

# *thoughts* *for* Tuesday

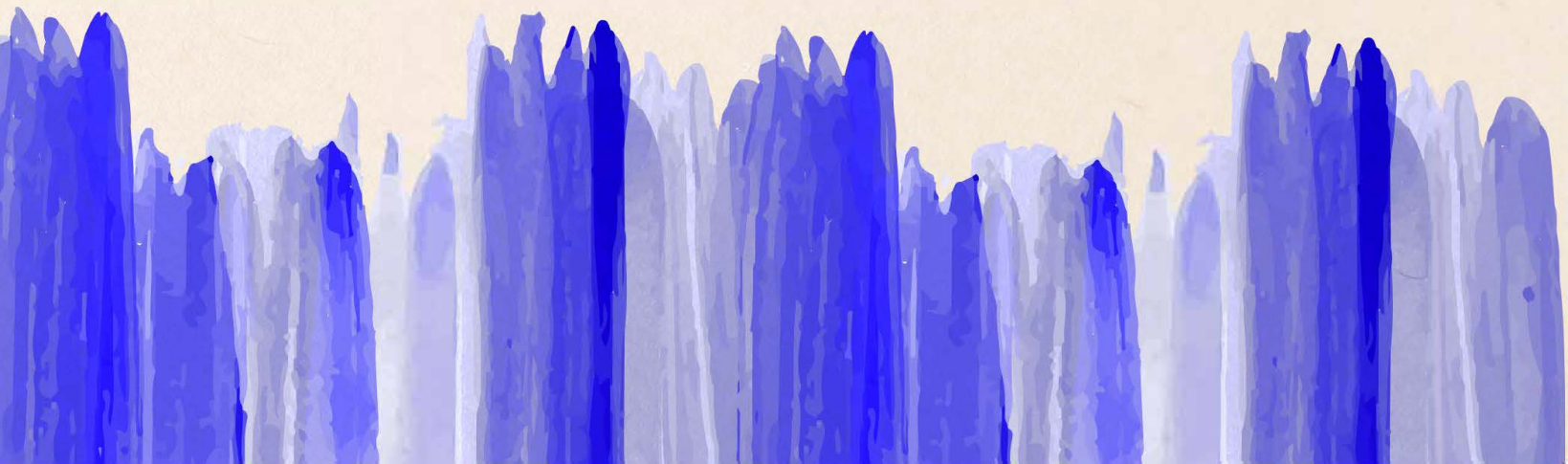


## BOBBY SIMPSON

"Bobby is a master teacher, motivator, and one heck of a human being that understands the importance of family, faith, and the process that leads to a successful performance."

MIKE CANDREA

*U.S. Olympic Gold Medal Coach*



# **THOUGHTS FOR TUESDAY**

**GOLD MEDAL WISDOM  
FOR LIFE**

**BOBBY SIMPSON**

## INTRODUCTION

I had major heart surgery (six bypasses) on March 24, 2015 and returned home five days later. I love to read, especially books by Dr. David Jeremiah, and on April 2 began *God Loves You: He always has-He always will*. It was a gift from my niece Susan Belflower, her husband Kevin, and their sons, Josh and John Thomas. I often begin with a book's dedication, acknowledgements, and introduction. The first sixteen words of the acknowledgements in this book literally jumped off the page. Dr. Jeremiah said, "On more than one occasion I have been asked about the process of writing a book." Was God telling *me* to now write the book that a number of people had been encouraging me to do for several years?

I kept pondering those sixteen words for about a week as I completed David Jeremiah's book. The next book that I read was recommended by my friend Tom Draffin and sent to me by my daughter, Neilie, and her family. It was an in-depth look by Timothy Keller at a critical action and entitled, *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. As he wrote about spiritual truth and change, Keller advised readers to ask, "Why might God be showing this to you *today*?" In South Georgia where I live, we would say I got *whopped upside the head* again. I thought back to April 2 and questioned why God had strategically placed those two books and those specific sentences in my hands at the strategic time that He did. My answer to the question regarding strategic placement and timing resulted in this book, *Thoughts For Tuesday: Gold Medal Wisdom For Life*.

*Thoughts For Tuesday* actually began back in April of 2007 when I decided that a quarterly four-page Higher Ground newsletter was too long and did not communicate often enough. I replaced it with a much shorter, more frequent communication that I promised would be ten or less lines (Word, Times New Roman, size 12), followed by scripture and/or a quote that relates to the text. For over fourteen years, I have kept my promise almost without exception. This book basically contains the first 260 of those quick-read items that provide wisdom, instruct, inspire, encourage, and help all of us to Get Better Every Day.

I was determined to keep the messages as close in every way possible to what was distributed on the original dates. The goal was for you to get "reader friendly" items, expressed with words that you know, instead of me trying to impress you with big words. Sometimes, even *made up words* have been used to help you *get the point*. I know a lot about grammar and punctuation, but again chose to prioritize you, the reader. So, I wrote more closely to how we speak than *writing right*. There are very few changes, so you will basically read original items from 2007-2012.

Readers have asked where I keep finding topics. Everywhere! This is a big, big world that God created and there is no limit to His sources for providing wisdom. These lessons may have come from signs on hospital walls, billboards, classrooms, workplaces, really cute and really wise grandsons, friends, life experiences, water bottles, sermons, and a zillion other places. There are a lot of concepts imbedded in wisdom and some may be used more than once, but that's okay. God has given us tons of unique and valuable approaches or illustrations to help us acquire heavenly wisdom.

You can read this book all in one day, read one item each weekday for a year, read it multiple times, or use any other way that fits your personal schedule. Most importantly, consider *wearing*

*this book*. Interact with it. When I read books, I write like crazy in them. I underline, highlight, star, circle words, draw arrows, and make a *boocoodle* (lots) of notes. This is YOUR book, so I encourage you to do more than just read it. Figure out how you can apply it and then actually do apply it. Let it help you improve your life and please share timely *Thoughts* to help others.

I have been diligent, but I must admit that human ability to acquire and share wisdom is limited. The best source of true wisdom comes from our Heavenly Father. *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.”* Isaiah 55:8-9 NKJV

I stated earlier that God strategically timed and placed two catalytic sentences in my personal path. I hope that each of you will find items that come straight from these pages right when you need them most. I have thoroughly enjoyed writing this book and I pray that you will thoroughly enjoy using it.

## **SAMPLE THOUGHTS FOR YOU**

**COMMUNICATION:** In November 1998, Craig Montvidas, the very insightful Head Coach of the Dutch National Team, sent a large number of his players to five USA coaches for a week of specialized training. Five infielders came here for me to assist with hitting and infield play. One day, we spent some leisure time allowing them to ride horses with my brother-in-law. Several had never ridden a horse, so the group began by slowly walking the horses around a pond. Without warning, Marjan Smit’s horse became startled and began a rapid gallop through some small pine trees, with Marjan screaming. When Tommy finally reached her and stopped the horse, he asked her why she had not just told the horse to STOP. Shaken, she said “I told him STOP in four different languages, but he would not stop.” If we expect someone to hear and act, we must remember to **communicate in the language of the listener**, even if we have to try more than four ways.

*You can have brilliant ideas, but if you can’t get them across, your ideas won’t get you anywhere.* Lee Iacocca



**GOODNESS:** While coaching baseball in the 1970’s at Florida State, I had thoughts of getting married someday and I would pray that God would provide someone who would be **good to me and good for me**. Boy, did He send a divinely wonderful answer to that prayer! Despite thousands and thousands of females on the FSU campus, He instead led me to my future wife Bonnie, who lived in Ty Ty, Georgia (2000 population of 716). As we consider our mothers and the mothers of our children, it’s clear she has been fantastic. She has definitely been good to our daughter Neilie and me and likewise good for us. Often, the *good tos* seem more fun than the *good fors*, but the *good fors* are often more helpful than the *good tos*. She is nice enough to be good to us and

courageous enough to be good for us. As a coach, player, teacher, student, employer, employee, parent, or child, challenge yourself to be both good to and good for everyone that you meet.

*A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.* Proverbs 31:10-11 NIV



**SILENCE:** In the fall of my sophomore year in college, I took *Fundamentals of Speech* and Dr. Whitehead was quite a creative instructor. During a session on extemporaneous speech, he would call us to the front of the class, then toss out such topics as “Uses Of Ear Wax” or “Ways To Use Peach Fuzz.” For my topic, he asked me to describe the sound of one hand clapping! Fortunately, my gray matter kicked in, reminding me of a popular song by Simon and Garfunkel. I quickly stated, “It’s the ‘Sound of Silence,’” sat down, and got his smile and my A. Not only was it a good reply to his request, it is also good advice for many of us today. As one who likes to talk a lot, I know I often need to speak less and listen more. I imagine many of you are people of action who may need to often pause and preview, feeding forward a solid philosophical and practical plan, and pause again after an action to review and reflect on the feedback. Oh, the value of **timely silence!!**

*Lord, keep your arm around my shoulder and your hand over my mouth.* Sign in gift shop at St. Mary’s Hospital in Athens, Georgia



**PREPARATION:** A few months ago, I saw a terrific thought posted in a school leader’s office. It stated that “Our role is not to prepare the path for the student, rather **prepare the student** for the path.” This powerful message is critical in athletics, education, the family, and the corporate world. We must help people develop qualities like responsibility, integrity, work ethic, trust, commitment, compassion, enthusiasm, courage, and the ability to adjust. Far too often, coaches, educators, parents, and corporate leaders are trying to prepare a magic path, when we should be developing a solid person who can assist in creating the path, improving the path, and adjusting to the potholes in the path. Instead of cloning mechanics, we should develop the person so he can find a path that works for him. Let’s begin to focus on the person, so the person can improve his ability to recognize the proper path and adjust so that he can properly travel that route to success.

*Our role is not to prepare the path for the student, rather prepare the student for the path.*  
Ainsley B. Rose (It is so important that I said it twice on purpose – Bobby)



**FINISHING:** After seeing the story in my Sunday School book, I googled the name of John Stephen Akhwari. You may want to do the same and even watch the video. At the 1968 Olympics, he made the *greatest last place finish ever* as he ended the marathon an hour or so after the other runners. He had fallen earlier, whacked his head, been trampled, badly cut, and dislocated a knee. He got up, bandaged the knee and hobbled in pain to finish a grueling race. The medals and ceremony were all over when he arrived, but fans remaining gave him a thunderous ovation. The next day, a writer asked him why, with those injuries and no chance to win, did he finish the race. His reply was remarkable, “My country (Tanzania) did not send me 5000 miles to start a race. They sent me 5000 miles to finish one.” When we encounter a quitting point, when challenged by frustration, confusion, fear, or fatigue, will we struggle, even if hobbling, and **finish the job**?

*because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:3-4 NIV*



**WINNING:** She was not the best player at the clinic, but she got my attention when she worked on her own during the break. She was practicing throwing, trying to internalize what she had just seen. Later, I saw her practice outfield footwork. Quickly, she was feeling the difference in her old way versus what she had just been taught. In a home run derby drill to get hitters to attack the ball, she got frustrated. She was just starting to play and had little chance to match the veteran players. Some saw a player of below average skill. I saw a young girl with an inspiring teachable spirit, fantastic attitude, and all-out effort. I knelt in front of her, put my hands on her shoulders, looked her right in the eyes, and told her that she was *the best practicer* (my word) in the whole clinic. Given a new goal, she went back to work, building a foundation for future success in life. Look around your field, business, or classroom and find these people, for they are the **true winners**.

*Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:9 NIV*