



### **God has a Plan**

By Melodee Simmons, Preschool and Early Childhood Representative

I have always wanted to be a teacher. I practiced that role with my little sister before she was old enough to go to school. She could read and write before she went to Kindergarten. As I matured, I sensed that God wanted me to be a teacher. I taught a first-grade Sunday school class when I was 14. That was it; teaching was for me.

### **My Plan Goes Awry**

At college, I decided to concentrate on the field of special education. I enjoyed all the classes, well most of them, and I was excited when it was time to do my student teaching. I soon realized I was not meant to be a teacher in special education. It takes unique people to teach these students, and I was not one of them.

Then I began to question if God wanted me to be a teacher. How could I know for sure? It took time for God to reveal His plan for me. I spent time working in retail. I married and had two sons. Through it all, I continued to teach Sunday school. So I was still teaching, just not the way I had thought.

### **A Special Offer**

One day, the director of the preschool at my church called and asked me to teach the class for 2-year-old children for the rest of the school year. At first, I said no, but they offered work hours that still allowed me to be with my boys when they were not in school. I thought it was only for a few months; I could do that to help them.

I loved it! I could watch the children grow and learn. I knew I had helped them. This was my desire. God knew what I needed to prepare for teaching in early childhood education. When I look back, I can see experiences I had that helped me teach the toddlers, like having had two toddlers of my own.

I taught for several years and then moved to a position in management. I was not sure if this was right for me. With the opportunities that came my way, it was God's leading. My husband was always supportive and encouraging in what I was doing. I became an assistant director and then a director. I love to help teachers solve problems they may have in their class. I love to share a new idea with them. I also enjoy collaborating with the parents. Everyone knows it is not easy being a parent, and some do not have extended family to help them. Sometimes they want advice, sometimes they just want to have a conversation.

### **Did I Waste My Special Education Training?**

What about all the special education training I had in college? One of my own sons had a slight learning disability. I recognized it early, so he received the help he needed. It also helps me at work when I recognize a child who needs a referral for evaluation.

I have worked in early childhood education for more than 30 years. I have received a national director credential. I work in a multicultural preschool. I am eager to see what God has waiting for me in the next 30 years!

**Melodee Simmons** lives in Houston, Texas. She has worked in private and corporate-owned centers, in Christian and secular preschools. She currently serves at the Giraffe Kids Learning Center and Development Academy. She attends the Living Word Church of the Nazarene. You may contact Melodee at [melodee.simmons@yahoo.com](mailto:melodee.simmons@yahoo.com).