

DISCIPLESHIP GUIDE

A Life-Group guide for sermon discussion, personal reflection, and next steps



STANDALONE MESSAGE | CASTAWAY OR CALLING | PASTOR ROBBY EMERY | JULY 26, 2026

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

As disciples, we're called not just to be informed but to be transformed into people who look more like Jesus—in our homes, our workplaces, and our communities. This guide helps you apply what we're learning at New Life Church to your weekly rhythms. Use it to engage in daily Bible reading, have meaningful conversations with your group, and take clear next steps in following Jesus.

WEEKLY SUMMARY

In Acts 27-28, Paul survived a violent shipwreck and landed on Malta, far from where he expected to be. Yet he refused to see himself as a castaway. Because he belonged to God, Paul treated the unwanted island as part of his calling: he held onto God's promise, served while suffering, shook off the snake that tried to attach itself to him, and allowed his wounded hand to become an instrument of healing. Pastor Robby reminded us that closeness to the Father is the cure for spiritual distance and confusion. Prayer does not inform God; it involves God. Our circumstances do not cancel our responsibility or our purpose. The pain, disappointment, and scars we carry do not have to paralyze us. In the hands of Jesus, broken places can become beautiful, and the wounds the enemy intended to use against us can become places where God's glory and hope flow through us to others.

CLOSENESS

Make God your first call

CALLING

Serve in every season

REDEMPTION

Let wounds carry hope

RESOURCES

- [Sunday's Sermon](#)
- [Table Talk Podcast](#)
- [Download the New Life Church app](#)

KEY VERSE

"So take courage! For I believe God. It will be just as he said."

ACTS 27:25

GROUP DISCUSSION



Use these questions to move from surviving unwanted circumstances to living out your calling.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CLOSENESS IS THE CURE

- Jesus entered human suffering and understands the pain no one else sees. What grief, disappointment, or confusion have you kept hidden instead of bringing close to the Father?
- Pastor Robby said, "Prayer is not informing God. It is involving God." In what area of your life does God need to become your first call?

CALLING OVER CASTAWAY

- Read Acts 27:22-26. Paul trusted God even though the ship would be lost. What circumstance tempts you to believe your calling or purpose has been canceled?
- "I am not going to allow the circumstances to change my responsibility." What faithful responsibility or next step must continue in your present season?

SERVE WHILE SUFFERING

- Read Acts 28:1-5. Paul gathered sticks and helped keep the fire burning while shipwrecked. Where might God be asking you to serve while you are still healing?
- What "snake" - an offense, old habit, bitterness, shame, or toxic attachment - needs to be shaken off before its poison spreads?

WOUNDED HANDS CAN BRING HEALING

- Read Acts 28:7-10. Paul laid his recently wounded hand on the sick. How could God use a scar or story from your life to bring hope to someone else?
- Jesus rose with His scars still visible. How does knowing Christ redeems suffering change the way you view your broken places?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Choose calling over castaway this week. To Know God, spend ten minutes each day making God your first call in prayer. To Find Freedom, identify one offense, habit, or lie to shake off and share it with a trusted believer. To Discover Purpose, name one way your present hardship has equipped you to help someone else. To Make a Difference, serve one person this week, especially in an area connected to a pain God has carried you through. Do not wait until you feel fully healed to begin bringing hope.

PRAYER GUIDE

Father, draw me close and teach me to make You my first call. Help me believe Your promise when my circumstances feel like a shipwreck. Give me courage to serve while I am suffering, wisdom to shake off what is poisoning my heart, and faith to trust that You can use my wounds to bring healing and hope to others. Jesus, redeem every broken place and lead me to walk in my calling. Amen.

CLOSING THOUGHT

"But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed." - Acts 28:5

Paul's shipwreck did not cancel his mission, and the snakebite did not define his future. In Christ, an unwanted island can become an assignment, and a wounded hand can become a healing hand. Your brokenness is not the end of your story when it is surrendered to Jesus.