



# Bright Light Foundation

## Timothy Lancaster, Jr.

*2013 BLF Recipient*



Our son Timmy Lancaster was born on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in Katy, Texas. From the beginning, he was a joyful and easy-going baby, a perfect edition to our family of three. From the time we found out I was pregnant with him and throughout the first year of his life, he had no medical concerns or problems to speak of. Tim and I both felt so grateful to God to have two beautiful, healthy, well-adjusted children in our lives.

When he was around 18 months old, Timmy started displaying some unusual behavior. He was constantly tired and despondent, with almost no appetite which, knowing our son was very strange indeed. We would find him sometimes fast asleep on the floor in the hallway by his room as if he were so tired he couldn't make it to the bed. We were concerned, but

there was no fever or symptoms of illness, and his doctor reported that he was healthy and growing as he should be. For a while, we tried adjusting his sleep schedule to include more naps and an earlier bed time, and made sure he ate well, but it didn't seem to help. My normally boisterous, goofy little toddler was now going down for a nap at eleven in the morning, and would sleep until 4 in the afternoon unless someone woke him, and then sleep all night. Something was not right with our son, so I left my job and started staying home with him.

During the Christmas holiday in 2012, we visited some relatives of ours in College Station, who commented that Timmy did not look well. We took him home and later that night, he started to look extremely jaundiced. We rushed him to the ER at 12 am after he woke up, vomited, rolled over and went back to sleep. The nurses ran tests for viruses or bacterial infections, but when nothing was forthcoming, decided to transfer Timmy to Texas Children's Hospital Downtown to diagnose what was happening to him. A very long ride behind the ambulance, no sleep, eighteen hours, and six blood transfusions later, he was admitted to the ninth floor, the doctors and nurses mentioning the word "Leukemia" more than once. Timothy was scared, exhausted, and sick. Only later did we find out that had we waited until morning to take him in, he



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would not have survived the night. God Almighty stepped in and rescued our son that night. On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012, after several procedures and tests, the doctors told us that he had been diagnosed with A.L.L.

In the last 9 months, our two year old boy has experienced trauma and adversity we never dreamed would happen as an adult, let alone a child. He has been through dozens of spinal taps and been given countless medications that make him feel badly, often against his will and despite all his efforts to avoid it. He does not understand the limitations we have had to place on him, but in spite of all of it he has remained a joyful, easy-going, and now resilient little boy with a smile for his nurses on treatment days. His strength has been an inspiration to so many people, and a comfort to his family that is on the journey as well. Even when he feels horrible, we almost have to remind ourselves that he has limits, because he wants so badly to be out experiencing the world. He will not let this cancer defeat him, even when he spends days in the hospital fighting a fever that comes out of nowhere. In him we can see God's true character, His ability to carry us through our darkest moments, and find comfort in knowing that His strength is perfected in our weakness.

As of August 26<sup>th</sup>, Timmy moved into the Maintenance phase, which will last three more years. He is expected to live a long and happy life, and is now able to attend school, play with other children, and be a kid again. He is ready for anything.