



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

“Jesus Is Hope”

Preached by Dr. Michelle Anthony

November 30, 2025

Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

Dr. Anthony delivered a powerful Advent message, reminding us that our hope is found in Jesus. She began by sharing an inspiring story of missionaries Gail and George, a married couple that sacrificed everything to bring the hope of Christ to Pakistan for 40 years. Her message emphasized that just as Gail and George gave their lives to share hope, Jesus came to earth and sacrificed everything to bring us hope and salvation. Dr. Anthony also told a story from Luke 13 when Jesus healed a crippled woman who had been bent over for 18 years. Likewise, she said, Jesus sees that which is broken inside of us and initiates a relationship with us to deliver His gift of salvation. The sermon focused on three aspects of hope from the Luke 13 story: hope begins when we are seen by

God; hope restores what has been broken; and hope releases what has been bound. Dr. Anthony emphasized that God sees us completely - not just a casual glance, but with deep perception and active compassion. She explained the concept of 'now but not yet' - that we get glimpses of God's kingdom now through His interventions, but complete restoration awaits His return when all brokenness will be healed forever.

Key Passages

- Luke 13:10-17
- Hebrews 6:19
- Matthew 23: 13-28

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, as we gather together this morning, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You have for us today. Help us to be present and attentive to Your voice. We pray that You would fill us with fresh wonder for who You are and what You're doing in our lives. Lord, we want to be a people who are awake and alive to Your presence. Surprise us this Advent season and help us to see You more clearly. We surrender our own agendas and ask that You would speak to each heart according to their need. In Jesus' name, **Amen**.

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

What's one Christmas tradition from your childhood that always filled you with wonder and excitement?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of the following questions as time and interest permit.

1. The woman in Luke 13 had been bent over for 18 years, unable to see faces or beauty around her. What are some things in your life that have caused you to feel 'bent over' or unable to see God's goodness?
2. Jesus saw the woman with deep perception, not just a casual glance. How does it change your perspective to know that God sees you completely and intimately knows your story?
3. The message emphasized that hope begins when we are seen by God, not when our circumstances change. How can we shift our hope from changing circumstances to resting in God's love for us?

4. Jesus called the woman 'daughter of Abraham,' affirming her dignity and identity. How do you tend to identify yourself - by your circumstances or by your identity as a child of God?
5. The religious leaders criticized Jesus for healing on the Sabbath, missing the miracle entirely. What are some 'rules' or expectations that might cause us to miss what God is doing?
6. Dr. Anthony explained the concept of 'now but not yet.' We get glimpses of God's kingdom now but complete restoration comes later. How does this help you deal with ongoing struggles or unanswered prayers?
7. The woman in Luke 13 immediately praised God after being healed, and the text suggests she couldn't stop. What would it look like for you to live with that kind of continuous gratitude and praise?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life

This week, practice identifying yourself as a beloved child of God rather than by your circumstances. When you catch yourself thinking 'I am broken,' 'I am a failure,' or defining yourself by your struggles, intentionally replace those thoughts with 'I am seen by God,' 'I am loved by the Father,' or

'I am a daughter/son of the Most High King.' Write down one specific area where you need to shift from hoping for changed circumstances to finding hope in God's unchanging love for you.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before you dismiss.

- Hope begins when we realize we are truly seen by God. He perceives us deeply and knows our complete story with active compassion.
- Hope restores what has been broken. We live in the 'now but not yet', where we get glimpses of God's kingdom now but await complete restoration when Jesus returns.
- Hope releases what has been bound. Jesus frees us not only from spiritual bondage but also from false identities and labels that keep us bent over.
- Our identity should be rooted in being children of God rather than in our circumstances or struggles.
- God initiates healing and restoration in His perfect timing and way, and we must learn to rest in His hope rather than our own striving.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Gracious Father, thank You for seeing each one of us completely and loving us unconditionally. We are grateful that You don't look away from our pain but move toward it with active compassion. Help us to live this week with the confidence that we are Your beloved children, not defined by our circumstances but by Your love. For those who are bent over by physical, emotional or spiritual burdens, we ask for Your healing touch and the strength to keep showing up in faith. Give us fresh wonder for who You are this Advent season, and help us to be people who rest in hope rather than striving with our own strength. May we live with continuous praise like the woman in Luke 13 who was healed, never stopping our gratitude for all You have done. In the powerful name of Jesus, our living hope, **Amen**.