

Dear Friends,

One morning on the way to the doctor for chemo, I was talking to Thomas about my wrestling with the specifics of, "giving thanks to God for 'everything' in our lives and praising Him for everything in our lives." Really, my question was whether I had to actually be in a place of thanking God FOR the brain tumors--- or was I just supposed to be able to thank God for His provisions in/through the tumors: answered prayers, blessings, His will in Thomas' life etc. Basically, was it that I just needed to thank God for what He was doing in Thomas' life with the tumors or was my heart supposed to be at a place of thankfulness/praise for the actual tumors.... I was wrestling with it, because I so wanted everything I was doing to be "right," so that my prayers for Thomas' healing would be effective. I told Thomas I was struggling with it because it would be so hard for me to honestly be thankful and praise for the "actual thing" that was causing so, so much pain and suffering to my child.

After a lot of discussion with Thomas and back and forth -- Thomas, always answering me patiently -- and then me saying, "But what about this or that" I asked Thomas, "how do you feel, do you thank Him 'for' the tumors or how do you handle/feel about it for you personally?" Thomas looked at me and said, "Mom, you think too much!!!! You are wasting time on rabbit trails. The bottom line is this: God sent His Son to die for me! If God never did anything else for me ever, if He never answered another prayer of mine, if He doesn't heal me, if I have brain tumors and suffer, no matter what happens to me ever, if He never, ever did another thing for me again but that-- His sending Jesus for me- that is enough for me to Praise Him continually, daily, as long as I live. So Mom, just focus on that... praise Him for sending Jesus and quit worrying about the tumors! and being thankful for them or not. All we need to continually praise Him, is His sending Jesus. " So, it hit me this morning as I thought about Christmas and it's meaning... for me thanks to Thomas' testimony to me.... it is about Jesus. That is God's gift to all of us. Thank you for blessing our family this Christmas season with your prayers. We are grateful.

This is a poem, Thomas wrote for me when he was 13, and I want to share it with you for Christmas. Thank you for your continuing prayers for our family, Amy

Holy Child

Oh Holy Child so sweet, so meek, so mild
Gave light to a world Satan beguiled
Brought into earth's mortal clasp,
You came to break death's grasp.

For us You suffered this mortal coil,
Sought to bring an end to Adam's turmoil.
In your quest, we were the spoil,
To attain victory your blood stained Golgotha's soil

You let yourself be falsely tried,
To be battered, beaten, condemned you died.
As you sacred blood did flow,
You took us off death row

Three days and nights your body lay rest,
Then showed that your power none could contest.

By: Thomas Epting May 25, 2004