

# Unbelief and a Third Grade Teacher

by Kelly Jackson

3rd Grade Teacher

After six years of teaching in the Birmingham City School System, I knew that God was calling me to Restoration Academy. I would continue to serve Christ in the inner city, but now I could teach with a Christ centered focus. I could not have anticipated the move with more excitement!! Smaller class sizes, supportive administration, Godly colleagues and a Christ-centered curriculum. I just knew I was moving to teacher heaven.

Within the first month of joining the Restoration staff I attended a professional development on how to implement Foundations and Frameworks in the classroom. Foundations and Frameworks is the reading curriculum used at Restoration Academy. The program centers around small group instruction. For each unit taught the student reads a new novel based upon their reading level and meets with the instructor in a small group setting to discuss it. I will come back to this a bit later.

The first of August I reported to the classroom to start to prepare for the new school year. There were no books to be found. (Remember, Foundations and Frameworks centers around small group instruction through novels.) As I surveyed the room, there were many things not to be found. I came up with four items that I personally really need while teaching: First, a dry erase board. Secondly, large play money to teach kids how to make change with money. Third on my list was Mr. Sketch Chisel Tip Scented Markers--not Crayola markers, not Sharpie markers, not Magic Markers. I needed Mr. Sketch Chisel Tip Scented Markers. Of course the readers were on my list. These teaching essentials are not cheap, and my "teacher heaven" had none of them.

I began to worry over these items. After several days of fretting, I went to visit with my mother in law. I expressed to her all the worry I had been carrying around with me. I told her everything that I did not have. She stopped me dead in my tracks. "Kelly, we need to pray right now! We are going to pray that God will provide what you need." We began to pray together. We prayed over every

aspect of the classroom and that God would provide in His timing what my class needed.

The next day at school I'm greeted by the school custodian, Mr. Mayo. "Mrs. Jackson, are you still looking for that dry erase board? I found one in the High School storage closet, and I'm going to throw it out if you don't want it." I couldn't believe it! A dry erase board, this was one of my four teaching essentials. On the way back to the elementary school he says, "Oh, and I forgot to tell you. There was a woman at Focus on Fairfield who said she used to teach third grade. She brought several boxes with her of her old stuff, and I put them in the back for you." I went to retrieve the first of several boxes. The first box I opened was filled with leveled readers. They were neatly organized into Ziploc bags, just the way I like it. I went to get another box, it too was FILLED with leveled readers neatly organized into Ziploc bags. Seriously God, readers and the dry erase board within the first 45 minutes of walking into school? I open a third box, and as I'm digging through it I find several packs of large play money...that's right...LARGE PLAY MONEY. "Wow, God is good!" is what I'm thinking at this point. I opened the last box to find two large baskets full of Mr. Sketch Scented Chisel Tip Markers. I had no words...only tears. "Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" - Matthew 6:26

What a mighty, gracious God we serve. He started caring for each precious child in my classroom as He knit them together in their mother's womb. He cares about their education, more than I care about their education. They are of utmost value to Him. What a beautiful thought.