

FROM THE CREATORS OF FIREPROOF AND COURAGEOUS

WAR ROOM

PRAYER IS A POWERFUL WEAPON



God is love

WAR ROOM (2015)

CREW OVERVIEW

Alex Kendrick (Director; Writer; Producer)
Stephen Kendrick (Writer; Producer)

CAST OVERVIEW

Karen Abercrombie (Miss Clara)
Priscilla Shirer (Elizabeth Jordan)
T.C. Stallings (Tony Jordan)
Alena Pitts (Danielle Jordan)
Michael Jr. (Michael Alexander)
Tenae Downing (Veronica Drake)
Alex Kendrick (Coleman Young)
Dave Blamy (Tom Stafford)
Beth Moore (Mandy)

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USING THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

Intended for use after viewing the film, this study guide provides catalysts for biblically based discussion of various themes found in *War Room*. The guide features three themes from the movie and is structured in such a way that groups can choose to discuss the entire guide at once or can focus on one or two themes at a time.

FILM OVERVIEW/NOTE TO GROUP

War Room is the fifth film from brothers Alex and Stephen Kendrick (previous films include *Flywheel*, *Facing the Giants*, *Fireproof* and *Courageous*) and centers on the transformational power of strategic prayer. Tony and Elizabeth Jordan (played by T.C. Stallings and Priscilla Shirer, respectively) have it all, but their world is crumbling under the strain of a failing marriage. Their bitter, destructive course takes a sudden turn when Elizabeth meets Miss Clara (Karen Abercrombie), who challenges her protégé to establish a “war room” and a strategic battle plan of prayer for her life and family. With Miss Clara’s sage wisdom and guidance, the Jordans embark on a life-changing journey of prayer, mentorship and grace.

The film opens with a montage of war footage while Miss Clara’s narration suggests a powerful and fitting parallel between wartime strategy and prayer strategy, establishing that both require preparation – as victories don’t come by accident – as well as an understanding of the real enemy at hand. The story then shifts to the Jordan family, providing an overview of daily life for each member: Tony climbs the corporate ladder and flirts with temptation, drifting further

from his wife and daughter; Elizabeth, a real estate agent, grows increasingly bitter and frustrated at her husband’s behavior, and her anger hinders her role as wife and mother; and young Danielle (Alena Pitts) becomes the collateral damage in her parents’ battle as she hides her wounded spirit and maintains a low profile, taking refuge in practicing for an upcoming Double Dutch contest.

Elizabeth meets a new client, Miss Clara, and what begins as a professional interaction soon develops into a mentoring relationship. During a visit intended to set the listing price of her home, Miss Clara asks Elizabeth personal questions about her faith and serves her coffee that is room temperature, illustrating that a believer cannot be lukewarm. Miss Clara then offers to mentor Elizabeth and teach her how to pray strategically, but Elizabeth is reluctant. That night, she overhears Danielle telling a friend about her parents’ fighting. Elizabeth tries to reassure her daughter, but when Danielle gives her mother a pop quiz about her interests and a recent award, Elizabeth fails miserably and realizes she must address several issues in her life and marriage.



Elizabeth feels the first problem that needs addressing is her husband. But, Miss Clara quickly dispels the thought: Tony is not the real enemy and it isn't Elizabeth's job to fix him. Equipped with Scripture and Miss Clara's advice to establish a war room and a prayer plan, Elizabeth heads home and makes a distracted, halfhearted attempt. A terrifying attempted robbery gives Elizabeth a new perspective, and she clears out her closet and establishes her war room with renewed purpose. She receives a text from a friend about possible infidelity on Tony's part and collapses in prayer, later walking determinedly around her house, declaring that it belongs to Jesus and telling the Devil to get out. Tony returns from his business trip, sees Elizabeth's text exchange with her friend and is utterly confused by and suspicious of her calm demeanor. Where are the accusations and tears? Where is the inevitable fight? What has happened to his wife?

Soon after, Tony is caught padding sales numbers and stealing drug samples, and he loses his job. He then has a nightmare that his family is being attacked – only to discover that he is the attacker. Scared and disoriented, he wakes up and finds Elizabeth's prayer room. At the community center, Tony tells his friend, Michael (played by Michael Jr.) about the prayer room; Michael, who has been lovingly and firmly cautioning Tony about his recent problematic behavior, is awed by Elizabeth's commitment. Back at home, Tony is overcome and convicted by what he sees, and he falls to his knees and calls on God. He reconciles with his wife and daughter, and knows he must also reconcile with his former employer by returning the stolen drug samples. Tony's boss, Coleman (Alex Kendrick), is so moved by the gesture that he forfeits criminal charges. *Grace*. Tony and Elizabeth know they have just experienced God's grace and they rejoice in His unmerited favor.

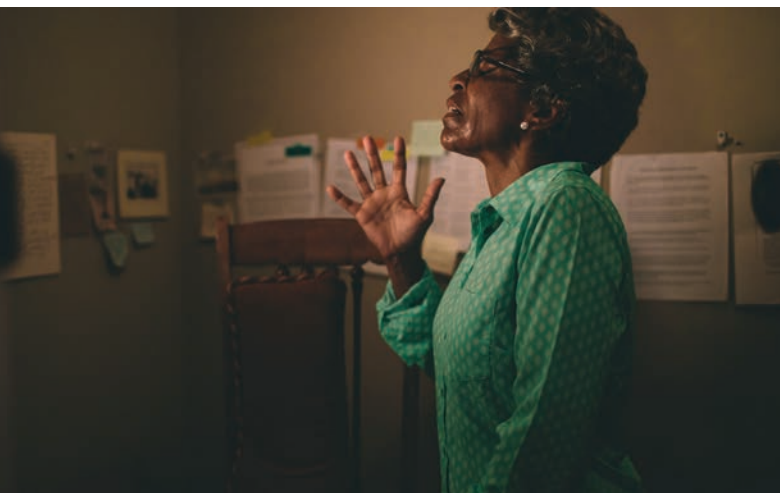
Miss Clara's house sells and she and Elizabeth enjoy some (hot) coffee together as they talk. To Elizabeth's surprise, Miss Clara confesses that things were quite difficult between herself and her late husband. Her experiences were painful, but they taught her priceless lessons about learning how to fight in prayer and to trust God in all circumstances. She prompts Elizabeth to become a mentor, to take all that she's learned and invest in someone. At the Double Dutch competition, Tony and Danielle's team takes second place, and the moment represents countless answers to prayer for Elizabeth and her family. In the final scene, Miss Clara is back in her war room, pleading with God for the next generation and the next: "Raise 'em up, LORD! Raise 'em up!"

THEME ONE: PRAYER

Guiding Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV): "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- 1 Chronicles 16:11 (NLT): Search for the LORD and for his strength; continually seek him.
- 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NIV): "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."
- Psalm 145:18 (NLT): The LORD is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.
- Proverbs 15:29 (NLT): The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayers of the righteous.
- Isaiah 40:31 (NLT): But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.
- Matthew 6:6 (NIV): "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."
- Matthew 7:11 (NIV): "If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"
- John 10:10 (NIV): "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."
- Romans 8:26 (NIV): In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.
- Romans 12:12 (NIV): Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.
- Philippians 4:6 (NIV): Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
- Colossians 4:2 (NIV): Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18 (NIV): Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.
- 2 Thessalonians 3:3 (NIV): But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one.
- James 4:7 (NIV): Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
- James 5:16 (NIV): Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.



SCENES TO REVIEW

- “Victories don’t come by accident.” (00:01:40–00:03:58, Chapter 1)
- The Real Enemy (00:27:23–00:29:32, Chapter 6)
- Creating a War Room (00:45:41–00:54:00, Chapter 10)
- Letting God Fight (00:55:12–00:58:20, Chapter 12)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

2 Chronicles 7:14 says, “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (NIV). In context, these words reflect part of God’s message to Solomon after the dedication of the Temple; what a testament to God’s unfailing and timeless Word that this passage is also relevant today! As you begin this theme discussion, reflect on 2 Chronicles 7:14 and engage the LORD in prayer. Listen to Him. Talk with Him.

The film opens with a montage of war footage before shifting to a glimpse of Miss Clara’s personal history – a brief description of her late husband’s death and the way his job as a wartime strategist taught her valuable lessons in identifying the real enemy as well as organizing and utilizing the proper strategies and resources to fight well. “Behind the field of battle,” Miss Clara narrates, “someone has developed a strategy ... Because victories don’t come by accident.”

SCENE TO REVIEW

“Victories don’t come by accident.” (00:01:40–00:03:58, Chapter 1)

- What do you learn about Miss Clara in this scene? What specific aspects of her character and personality are highlighted here that are developed in greater depth later in the film?
- Which battle strategies does Miss Clara mention in the opening sequence? How are these strategies useful not only in war, but also in prayer? Give examples if possible.

- Why is it important to look at what the enemy is doing in order to prepare your own battle strategy? What purpose is served in understanding the enemy’s plan of attack?
- Miss Clara says that Leo’s death taught her that we should never take life for granted. Why might this perspective foster the practice and discipline of prayer?

Read 1 Chronicles 16:11 and Colossians 4:2 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does 1 Chronicles 16:11 offer a primer for prayer? What beginning steps do you see in this verse that lay the groundwork for a relationship and conversation with God?
- According to Colossians 4:2, how committed should we be to prayer? Why do you think this verse tells us to be “watchful” and “grateful” – why these two attributes?

One night, Elizabeth overhears Danielle telling a friend that all her parents do is fight. In the subsequent (and heartbreaking) conversation with her daughter, Elizabeth realizes that she and Tony have not been the most attentive parents. On the heels of this discovery, Elizabeth vents her frustrations about Tony’s selfishness, vain ambition, inappropriate flirtations and absentee parenting to Miss Clara, who stops Elizabeth in her tracks, and tells her to take all of her “whining” about her husband, identify the real enemy and channel that effort into prayer.

SCENE TO REVIEW

The Real Enemy (00:27:23–00:29:32, Chapter 6)

- How would you describe Miss Clara’s body language at the beginning of the scene? What does her reaction say about the way that Elizabeth is communicating?

Miss Clara says, “How much of the one hour we got together today are you gonna spend whining about your husband, and how much we gonna spend on what the LORD can do about him?”

- Does Miss Clara’s question resonate with you? Have you ever spent time “whining” about a person or situation instead of bringing it before the LORD? If so, what





happened?

- Miss Clara tells Elizabeth, “You’re fighting the wrong enemy.” What does she mean by this? Who is the real enemy and why does this point of clarification matter?

A bit later, Miss Clara says, “Elizabeth, you’ve got to plead with God so that He can do what only He can do. And then you’ve got to get out of the way and let Him do it.”

- What does Miss Clara’s advice suggest about the power of prayer and about trusting God to make a difference where it seems no difference can be made?
- Elizabeth tells Miss Clara that she doesn’t even know where to start, and Miss Clara hands her something. What does she give her and why is it the best place to start?

Read Psalm 145:18; Proverbs 15:29; Isaiah 40:31 and Romans 8:26 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What do the verses from Psalms and Proverbs say about the LORD hearing prayer? What promises are found in these verses and how does that encourage you?
- If, like Elizabeth, you are weary of a situation and don’t know where to start, what powerful truths and answers do you see in Isaiah 40:31 and Romans 8:26?

Earlier in the film, Elizabeth makes a halfhearted attempt at establishing a war room, but she decides to get serious about her prayer closet after she and Miss Clara are held up at knifepoint and Tony’s response to the situation leans toward indifference. With renewed purpose and a better understanding of the need for intimacy with God, she empties her closet – creating a distraction-free zone – and stumbles through what can sometimes be the hardest part of reconnecting with God after an extended vacation from His presence: simply starting to pray.

SCENES TO REVIEW

Creating a War Room (00:45:41–00:54:00, Chapter 10)

Letting God Fight (00:55:12–00:58:20, Chapter 12)

At the beginning of the first Scene to Review (*Creating a War Room*), Miss Clara narrates, “There’s no magic in the location you pray, but Scripture does say to go into your inner room and pray in secret, and your Heavenly Father, who sees what’s done in secret, will reward you. Now get rid of any distractions, and focus your heart and mind on Him. Acknowledge that He is God and that you desperately need Him. Now, be grateful for your blessings, but lift your needs and requests to Him. If you’ve got something to confess, then confess it. Ask Him for forgiveness, then choose to believe Him when He says that He loves you and will take care of you. Then pray for the heart of your husband, your daughter and anyone else that the LORD brings to your mind. And don’t rush it. You take your time. And then you listen.”

- Miss Clara lays out a battle plan of prayer. What do you think of her approach? Do you pray similarly? Differently? Take time to reflect on and discuss this question.
- Whether a person is just learning to pray, reconnecting with God after time apart or approaching the throne with confidence, how does this advice offer encouragement?
- Trace Elizabeth’s prayer journey. How does she grow in confidence and ability? Think back to her first timid, unsure prayers and then to her delight in spending time with God.
- From the second Scene to Review (*Letting God Fight*): In your own words, explain what Elizabeth is trying to tell her daughter about learning to let God fight her battles.

Read Matthew 6:6; John 10:10; Philippians 4:6; and James 4:7 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What are your thoughts on Jesus’ words in Matthew 6:6? Why do you think He instructs us to pray in a closed room to an unseen Father who sees what is done in secret?

- How does Philippians 4:6 align with what Miss Clara says about prayer? How does this verse apply to Elizabeth’s concern over Tony’s possible infidelity?
- Elizabeth quotes John 10:10 and James 4:7 before she brings her life and home under Jesus’ management. Are there any areas of your life that need to be surrendered to God?

As you finish this theme discussion, take time to read Matthew 7:11; Romans 12:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; and James 5:16 (see Scriptures Referenced). What do these verses tell you about prayer? How do they encourage you to pray and seek the LORD in all situations? Drawing from what you’ve seen and discussed in this section on prayer, take an honest look at your prayer life. Are you in communion with God on a regular, daily basis? Do you value His guidance and direction in your life? If you’ve been struggling to pray, consider taking this opportunity to reconnect with your Heavenly Father, who loves you unconditionally.

THEME TWO: MENTORSHIP

Guiding Scripture: Proverbs 27:17 (NLT): As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- Psalm 71:18 (NIV): Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.
- Psalm 145:4 (NIV): One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.
- Proverbs 3:3 (NIV): Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.
- Proverbs 13:20 (NLT): Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.
- Proverbs 27:17 (NLT): As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.
- Matthew 5:14–16 (NIV): “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do

people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

- Matthew 28:18–20 (NIV): Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
- Ephesians 4:2 (NIV): Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.
- Philippians 2:1–4 (NIV): Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.
- Colossians 3:16 (NLT): Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV): Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
- 2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT): You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.
- Titus 2:4–5 (NLT): These older women must train the younger women to love their husbands and their children, to live wisely and be pure, to work in their homes, to do good, and to be submissive to their husbands. Then they will not bring shame on the word of God.
- James 3:14–16 (NIV): But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.
- Revelation 3:15–16 (NIV): “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm – neither hot nor cold – I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”

SCENES TO REVIEW

- Lukewarm Coffee (00:17:15–00:23:30, Chapter 4)
- Ball Hog (00:08:09–00:09:20, Chapter 2)
- Marriage CPR (00:35:28–00:37:59, Chapter 8)
- Miss Clara’s Story (01:33:25–01:38:27, Chapter 19)
- “Raise ‘em up, LORD!” (01:49:53–01:52:45, Chapter 23)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

One of the more prominent threads woven into the fabric of *War Room* is the theme of mentorship. For Elizabeth, mentorship represents the special bond she develops and shares with Miss Clara, a woman who seeks to impart her wisdom to the younger generations. For Tony, mentorship plays out differently and is more appropriately called accountability – Tony’s friend, Michael, holds Tony responsible for his attitude and behavior in a loving, yet firm, way. These parallel storylines make for a challenging and inspiring look at the power of mentorship.

In a scene that is both humorous and humbling, Miss Clara serves Elizabeth a cup of lukewarm coffee, making the point that being either hot or cold is better than being room temperature. Even though she’d prefer to keep their relationship professional, Elizabeth is intrigued by Miss Clara’s words of caution regarding her personal and spiritual life. What follows is a candid assessment of Elizabeth’s need to depart from her lukewarm perspective, and a mentoring relationship emerges.

SCENE TO REVIEW

Lukewarm Coffee (00:17:15–00:23:30, Chapter 4)

- What do you think of the coffee analogy? What comparisons does Miss Clara make between lukewarm coffee and the state of Elizabeth’s faith?
- List some of the difficult or uncomfortable questions that Miss Clara asks Elizabeth. Why might awkwardness, difficulty or discomfort be a natural part of the mentoring process?
- Why is Miss Clara a good mentor for Elizabeth? What has she experienced (a.k.a. “landmines”) that can speak directly to Elizabeth’s current situation?
- In your opinion, what qualities does it take to be a mentor? To be the person being mentored? Have you ever been involved in mentorship? If yes, how was the experience?

Read Psalm 71:18; 145:4; Titus 2:4–5; and Revelation 3:15–16 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What do the two verses from Psalms say about mentorship? Why is it important for one generation to declare God’s power, works and acts to the next generation?
- How does the Titus passage speak to Miss Clara and Elizabeth’s mentorship? According to these verses, in which specific areas are the older women to train the younger women?
- In what ways does Jesus’ message to the church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:15–16) motivate you in your spiritual walk? Why is it better to be hot or cold than lukewarm?

As Elizabeth begins to flourish under the guidance of Miss Clara, Tony grows increasingly distracted by the temptations around him – greed, vanity and sexual immorality to name a few. Michael sees several red flags in Tony’s attitude and behavior, and his presence in Tony’s life becomes that of an accountability partner (even if the accountability is largely unwanted on Tony’s part). Tony and Michael’s friendship demonstrates several significant aspects of accountability, one of them being that a good friend will hold you responsible no matter the cost.

SCENES TO REVIEW

Ball Hog (00:08:09–00:09:20, Chapter 2)

Marriage CPR (00:35:28–00:37:59, Chapter 8)

- Think through these scenes and the film as a whole and then compare and contrast the way Elizabeth and Tony participate in their respective mentoring relationships.
- What are some of the ways that Michael draws out Tony? What types of questions does he ask Tony? Does he avoid sensitive issues? Why or why not? Be specific if you can.
- How would you describe Michael’s personality? In what ways does his unique set of characteristics make for a



great accountability partner?

- In Tony and Michael’s case, how does their friendship allow for a level of accountability that might otherwise be limited? Do you have a friend who holds you accountable?

Read Proverbs 13:20; Proverbs 27:17; and James 3:14–16 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- What do the verses from Proverbs have to say regarding the company we keep? Have you experienced the truth of this wisdom in your life? If yes, can you give an example?
- How does James 3:14–16 relate to Tony’s situation? What happens when we pursue a destructive course? Why is accountability a great vehicle for making healthy changes?

When Miss Clara’s house sells, Elizabeth visits her friend to deliver the good news. The two women discuss their friendship and Elizabeth wants to make sure that they will continue their chats. Though Miss Clara agrees, she challenges Elizabeth to find a new person in whom to invest, a new person whom she can mentor the way she’s been mentored. With that challenge, Miss Clara shares more of her and her husband’s story, and the honest recollection of difficulties gives Elizabeth a greater understanding of why her mentor wants to reach the next generation.

SCENES TO REVIEW

Miss Clara’s Story (01:33:25–01:38:27, Chapter 19)

“Raise ‘em up, LORD!” (01:49:53–01:52:45, Chapter 23)

In the first Scene to Review (*Miss Clara’s Story*), Miss Clara says, “We all need help every now and then,” and Elizabeth later replies, “I wasn’t willing to admit how much help I needed, and I needed somebody to wake me up from the insanity of doing the same thing over and over.”

- Think about Elizabeth’s comment for a moment. How is this an example of the clarity that comes with hindsight? Why is Elizabeth now able to see that she needed guidance?
- What does Miss Clara share about herself in her vulnerability? How have her life story and her experiences informed her commitment to becoming a mentor and teacher?
- What are the benefits of teaching and investing in the next generation? Why is it vital to pass along what we have learned? How does Miss Clara’s story demonstrate this ideal?
- Which parts of Miss Clara’s prayer in the second Scene to Review (“*Raise ‘em up, LORD!*”) stand out the most to you? Why?
- How can you become involved in either being mentored or becoming a mentor? Are there opportunities in your family, neighborhood, church, school or work environment?

Read Matthew 5:14–16; Colossians 3:16; and 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- Matthew 5:14–16 says that believers are “the light of

the world.” How does this metaphor – and the rest of the Matthew passage – correspond to mentorship?

- What instructions are included in Colossians 3:16 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11 that relate to the theme of mentorship? Include specific examples.

As you finish discussing the theme of mentorship, read the following verses: Proverbs 3:3; Matthew 28:18–20; Ephesians 4:2; Philippians 2:1–4; and 2 Timothy 2:2 (see Scriptures Referenced). What does each passage contribute to the concept of mentoring and accountability? How do these verses reflect the importance of the related practice of discipleship? Consider areas in your life that could use sharpening, as referenced in this theme’s Guiding Scripture of Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend” (NLT). Likewise, think about the ways that God has equipped you to be a blessing to others.

THEME THREE: GRACE

Guiding Scripture: Ephesians 1:7 (NLT): He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

SCRIPTURES REFERENCED

- Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV): “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”
- Lamentations 3:22–23 (NIV): “Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”
- John 1:14 (NIV): The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 3:16–17 (NIV): “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to



save the world through him.”

- Romans 5:8 (NLT): But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.
- Romans 6:1–2 (NLT): Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it?
- Romans 6:14 (NLT): Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.
- Romans 8:38–39 (NIV): For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our LORD.
- 2 Corinthians 12:8–10 (NIV): Three times I pleaded with the LORD to take it away from me. But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Ephesians 1:7 (NLT): He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.
- Ephesians 2:8–9 (NIV): For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.
- Hebrews 4:14, 16 (NLT): So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe...Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- James 4:6 (NLT): And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”
- 1 John 4:19 (NIV): We love because he first loved us.

SCENES TO REVIEW

- “Do you deserve grace?” (00:40:55–00:45:38, Chapter 9)
- Tony’s Change of Heart (01:05:54–01:12:15, Chapter 14)
- Reconciliation (01:14:22–01:18:39, Chapter 15)
- Asking Forgiveness (01:21:23–01:27:26, Chapter 17)
- Grace (01:28:28–01:32:09, Chapter 18)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As you begin this theme discussion, take a moment to reflect on the way(s) that grace, salvation, forgiveness and reconciliation are connected – in *War Room*, grace is often inextricably woven with these other outpourings of God’s favor and love. Grace is seen in Elizabeth’s willingness to surrender to God and to pray for her husband, in Tony’s

act of confession and desire for forgiveness from those he has hurt; in an employer’s willingness to extend a pardon instead of demanding justice and consequence; and in a family’s complete restoration and reconciliation.

Tony and Elizabeth Jordan have become ships passing in the night – well, ships passing in the night that have cannons aimed at each other. Neither is willing to put the other’s best interests first, and neither is willing to address the situation in a productive manner. That begins to change when Miss Clara asks Elizabeth to write down all of Tony’s faults. Three pages later, Miss Clara dismisses the list without a glance, instead asking Elizabeth if Tony deserves God’s grace.

SCENE TO REVIEW

“Do you deserve grace?” (00:40:55–00:45:38, Chapter 9)

- When Miss Clara sees Elizabeth’s list of Tony’s wrongdoings, she asks, “In light of all these wrongs, does God still love Tony?” How does the answer, in fact, define grace?
- How does God’s grace help us to forgive others? What is the relationship between Jesus’ work on the cross, forgiveness and grace? Why is Jesus the epitome of grace?
- Miss Clara tells Elizabeth that there isn’t enough room for both Elizabeth and Jesus on the throne of her heart. She must step down and surrender. Why?
- Explain why Elizabeth must surrender and fight at the same time. How does this paradox further enhance the beauty of grace, and how does grace transform our hearts and lives?

Read John 3:16–17; Romans 5:8; and Romans 6:14 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does the essence of the gospel message in John 3:16–17 relate to grace? What unfathomable grace did God bestow on us when He sent Jesus to die for our sins?
- How are the messages in Romans 5:8 and 6:14 similar regarding grace? In Romans 6:14, what word is associated with God’s grace?
- Have you experienced the power of salvation and, subsequently, God’s grace? If not, take comfort and refuge in the lifesaving message of John 3:16–17 and believe in Jesus today.

Never underestimate the power of a praying spouse! Though Tony suffers the consequences of many poor and sinful decisions, he has the benefit of a wife who continually lifts up her husband to the LORD. And that LORD is in the business of delivering people from the snares of evil, transforming hearts and minds and establishing a new tone of reconciliation and peace.

SCENES TO REVIEW

Tony’s Change of Heart (01:05:54–01:12:15, Chapter 14)

Reconciliation (01:14:22–01:18:39, Chapter 15)

- What do you think it means that Tony was the one attacking his own family in his nightmare? Symbolically, what might the nightmare represent?

- Put yourself in Tony's place for a moment. What do you think he feels as he discovers Elizabeth's war room and the prayers she wrote for him despite his offenses?
- Tony experiences grace at his worst, lowest point. Why is it that we often call on God in our most broken, humble and impossible moments?
- What are your thoughts on Tony and Elizabeth's reconciliation? What parts of their conversation resonate with you the most? Why? Where do you see grace?
- Elizabeth tells Tony that she finds her contentment in Jesus and that she belongs to Him first and foremost. Why is this model ultimately best for their marriage?

Read Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 6:1–2; and James 4:6 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How do Jeremiah 29:11 and Romans 6:1–2 complement each other in a way that demonstrates how much God loves us and that He desires good for us?
- What does James 4:6 suggest about the relationship between grace and humility? According to this verse, in what way does God give grace?

After Tony loses his job, he wrestles with the decision to return stolen drug samples, knowing that he faces criminal charges if his former employer chooses to prosecute him. Having experienced an abundance of God's grace in his life – the restoration of his marriage and a reconciliation with Danielle – Tony knows the true power of prayer and must determine if he is willing to trust God fully with his future, whether it includes prosecution or pardon.

SCENES TO REVIEW

Asking Forgiveness (01:21:23–01:27:26, Chapter 17)

Grace (01:28:28–01:32:09, Chapter 18)

- In your opinion, what prompts Tony to decide to return the drug samples to his former employer? Why is Coleman shocked to witness such an action?
- How is Tony's decision to seek forgiveness for all of his wrongs a witness to the power of God's grace and His ability to transform hearts?
- What do you think Tony and Elizabeth feel the moment Coleman drops criminal charges? How does this unexpected and blessed outcome further bolster Tony's gratitude?
- Have you ever experienced the power of God's grace – His unmerited favor? If yes, would you consider sharing your experience and how it impacted your life and faith?

Read Lamentations 3:22–23; Romans 8:38–39; and Hebrews 4:14, 16 (see Scriptures Referenced).

- How does Lamentations 3:22–23 present a beautiful portrait of God's grace? What does it mean to you that God's "compassions never fail" and are "new every morning"?
- Reflect on Romans 8:38–39 and Hebrews 4:14 and the profound message contained within each verse. Take time to savor the descriptions of God's love and accessibility.

In concluding this theme discussion about grace, be sure to read John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 12:8–10; Ephesians

1:7; Ephesians 2:8–9; and 1 John 4:19 (see Scriptures Referenced). How does each verse contribute to a greater understanding of grace, salvation, confession, humility and forgiveness? Feel free to refer to additional Scripture in your discussion of grace. You can also think back through the film and point out additional examples of God's unmerited favor bestowed upon any person or situation. On a personal level, do you recall moments of grace in your life? How has God shown you favor and delivered you from the consequences of sinful actions, behaviors and decisions? Spend some time in prayer, thanking God for all He's done.

FINAL THOUGHTS

- What do you think of the character of Danielle? Trace her character arc throughout the film – how does she grow and change due to her family's trials and triumphs?
- Are you encouraged to establish your own war room? If you don't have the space to dedicate an entire room, what are some other ways to practice the discipline of prayer?
- What does the film have to say about the importance of surrounding yourself with good friends and a community that supports you and your family?
- Tony joins Danielle's Double Dutch team (much to her delight!) If you are having trouble connecting with someone you love, what small step could you take to bond?
- What other themes do you see in the film? Point to specific scenes for examples. How do these themes tie in with the overarching themes of prayer, mentorship and grace?

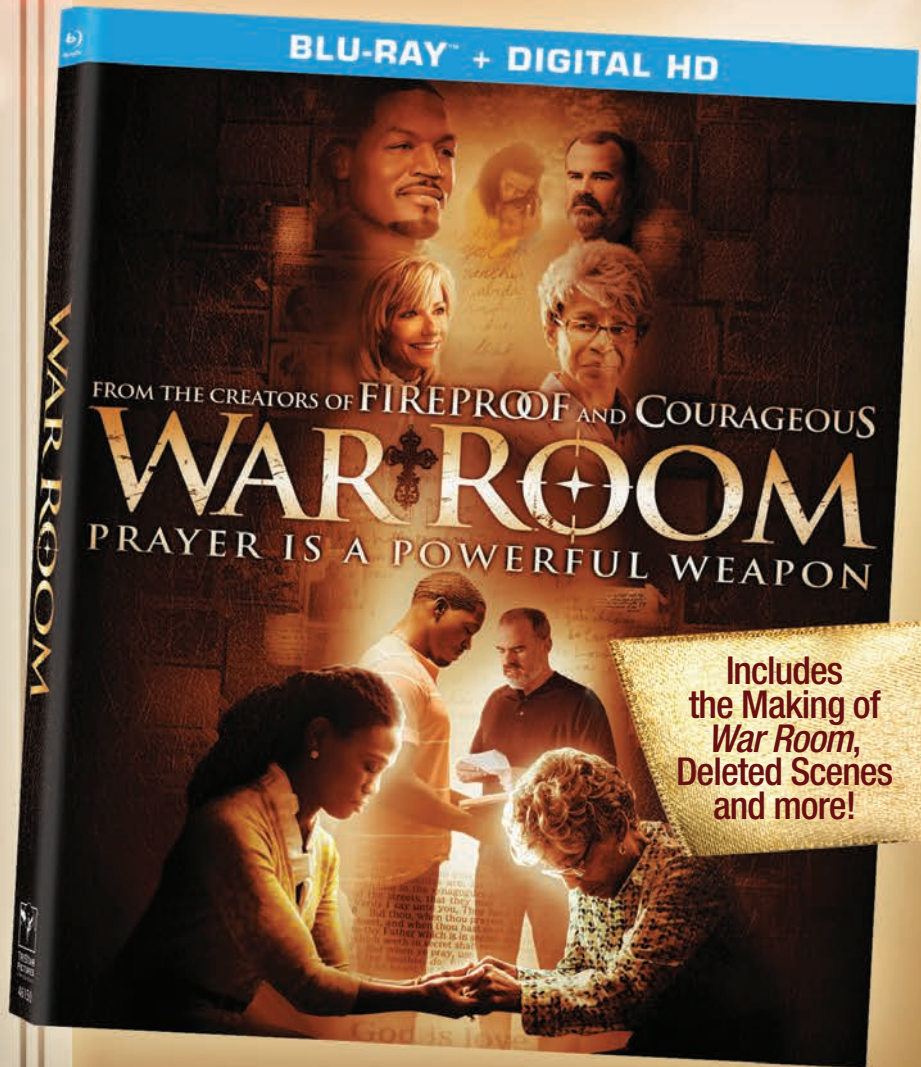


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