



The SCAIHS *Advantage*

2006-07 Academic Year

*Passing the torch to the next generation
Matthew 5:14-16*

Year 17, 06-07 Academic Year

Our first knowledge of Thomas W. Epting, Jr. was in 1995 when he was enrolled in kindergarten with SCAIHS. Thomas had been diagnosed with leukemia in May of that year shortly before his fifth birthday. We began praying fervently for him as he battled leukemia, not once, but twice. We remember well when we received the report in 2000 that the disease was gone. What a day of rejoicing!

Years passed and one day last May a disappointing email arrived from his mother, Amy. Thomas had experienced some unusual symptoms and was eventually diagnosed with not one, but five brain tumors. We were devastated. How could this be?

Amy faithfully emailed updates chronicling all the tests, therapies, medications, x-rays, pain, loss of mobility, etc. that Thomas endured—always without complaint. His deep relationship with Jesus Christ was the most important thing to him, as was his desire that Jesus would be glorified during his battles with cancer. Amy wrote of a time when she was trying to conceal her worry and fear from Thomas and he said, “Mom, quit worrying. It is a sin. Quit being scared. God has a plan. Don’t be stressed out. God is in control.”

On his 16th birthday, July 14, 2006, after receiving many birthday wishes, cards, and calls, he commented, “Mom, all of this is so unreal. I have done nothing to deserve so much from so many nice people.” Ten days later she asked Thomas what his prayer request was and he replied, “I pray that God be glorified and that His will be done in my life. That’s all that matters.” In early November, Amy asked Thomas if he boldly asked the Lord to be healed. “I ask for

Life of Faith

Thomas W. Epting, Jr.
July 14, 1990-November 24, 2006



God’s will for my life and if He will heal me, I would like to be healed. But, Mom, why would I want anything for my life that isn’t God’s will? If it isn’t God’s plan for my life that I am healed, why would I want that? God’s plan is what is best for me!” was his reply.

One day on the way to the doctor for chemo, Amy was talking to Thomas about wrestling with the specifics of “giving thanks to God for *everything* in our lives.” Was she to thank god FOR the tumors? Thomas exhorted her, “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, His sending Jesus for me—that is enough for me to praise Him continually.”

At 5:30 p.m., Friday, November 24, 2006, Thomas was ushered into

the presence of His Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One year earlier he wrote an essay entitled, *What Is Happiness?* The last paragraph read: “As Christians, we can find happiness from knowing that there is a God who loves us and will never forsake us, but also in knowing that He is coming back for us. We are crooked beings in a twisted world, and, until Jesus returns, the world will remain twisted. We are made straight by Him, and in only Him is where we can find our happiness, not in virtue, not in earthly possessions, not in anything found on this earth.”

Thomas’ testimony throughout his treatments and illness was so powerful! We are sure his 16 years impacted more lives than many of ours will ever touch. Thomas’ main request was that God would continue to be glorified through his faith and life. To that end this article is dedicated.