

By Jordan Monson Wright

(Based on a true story)

Have you ever had to say no to something you wanted to do because it was on a Sunday? Maybe it was an easy decision. Maybe it was hard. Once there was a man named Eric Liddell in Scotland who had to make a very hard decision.

Eric was a fast runner, a very fast runner called a sprinter. His best race was the 100-meter dash. Because he was so fast, he was chosen for Great Britain's team in the 1924 Olympics in Paris, France.

Eric also believed in God. He believed that Sunday was a special day to worship Him.

When the Olympic schedule was announced, Eric found out that the 100-meter race was on a Sunday. He said he wouldn't run that race. He decided to run a much longer race, the 400-meter dash, on another day instead.

Eric's decision made many people angry. Reporters came to his house and called him a traitor to his country. Some thought he was afraid he would lose in the 100-meter race.

Most people just didn't understand why keeping the Sabbath day holy meant so much to Eric. The men in the British Olympic Association told Eric that if God had made Eric such a fast runner, Eric would be honoring God by using his talent, even on a Sunday. Eric told them he believed that his speed was a gift from God, but he still didn't feel right about running. Some men from the association tried to convince Eric that the Sabbath



An OLYMPIC Decision

ended at noon in France. "My Sabbath lasts all day," Eric replied. He had made his decision.

Eric trained for the 400-meter race for several months before the Olympics. It was hard work. At first he ran out of energy when he was only halfway through. But Eric kept practicing. He knew that even if he lost, he would still feel good about his choice. And he had faith that God would help him because he was keeping the Sabbath day holy.

On the day of the race, Eric tried to stay calm. He shook hands with the other racers and pinned the number 451 to his running clothes. *Am I doing the right thing?* he asked himself. Eric decided he would run as hard as he could for as long as he could, and then he would trust God to help him do the rest.

When Eric heard the starting gun, he zoomed ahead, taking the lead. The other runners ran slower on purpose, trying to save some energy for the end. They all thought Eric would burn himself out. But by the halfway point, Eric still hadn't lost his energy. He



WITH GOD'S HELP

Eric Liddell (1902–1945) explained how God helped him: "The secret of my success over the 400m is that I run the first 200m as fast as I can. Then, for the second 200m, with God's help, I run faster." After the Olympics, he spent the rest of his life in China, serving people and teaching about God.

wasn't getting tired! But could he last?

One of the other racers almost caught up with Eric, but Eric still wasn't tired. He pulled even farther ahead. No one could catch him! He crossed the finish line several yards ahead of the other racer and broke a world record.

With God's help, Eric had won a gold medal! He knew that God had given him the strength to win. He also knew that God had given him the strength to stick with his decision.

You can make hard decisions too. When you choose what you know is right, Heavenly Father can help you stick with your choices and give your best effort! ●

The author lives in Michigan, USA.

