GUIA DE ESTUDO

When god leads through unexpected callings

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New Hope Fulton · doxus.org

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BIG IDEA

God guides Casper step by step, turning unexpected detours into the place where his calling becomes clear.

When God Shows Up

Casper began with prayer by saying the church is only “a building with chairs and people and things that don't last until he shows up.” That image captures the whole sermon: God’s presence changes everything, and faith grows as he leads one step at a time.

> *At this place, it's only a building with chairs and people and things that don't last until he shows up.*
>
> — Opening prayer

A life shaped by presence, not performance

The sermon frames Casper’s life as a story of God’s presence turning ordinary places into holy ground. He grew up in what he called almost a “Christian family on steroids”: grandparents on both sides worked for the church, his mother ran the choir, and his childhood included Wednesday, Saturday, and weekly church life. Yet the point is not just that he was around church; it is that God was already writing his story long before Casper understood it. The message repeatedly returns to the idea that faith is not mainly about human control, but about God showing up and changing the direction of a life.

> *Because when you show up, things don't remain the same.*
>
> — Prayer confession

Faith began before he had language for it

Casper said he did not remember ever consciously choosing faith in a dramatic way. Instead, there was a formative moment at a Steve Green concert when, somewhere between ages 7 and 11, he felt a call to believe. That experience mattered because it was not based on preaching or a formal Bible lesson; it was a lived encounter that helped him trust God personally. The preacher used this to show that knowing God often begins with a real experience of his nearness, not just with abstract ideas.

Unexpected paths: medicine before ministry

As a teenager in San Antonio, Texas, Casper was intensely committed to becoming a doctor, especially an eye surgeon. He attended a magnet high school focused on health careers, studied medical terminology and surgical instrumentation, and even

worked as a scrub tech on a mission trip to Fiji with an eye surgeon. He spoke about Ben Carson as an early example of excellence. But the sermon's point is that what looked like a straight path toward medicine was really God preparing him for something else. Even the resources, mentors, and training that seemed aimed at medicine became part of a larger divine plan.

APLICAÇÃO PRÁTICA

Notice the path you think is final

Think about the skills, classes, mentors, and jobs you once assumed were leading only one way. Casper's medical training in San Antonio, his work as a scrub tech in Fiji, and his admiration for Ben Carson were real parts of his story, but they did not define his final calling. Ask where God may be using your current setting to prepare you for a future you cannot yet name.

PARA REFLEXÃO

Discuss the medical detour

1. Why do you think Casper was so convinced he would become an eye surgeon?
2. How did the Fiji mission trip function as a turning point in his story?
3. What does his story suggest about the difference between our plans and God's plans?

> *I thought it was pre med that I was the reason I was going to Southern, but God took me to Southern to put me in an environment for where I end up in my trajectory now.*
>
> — Casper on his real reason for Southern

God used Southern to redirect his life

Casper believed Southern was for pre-med training, but God used Southern to place him in an environment that would reshape his calling. There were two full rides—Xavier and Baylor—but he chose Southern after touring it and comparing the resources, faculty, and acceptance rates. Still, the turning point came when he took psychology, a year of task force work at Shenandoah Valley Academy in Virginia, and then a fateful conversation about switching from medicine to religion. His father challenged him with the story of Gideon's fleece, asking him to test whether God was opening a path. The impossible details—time, money, and direction—showed that God was guiding him, even when Casper had no desire to enter ministry.

APLICAÇÃO PRÁTICA

Test, listen, and stay open

Casper's father told him to identify what was impossible if he were truly being redirected. That challenge mattered because Casper was close to finishing pre-med and would have had every human reason to stay. If you are at a crossroads, do not ignore the things that seem impossible without God. Bring them honestly before him, as Casper did.

REFLEXÃO

Where are your impossible details?

- What "fleece" moments in your life have helped you recognize God's direction?
- Have you been assuming a pathway is final simply because you are already far along in it?
- Where might God be using delay, discomfort, or redirection to clarify your calling?

PARA REFLEXÃO

The questions behind the pivot

4. What impossible details helped Casper realize that switching majors was not just an emotional impulse?
5. Why was his father's challenge with Gideon important in the story?
6. What does Casper's story teach about trusting God before the whole path is visible?

A new ministry imagination in Australia

After Southern, Casper went to Denver briefly, then received a call from an Australian pastor asking him to come as a task force pastor. In Australia he learned that ministry could be relational, not just programmatic. He was told not to run Bible studies with the kids on Friday night, but to play foosball, basketball, and build relationships in a Salvation Army building shared by the church and the community. This challenged his conservative assumptions from Southern, where church often meant strict expectations. In Australia he discovered that witnessing and evangelism can begin with presence, hospitality, and neighborhood trust.

APLICAÇÃO PRÁTICA

Build relationships before you build programs

Casper was told to hang out with kids in the neighborhood, not start with Bible studies. He played foosball, basketball, and spent Friday nights creating trust. In your own context, ask whether you are trying to rush past relationship into results. Sometimes evangelism begins with staying close long enough for people to know you care.

> *I know that I'm not supposed to be a doctor.*
>
> — Casper on his life direction

Seminary, media, and the broadness of God's calling

Casper went to seminary in another major act of trust: a friend told him to just buy a plane ticket and show up, and he did. At Andrews, he was given a flexible track, and a mentor insisted he take the broadest degree possible because he had no idea where God would take him. That advice became crucial. He kept finding himself in places that were not part of his original plan: music, lights, broadcast, and behind-the-scenes media work. What he once thought was a narrow call to youth ministry became a much broader preparation for a future role he could not have invented on his own.

Calling is often built behind the scenes

Casper repeatedly described himself as not the preacher or the front-person. He was the one on the soundboard, building worship culture at Southern, serving in Australia, and later learning cameras and broadcast systems in seminary and church life. These behind-the-scenes assignments were not distractions from his calling; they were his calling unfolding. The sermon shows that personal holiness and surrender often look like faithful service in hidden places before public ministry becomes visible.

APLICAÇÃO PRÁTICA

Honor the hidden assignments

If you are in a role that feels invisible—running sound, helping with video, setting up chairs, or supporting worship—do not dismiss it. Casper's story shows that God trained him through the exact kinds of tasks that later mattered at New Hope. Faithfulness in small, hidden places can become preparation for future service.

> *God is working in your life.*
>
> — What God was doing all along

New Hope and a calling that finally fit

Casper's path eventually led to New Hope in 2022, when Andre called and Mike described a role that needed to be built. Casper realized the position was not something he had planned years earlier, but it perfectly matched everything God had been training him to do. The sermon emphasizes that God had been preparing him for a job that did not really exist in 2003 or 2010: media pastor. His story is not about sudden success; it is about God's patient work, using every stage—from childhood church life to Fiji, Virginia, Australia, seminary, and Ohio—to equip him for a role at New Hope.

REFLEXÃO

Looking back with faith

- Where can you now see God's preparation in your own past that you could not see at the time?
- Which of Casper's detours feels most like your own life?
- Are you willing to believe that God may be writing a story larger than your current title or job description?

ORAÇÃO

Prayer of surrender

Father, thank you that you are not finished writing our stories. Teach us to trust your guidance one step at a time, even when the path is unexpected. Help us surrender our plans, receive your direction, and recognize the ways you prepare us through hidden seasons, difficult detours, and new assignments. Make us faithful in Christian community, holy in our lives, and ready to witness to your goodness wherever you send us. In Jesus' name, amen.