



It Took A Journey to Learn a Lesson

By Nancy Shonamon, Christian School Representative

My story is unique, but the God we serve is the same. For me, the journey on the education career trail was launched decades ago. The first leg of the journey began in the Midwest in an elementary classroom. Since I attended public schools, I felt at home as a teacher there. As a Christian educator, I gladly embraced this mission field: ministering to families, encouraging co-workers, raising my children in the same school community, framing academics with challenging questions that promoted truth-based discussions. I have cherished memories of those days.

A Big Change in Our Lives

In 2003, my husband and I began to sense a call from the Lord to enter full-time Christian education as a family. We had a growing desire to use our skills in the Christian school setting. In 2004, we had a decision to make. Three Christian schools extended job offers to both of us. Each of these schools had so much to offer our growing family: strong academics, biblically based curriculum, great sports programs, and a loving community.

After much prayer, it became obvious to us that Texas would be our new home. We made the trek with our family across the country. Shortly after we arrived, we began to have growing concerns for one of our children. Our son seemed to be having a more difficult time adjusting to his new surroundings, new school, and a new culture. There just seemed to be something “off” that we did not see prior to coming to Texas. After three months, he was asked to leave the Christian school that was actually our sole purpose for moving to Texas. This was the same school where we had dreams of all of us going to school and ministering daily under one roof as a family. “He’s just not a good fit” were words that would resonate in my broken heart for many months ahead.

Something Good from Something Bad

If the story ended there, it would be a heart-wrenching testimony about the failure of a school to meet the needs of a child. However, those very words that broke my heart became a catalyst in my career.

The Lord created in my heart a passion for developing Christian schools that could educate children well and minister holistically to individuals with respect to the giftedness the Lord instills in each of us, including students with special learning needs.

My husband continued serving at that school while my children and I once again found ourselves in the local public schools. This led us to encounter specialists who were equipped to administer diagnostic tests and bring answers to our concerns for our son's development. Our son had Asperger's syndrome. Being a mother, I can only describe this leg of the journey as the worst/best experience of my life. After months of unknowns and heartbreak, we had answers.

The journey does not end there. This journey identifies the sovereignty of God and the intentional orchestration He has for our lives, regardless of how bleak the days can look. Those challenging days gave us answers, equipped us, grew my professional skills, and further matured our calling as Christian school educators.

Today our path has led us back to the same school that drew us to Texas in the first place. With professional development experiences, growth of the school and surrounding community, a new academic program for students with special needs, and a growing awareness in our school community regarding children with various learning needs, God has orchestrated success. He has given me the honor of serving in this school community for 16 years with most of that time being spent in administrative leadership positions where I influenced positive changes.

To God be the glory.

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