his time at the gym when he does come home. He spends little time with his daughter. When she shares with him about her grade or her double Dutch, he complains and thinks she should be doing something else. Tony doesn't show much respect for Elizabeth or Danielle. He never seems present, and Elizabeth is so caught up in punishing him for not being there that they have no clue what their daughter is doing in her school life and after-school activities. I see this happening in many families I know. Families are busy, living separate lives, and no one spends time together as families. My niece and her husband just went through something like the Jordan family struggles. My niece Sally is more like Tony, and my nephew Tom takes on the role of Elizabeth, so the roles are reversed, but their difficulties in their marriage are the same. My niece, at the time, was driven and very anxious to

climb the corporate ladder. Her job was demanding. She didn't mind. She wanted to impress her bosses. Most nights, she worked late. When she arrived home, Tom would have the kids fed and ready for bed. Sally gave the kids a quick kiss hello, then went straight to her home gym and on her phone. Tom resented her. He would confide in a few family members about what was happening, but we didn't have the answer. Most of the family would encourage therapy, and a few of us would suggest he pray for her. Tom tried talking to Sally, but she would lash out and take off. She would say some harsh things like Tony's abrupt and dismissive way he treated Elizabeth when she confronted him about going on another business trip or working too much. My nephew was getting the same treatment. He was so resentful and sad. The children would stay at my sister's house a lot because of the fighting that was going on between their parents. The whole family was emotionally and spiritually struggling. Our family as a whole all agreed that we could pray for them. Sally had no interest in looking at herself. Trying to convince her, we found we were powerless, but with prayer, we no longer felt this way. This gave us hope and something to do other than try to fix a situation that wasn't ours. As Ms. Clara said, "we were fighting the wrong enemy. We all knew how good God was, but Sally and Tom hadn't a clue yet. They were too busy battling one another. As the situation worsened, Tom discovered that Sally was speaking with some man online, much like when Elizabeth received her friend's text about seeing Tony with another woman. The difference between Tom and Sally's situation is that Tom confronts her immediately. Sally is defensive when asked about this man. Finally, she got so angry that she took off, and Tom and the kids didn't see her for a full day.

During this time, the family came together. We kept the children close and comforted Tom. The family didn't have Ms. Clara, but they did have their grandmother, my mom. Fran prayed every moment of each day for her grandkids and great-grandkids. She called all her prayer groups and

the priest from her parish. She told him, “Don’t be angry; pray without ceasing, and she will return home. This was real life, not a movie, so it wasn’t as dramatic, but something did happen to Sally that night. That following day when Sally came home, Tom told us she seemed different. We still don’t know the shift, but she was peaceful and content for the first time in a long time. She never told anyone what changed her heart. She no longer worked long hours; she spent all her free time with the kids and family. She agreed to go to Christian counseling. None of us knows for sure what happened. When asked, Sally couldn’t answer. But what she said did say was that something inside her felt lighter, and she felt free. It was an amazing transformation to watch. Their sweet family was coming back together, and to this day, my mom swears it was the power of prayer. I believe this as well.

I felt great sympathy for my niece and the Jordan family. I sympathized with the family's troubles because neither had God to turn to. The families didn’t find it essential to have a relationship with God until they realized they needed God. There is no grace without a relationship with God. When Tony is forgiven by his boss and no charges are filed, Elizabeth knows that Tony was given God’s grace. We see this again when Tony’s associate, who originally wanted to put him in jail, gets a flat. Tony helps him without a word spoken—another moment where humility and grace are given to both men.

The significant part that came out of this challenging time for the families was that they began to pray and read the Bible. My niece's family began attending church and praying, much like the Jordan family. I wish the film would have gone on a bit longer. I loved the scenes at the end after their win at the Double-Dutch contest. I would have loved to see more about how their lives grew together in loving God and if they continued. The blessing with my family is that I get to

watch them grow and love the Lord and one another. It was extraordinary to see this movie. I, too, believe in the power of prayer.

Of the two movies, the War Room had a clear and strong message about Christianity with its strong message of the power of prayer. The War Room would be the best ambassador of Christian themes for all Christians and the secular world. The message in War Room was clear. The power of prayer, the importance of prayer's power, the importance of helping others, forgiveness, and the importance of making amends to those we've harmed. From the beginning, I felt a certain energy coming from the film.

From the start, there was a spirit about Ms. Clara. You wanted more of her, and the movie delivered. As a Christian, what struck me as a God-awakening moment was when Ms. Clara began to preach to Elizabeth while having coffee. Ms. Clara clarifies to Elizabeth that how she is fighting is all wrong. She explains to Elizabeth, "just because you argue a lot doesn't mean you fight well; you got to plead with God so that he could do what he can. You got to get out of the way and let him do it." A profound moment for me, and I am sure for anyone else watching this. Another scene I felt spoke volumes and was quite funny was when Ms. Clara, Elizabeth, and Danielle were almost mugged. Ms. Clara does not back down and tells the mugger if "put it down in Jesus' name." The police officers are stunned, but she goes on to make sure they write it as she said, "in Jesus' name." She tells them why she says, "everyone's always trying to leave Jesus out, which is one reason we're in the mess we're in."

This is the message throughout the movie. Without Jesus, we are nothing. We become selfish and self-centered. Nothing matters but what we want, and we begin to battle amongst one another instead of coming together in one with Jesus Christ. This is precisely what Satan wants. The movie was a great reminder of who the real enemy is and the power of prayer.

However, the movie *Left Behind* seemed from the very beginning to look and feel like it was the start of a sci-fi or some thriller/ fantasy film. A person without knowledge of the Book of Revelations would come to a similar conclusion. From the start, the confusion began. The miraculous decimation of Israel's enemy as it attacked from the air. The next strange scene is on the plane when all the bodies go missing. Another sci-fi feel is when they are all at the meeting around the table while Buck tries to tell them it's all a lie in what Nicolae is trying to say to them. But Nicolae takes over and begins his charade of lies and murderous acts. As his ranting goes on about how he is doing good for the world, he turns into a grey-faced-looking anti-Christ or satan. The visual effects were not very good; only Buck could see this happening. In the meantime, Nicolae hypnotizes everyone into believing what he is saying. The movie was ok and sometimes exciting. It stirred my imagination and had me go back and read up on The Book of Revelation. The problem with the movie *Left Behind* is that the non-Christians would not understand the message unless they knew what the movie was about beforehand and read the Book of Revelations.

When it came to the War Rooms' lighting, as I can see, it was primarily bright, speaking of hope and prayer, and dark when struggles were going on. The lightning added intensity to the film's quality and the feelings in each scene. I am not a critic, but I have seen both Hollywood films and several Christian films. Give the War Room four stars for its story production. For me, it was unique and brilliant. The way a passage in the Bible inspired this wonderful movie. I was never bored. I laughed, teared up a bit, and was so inspired.

The settings were bright and full of light. When the scene was sad, it was dreary and sometimes dark. The scenes in the home during a confrontation between Elizabeth and Tony are dim and depressing. When Ms. Clara and Elizabeth pray, the sun shines through the window, or a light is

on in the background. The lighting sets the mood. The acting is top-notch. The film's cinematography was beautiful—the close-up and composition, especially on Ms. Clara at the beginning when she was younger and fast forward to the present when she is older.

Another is in the camera's angles, especially on Elizabeth when she is screaming outside her home, telling Satan he is no longer wanted here. The close-up of her expressions during this scene touched me deeply. Her movements showed her passion as they brought drama and excitement to the scene. The photography was unique in capturing Tony fiercely and aggressively playing basketball. You could feel his anger and hear it with every grunt and yell. The timing was perfect with what happened next with his friend's comment about him playing with such rage. The Double-Dutch scene contest had the best lighting. It was important for the viewer to see all the action in this part of the movie. The camera was able to get great angle shots. It was important for light is bright. It caught the activity going on perfectly. Between the color, the sound, and the camera angles; I felt I was a part of the audience. It was a fantastic adventure watching the jumper ropers, especially the Comets.

Biblical messages that the War Room spread in the movie

Matthew 6:6 “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

Ephesians 6:18 “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”

James 5:16 “Confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much”.

Overall, the movie was inspiring. I hope the movie leaves people with ideas to create their war room. It would be an excellent recommendation to a Christian film enthusiast because of its message on the power of prayer.