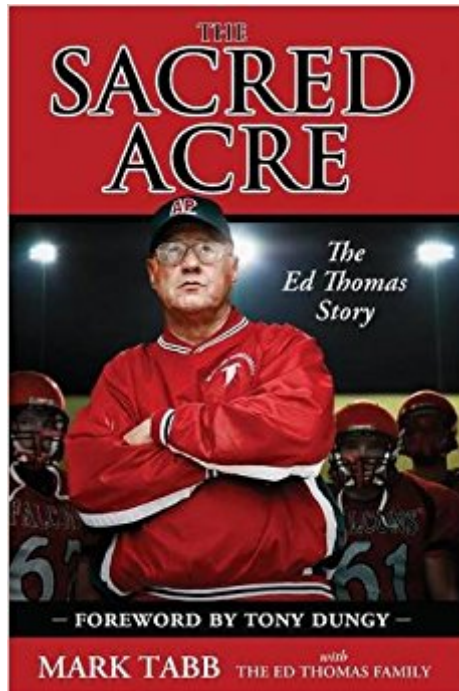




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The Sacred Acre: The Ed Thomas Story



Synopsis

On a Sunday in May 2008, an F-5 tornado struck the town of Parkersburg, Iowa, killing eight people and destroying 250 homes and businesses within 34 seconds. The next day, Parkersburg's beloved football coach, Ed Thomas, made a stunning prediction: "God willing, we will play our first home game here on this field this season." One hundred days later, the home team scored a victory on the field they dubbed "The Sacred Acre," serving as a galvanizing point for the town to band together and rebuild. But just as Parkersburg was recovering, another devastating tragedy struck. While working with a group of football and volleyball players early one morning, one of Ed's former students walked in and gunned him down point blank. Ed Thomas was 58. The murder of this hometown hero spread across national news headlines. Ed's community and family reeled from shock. Yet the story doesn't end here. What happened next proves that even a double tragedy is no match for faith, love and the power of forgiveness.

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Customer Reviews

Mark Tabb has authored or coauthored more than thirty books, including the number one New York Times bestseller, *Mistaken Identity*.

I went to college a half hour away from Parkersburg and my instructor was a huge fan of Coach Thomas. We read this book, keeping his and his family's leadership styles in mind, but really I would

recommend this book to anyone. This family was amazing in the face of tragedy and if anything so terrible ever happens to me or mine, I hope that I could follow in their footsteps.

I am from Parkersburg, Iowa, the small town in Iowa known nationwide for several things. We have had 4 of our boys playing in the NFL, May 2008 an EF5 tornado ripped thru and destroyed a big part of our town and our Coach was murdered working with the kids that respected him so much. Having lived thru so much of what is written in this book, I am amazed how this author could put together such a true and accurate story of a man who led Parkersburg thru good times and thru bad. Even if you had never heard of all the tragedy that was faced in this town, it will tug at your heart. It makes you feel some of what we all really felt going thru those bad times. Having so much faith and passing it on without people even realizing it gave Coach and his family the ability to be such strong leaders for our community. A great lesson is within these pages along with a story of a teacher and football coach who was content to live in a small town and lead our young people into adulthood with good work ethics and the thought that you always remember where you came from. A must read for all ages.

"The Sacred Acre" is a fantastic book. I had the opportunity to hear Aaron Thomas speak at an industry event. After that I had to read the book. I wish we had more coaches and families out in the world that are of the same quality as Ed Thomas and his family. If we did it would be a much better world. Football was important to Ed, but it wasn't the most important thing to him. First was God, his family, church, and then football. He used football as an avenue to develop young men over his football and coaching career. It is a must read. After I finished the book I have passed it around to many of my friends and family!! Special thanks to the Thomas Family for sharing their heartfelt story.

What a wonderful life I took the time to read this book finally When i was sitting in a hospital room with my wife and two day old son until then i had never read an entire book. i could not put it down. Being from St. Ansgar i knew of coach Thomas as a coach of the other team that was always going to be our toughest game of the year. we had the up most respect for AP. I heard of the loss while i was serving the county after high school. My heart sunk. I read the book at the right time because shortly after birth my wife and I learned our son would be blind. It was real tough and i needed something to take my mind off things i read the book and not only passed time but realized God has a plan for my family and we need to trust in him. gave me a wake up call and perspective

of how precious life is. i would recommend this book to any one but especially going though a tough time and may be lost in life... Thank you

Excellent book. Amazing and sad story about a very strong family with great Christian values.

I'm from Iowa so I heard all about this in the news but really had no idea about who Ed Thomas really was. I had a friend tell me that I just had to read this book last fall, and I kept putting it off until last week and when I did, I couldn't put it down. What an amazing story - its a very meaningful book even if you don't know diddly about football. Parkersburg lost an incredible man but its incredible the difference he made in the lives he AND his family have touched. How they reacted to his loss is something we should all take a lesson from. I will be rereading this again and again.

I was familiar with the Ed Thomas story. I just didn't know the details until I read this book. Mark did a great job of not making the entire book about football. The first two-thirds or so are about how Ed responded to the town's tornado, then it shifts more to football. The book reads like a good letter from a good friend. Good detail. The book flows. I don't think there is really any slow part. But most of all, Ed Thomas is an excellent inspiration.

Being from Iowa, this story has dominated our headlines for years and still is with the ongoing criminal appeals. But it was fascinating to go deeper than the facts that are reported on the news and learn more about the relationships of those involved in this situation - Coach Ed's background, his marriage, Mark Becker's dad having been Coach Ed's first ever football captain in Parkersburg, etc. The writing is not always poetic, but the subject matter is so touching that it is definitely worth a read. It is truly amazing how one man touched so many lives. Guided by faith, he taught high school boys how to be good men, and he, with God's help, gave his family the courage and strength to forgive.

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