



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

CAST AWAY: ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL

Dave · Weekend of September 19 and 20, 2026

SCRIPTURES

Hebrews 6:18-20 · Luke 6:47-49 · Psalm 20:7 · John 16:33 · Romans 8:38-39

THE MESSAGE

Chuck Noland runs his life on a stopwatch, and on a December night over the Pacific the plane goes down and takes every bit of that control with it. What keeps him human on the island is a volleyball with a bloody handprint and a face he draws on it himself. When Wilson drifts away, the whole theater feels it, because everybody has put their weight on something they could lose. The crash did not create Chuck's problem. It showed what he had been anchored to all along. Hebrews 6 describes a hope that works like a ship's anchor, dropping past everything visible and fixing itself to God, in the place Jesus has already gone ahead of us. The people in your living room are anchored to something right now, and this week is a chance to find out whether it will hold.

BEFORE YOU START

Most of this conversation comes down to what each person is actually putting their weight on. The message was careful to say that careers, marriages, health, and savings are not bad things. They make poor foundations because every one of them can be taken away. Your job is to help people see what they are leaning on and then point them toward the anchor that can carry it.

Somebody at your table will not be answering hypothetically.

Their Wilson is drifting right now, or it already went and they are still grieving it. When that person answers, do not rush to fix it. Let the group stay with them, and follow up during the week. Watch for guilt too. If people start apologizing for caring about their family or their work, repeat what the message said: those things are fine, they just cannot be the foundation. Nobody needs to give anything up tonight. You are helping people reorder what they lean on.

Answer question three yourself before you ask anyone else to, and make it something real and current. The group will match whatever level of honesty you set.

You will not get through all eight questions, and you are not meant to. Choose the ones your group needs and take them in whatever order serves the conversation.

ICEBREAKER

Chuck had a volleyball. *If you were stranded and could keep one completely useless object from your house for company, what would it be, and what would you name it?*

Keep this to five minutes. It is a warm-up.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These move from the island to your own life. Question three asks the most of people.

1

The message opened with a question it said was not rhetorical: “What would happen to you if everything you currently rely on disappeared overnight?” Your job, your health, your relationships, your savings, your reputation, not diminished but gone. *What would be left?*

Let two or three people answer and keep moving. Question three is where this gets personal.

Luke 6:47-49

2

The crash did not create Chuck’s problem, it revealed it. Jesus says the same about two houses that look identical until the water rises. Think about a hard season you have already come through. *What did it show you about what you were standing on at the time?*

The past tense is deliberate. People will talk about a storm they survived long before they talk about one they are in. If someone goes to a current crisis anyway, follow them there.

3

Chuck presses his bloody handprint onto a volleyball and gives it a face. He is not losing his mind, he is attaching, because none of us can help doing that. **So here is the honest version:** *what would devastate you to lose?* Not hurt you. Devastate you, in a way nothing else would. The message called that your Wilson, and said “Wilson is not a criticism. Wilson is a diagnosis.”

Go first, and name yours specifically rather than as a category. Then let the silence sit a few seconds before you rescue it.

Hebrews 6:18-20

4

Hebrews says the anchor we need is “firm and secure.” Firm means it does not move, and secure means it does not fail. Hold what you named in the last question up against that standard. Could it be taken from you?

The NLT link reads “strong and trustworthy” where the screen said firm and secure, so expect some Bibles to differ. Nobody needs to renounce anything here. “Yes, it could be taken” is a complete and honest answer.

5

Before the crash, Chuck’s anchors were control, productivity, and time. He could not let a single moment go unmanaged. *Where does that sound like you, and what would this week look like if you put your weight on Jesus instead of on staying in control?*

GO DEEPER

The first is for the people who love the text, the second pushes the group further, and the third asks for a commitment.

Hebrews 6:18-20 · Leviticus 16:2 · Matthew 27:51

GD1

Read Hebrews 6:18-20 together. Our hope enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus went ahead of us as our forerunner and became high priest forever. For readers who knew the tabernacle, that was the Most Holy Place, where only the high priest went, once a year, carrying blood. What is the writer claiming about Jesus by reaching for that picture, and what does it tell you about where your hope is fastened?

Leviticus 16 describes that yearly entry on the Day of Atonement. If the group wants more, Matthew 27:51 says the temple curtain tore from top to bottom when Jesus died. Most readers connect it to the inner curtain Hebrews describes, but Matthew does not say which of the temple’s curtains it was, so offer it as a strong connection rather than a settled fact.

GD2

Hebrews calls its readers people “who have fled,” which assumes some crisis already sent them running. The message asked where you ran. Psalm 20:7 names what people ran to in that world: chariots and horses, the strongest and most reliable things available. *What are the modern chariots and horses, and why are the respectable ones harder to notice than obvious sin?*

GD3

Name one specific thing you will do this week that moves weight off your Wilson and onto Jesus. Say what it is, when you are doing it, and who in this group is checking on you before you meet again.

Write the answers down before people leave and send them to the group this week. “Trust God more” is not specific enough. Push until the answer is something that could go on a calendar.

CLOSE YOUR GROUP IN PRAYER

“Jesus is the anchor that holds.”

Skip the general prayer tonight. Ask everyone to sit quietly for thirty seconds with what they named in question three. Then pray over your people out loud, by name where you can, asking God to loosen their grip on what cannot hold them and to fasten their hope in Jesus.

If someone tells you they are ready to trade their Wilson for the real thing, stop and pray with them right there, then email smallgroups@eastside.com so the team can follow up this week. Send everyone out with Romans 8:38-39.