

# LIFENEWS

## GOLD STAR

### ATTENDANCE AWARD

by Ron Story, Community Life Pastor  
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Occasionally when someone has missed a Sunday or two, I will send them a card requesting that they bring a note from home to be granted an excused absence to maintain their "Gold Star Attendance Award." In this day and age, with so much going on in our lives, there really aren't many who even think about Gold Star Attendance Awards. At Parkside, we are grateful for all who make the effort to come as often as they are able.

The writer to the Hebrews gives us the true standard of instruction with respect to church attendance when he says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see The Day of drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24-25) In these two verses, we see four keys to God's instruction regarding Gold Star Attendance.

First of all, as we prepare to come on Sunday mornings, we should consider and deliberately think about how we are not coming to get something for ourselves but to worship God and serve others in a way, that stirs others to love and good works. In other words, the goal is not to build up ourselves but to build up the church.

Secondly, we are to make meeting together for worship on Sundays a priority. From time to time, there will be family

situations and other responsibilities that require our attention on a Sunday, but the scripture warns us not to let other things become our Sunday morning habit or pattern. Coming together regularly on Sundays is a vital part of our spiritual health and well-being.

Thirdly, when we come together, we are to encourage one another. We are to be intentional in this, not waiting around for others to make the first move. Come prepared to initiate welcoming and greeting others, especially those we don't know. Go out of your way to look for new people and those sitting by themselves. Take time to ask questions, get to know them, and care for their souls.

Finally, recognize that "The Day" is drawing near - the time of Christ's return and our gathering together to do church 24/7 for eternity! Sunday morning worship is a warm-up for what Heaven will be like! This world is a mess, and gathering together on Sundays is a break from the mess and a taste of Heaven... the worship and fellowship we will enjoy forever!

What a joy it is to gather together on Sundays to worship our sovereign Lord and to fellowship with one another, loving, serving, and encouraging each other, enjoying a taste of Heaven on earth!

See you Sunday!

*Pastor Ron*