



# BEHOLD

## Week 3

### **BREAKING THE ICE**

BTalk about a great adventure you went on this year. It could be a vacation or something unexpected you did.

Who is the most hopeful person you know?

### **MAIN CONTENT**

#### Breaking the Ice

Talk about a great adventure you went on this year. It could be a vacation or something unexpected you did.

Who is the most hopeful person you know?

#### Main Content

This week we got to hear from our good friend Annie F. Downs. Annie started her message talking about some hard circumstances she had this year and learning how to hold sorry and expectation at the same time. Some advice she was given was to be held.

1. Talk about a time you experienced the need to be held during a difficult circumstance.

When we need to be held we go to Jesus to give us the hope we need. When we behold Him, our living hope, He holds us close. His hope is how we are held when we are hurting.

Read Luke 2: 8-11

We see in scripture where God gave us the hope that He will hold us when He sent His son Jesus. Sometimes when we are told that we are being held by God we don't feel it.

2. Talk about a time when you didn't feel God in your circumstance. What changed in the circumstance? Did you ever get to the point where you did feel Him and how did you get there?

Our circumstances do not get to tell us who God is. He is never changing unlike us who are always changing. If you are in the middle of some hard circumstances and you aren't feeling God in His kindness, He can send others to remind us of who Jesus is and how He wants to hold us and keep us safe.

3. Who has been someone in your life who helps remind you of who God is and how He loves you?

Read 1 Timothy 1:1

In this verse, it talks about Jesus being our living hope. When our circumstances feel dire, we need to be held and reminded that Jesus is our hope.

4. When have you had the most hope in Jesus? What kind of circumstances surrounded you in that time?

Read Colossians 1:15-17

In this verse, it mentions through Christ all things are held together. When we behold Christ, we can know we are being held together by Him. He wants us to feel His presence and know He holds us together.

Our circumstances, feelings and emotions may tell us we are falling apart. As Annie has told us before, "Feelings are allowed to ride but they can't drive." We can't let what we feel in the moment take us away from the truth that Jesus is the hope we need.

5. What are some methods you utilize to help you remember, feelings are allowed to ride but they can't drive?

Read Romans 5: 3-5

Hope isn't free like the fruits of the Spirit. Hope is the outcome of suffering and persevering. When we go through perseverance, it strengthens our character. When our character strengthens, it gives us hope.

6. How have you seen your character change through the perseverance of hard circumstances?

When you start to have suffering, remind yourself this will end in hope. Pray and ask God to help you persevere, strengthen your character and bring you hope.

Annie gave us a simple prayer to use when we are suffering and persevering through hard circumstances. Pray: Jesus, you are my hope. I am looking to you, help me.

## 7. What are you hoping for right now?

Annie talked about a conversation she had with a friend, Andy Crouch. He told her, "Spiritual disciplines aren't a device, they are an instrument." A device doesn't require anything from you. An instrument requires you to do something. You have to practice it. Hope isn't a device. We want it to be easy like a device so we can just grab hope whenever we need it, but hope is an instrument we have to practice.

## 8. Do you treat hope as a device or instrument? How can you use hope as an instrument in your life?

Hope is not something we get good at. We can't earn hope, we practice it. When we behold Jesus, He holds us and gives us hope. Jesus is our hope because He takes away all of our suffering in the end. He will make it right. Until then, we practice. We persevere and we don't give up. We build our character and in the end, He takes away our suffering.

## CLOSING PRAYER

God, we know you don't desire for us to have fear, confusion and heartache. Your desire is for us to live fully in you and to know you deeply and intimately. Will you teach us how to practice hope in our lives. Show us how to trust you and pray to you when we need help and also when our circumstances are good. You are our hope, Jesus. We love you. Amen.

## ACTION STEP

+ Practice the prayer Annie gave us this week when you need hope: Jesus, you are my hope. I am looking to you, help me.

+ Invite someone to hear the hope of Jesus at one of our Christmas at Cross Point services. You can find all the information at <https://crosspoint.tv/christmas/>

+ Make plans with your friends, groups, family and neighbors to tune in for a special, online only, New Year's Day service at [crosspoint.tv/watchnow](https://crosspoint.tv/watchnow)