

Does Hillsong Pay Justin Bieber to Attend?

Megachurch Hillsong did not pay Justin Bieber to attend its massive conference this week, New York campus pastor Carl Lentz says.

"No, we don't pay him to attend. This is a volunteer thing," Lentz says on a popular Australian morning show.

The Closer conference is in Sydney right now and features speakers Lentz, Brian Houston and Jentezen Franklin, among others.

"We're excited for the language of Closer. It is simple, powerful and resonates with truth. God is indeed closer than we know, the harvest is rapidly ripening and the kingdom of heaven is near to any with a seeking heart. In hosting this gathering, we are conscious of what happens when the body of Christ gathers with a spirit of unity. We are conscious of what is unleashed spiritually when thousands worship and lean heavenward ... conscious of what the timeless Word of God, taught and divided correctly, can do in all of our lives. As we enter a new decade, the potential and possibilities are endless," according to the invitation.

Lentz says Bieber wants to come to draw closer to God.

"He comes on his own, and everybody here would buy a ticket, be a part of it. He feels like it's a big part of his year to be able to come here, and right now he's like in the middle of tour as well, so I think it's a good break for him to just press pause on all that and be around people who love what he loves," Lentz says.

He continued: "I think Justin is a good Christian, and I don't think his problems are behind him. I think we all have to deal

with a lot of stuff to come, but he's doing really well ... A lot of what you see in the media, if it's negative, is a small percentage of who he is. I think he's really fun; he loves people. It gets weird when you're this famous to kind of trust people and act normal, but, for the most part, he's a really fun guy to be around." {eo}