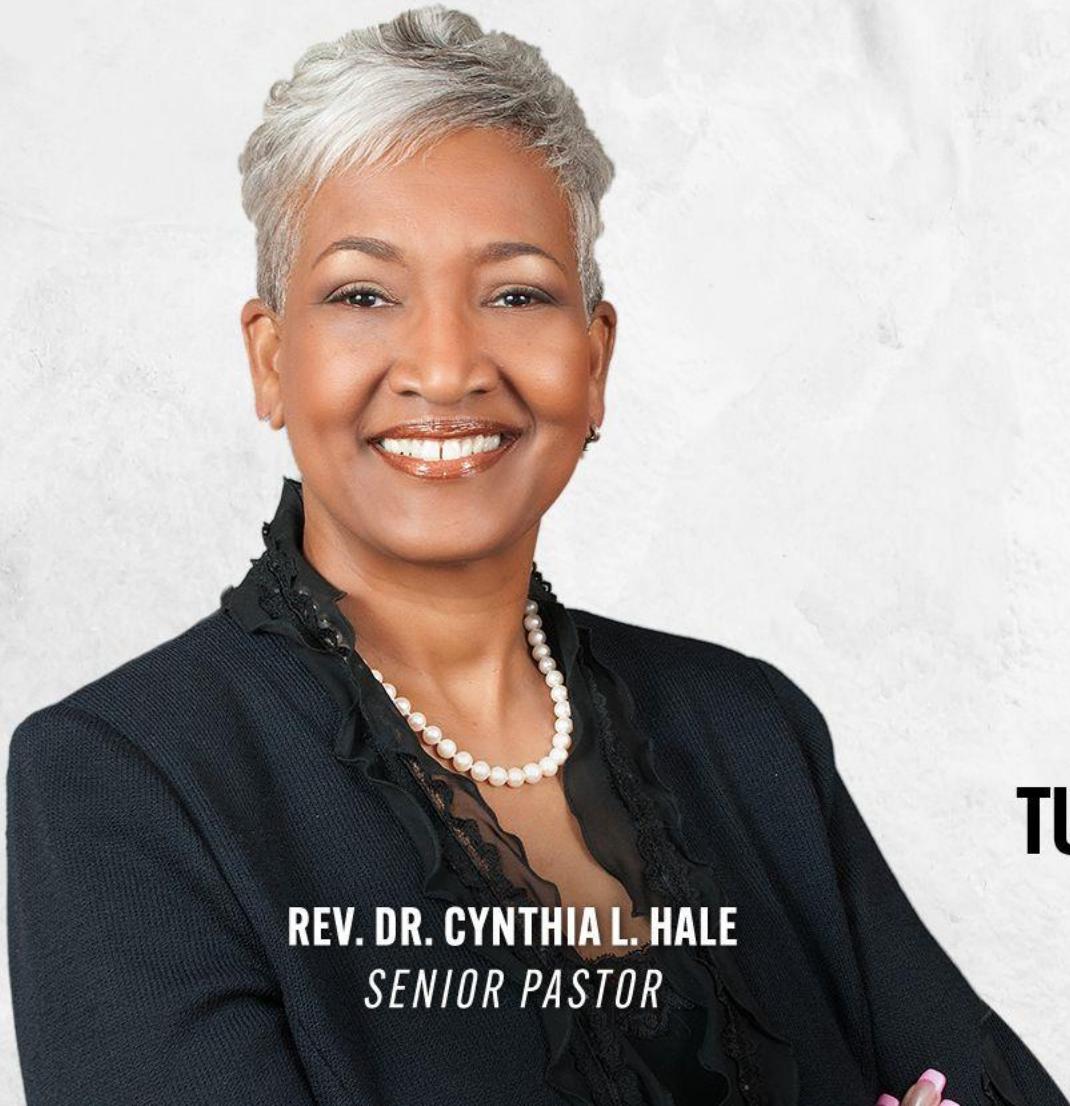


# THE GATHERING



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SENIOR PASTOR



TUESDAYS, AUG. 10 - SEPT. 7 • 7:30 P.M.

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LIVE AND

# The Gathering

I Am Especially Fond of You

Tuesday, August 17, 2021

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RAY OF HOPE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A favorite is a person or thing regarded with special favor or preference, which usually means unfair treatment of anyone who is not our favorite.

Favor  
“excessive kindness or unfair  
partiality or preferential  
treatment”

God's favor  
or choice  
is not arbitrary.

God's favor or choice  
often comes with great  
responsibility and  
challenges.

I'm especially fond of you!

Fond  
“Having an affection or liking,  
foolishly tender, cherished  
with great affection”

“For the Son of Man  
came to seek and  
to save the lost.”

Luke 19:10

# Luke 15

“Lost” in English  
“helpless, not made use of,  
longer possessed, taken away  
beyond reach, unable to find the way,  
no longer visible, obscured or  
overlooked”

“Apollumi”

“to destroy, a complete loss,  
cut off, to completely perish,  
to die, to come to destruction”

“God does not want anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

2 Peter 3:9

When we die separated  
from God, that breaks  
God's heart.

# Pharisees

- Jewish sect
- Strict observance of the law
- Self-righteous
- Associated only with “righteous”

“People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

1 Samuel 16:7

No one is irretrievable

What do you think you've  
done that is unforgiveable?

**Psalm 139:7-10**

**Everyone is worth  
being found.**

**Matthew 10:29-31**

It gives God great joy to  
forgive and restore the lost!

- The Seeker's Loss
- The Seeker's Activity
- The Seeker's Persistence
- The Seeker's Love
- The Seeker's Joy
- The Seeker's Fellowship

**God is the seeker.**

**The unsaved are the lost coin  
and lost sheep.**

God will come after you!

The woman was  
unrelentless in her search.

- Lit a lamp
- Swept the house
- Searched carefully

**1 Coin = a day's wages**

When a Jewish girl married,  
she began to wear a headband of  
ten silver coins to signify  
that she was now a wife.

What lost coin is not worth  
being found?

**Romans 8:38-39**

God is not satisfied until he  
completes his set.

The shepherd was responsible  
for his sheep.

He had to pay for missing sheep.

**Sheep can't find their way home.**

**Sheep get lost little by little.**

**There is safety in numbers.**

A shepherd is especially fond  
of the one that wanders off.

**Shepherds often traveled in groups. It is unlikely that the 99 were left alone.**

“You have taken account of  
my wanderings. Put my tears  
in your bottle. Are they not  
in your book?”

Psalm 56:8

The shepherd comforts the  
sheep when he finds it.

“Yea thou I walk through the valley  
of the shadow of death, I will fear no  
evil, for you are with me; your rod  
and your staff, they comfort me.”

Psalm 23:4

**Matthew 11:28-30**

Just as that coin was returned to  
the headdress with the other coins,  
the sheep was returned to the fold.

The son was lost by choice.

An heir was entitled to claim his share  
of his father's estate while he was  
still yet living.

The oldest received  $\frac{2}{3}$  and  
the youngest  $\frac{1}{3}$ .

When he came to himself,  
the son made a wise choice.  
He chose to return home.

We have a God-shaped hole  
inside of us.

To return home, you must  
first realize that you are lost.

**Some of us stay lost because  
we are too prideful.**

The father was waiting for  
the son.

The father never gave up hope;  
God doesn't either.

He hoped against all hope.

“The Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore, he will rise up to show you compassion.”

Isaiah 30:18

The son was walking home,  
but the father ran to greet him.

Old men in the ancient near  
east didn't run.

The father received him warmly  
and compassionately.

**“See what great love the Father  
has lavished on us, that we should be  
called children of God!  
And that is what we are!”**

**1 John 3:1**

Being found does not require  
you to get yourself fully  
together or be all cleaned up.

Heaven throws a party when  
a lost soul is found.

We don't need to get upset  
when God shows favor  
to others.

1. When we were lost, God came after us.
2. Heaven threw a party for us.
3. If you run away from God, you can always come home.

We too are called to be  
especially fond of the lost.