

# HONORS



**By Merillee Booren**  
(Based on a true story)

*My sabbaths ye shall keep* (Exodus 31:13).

**E**than loved everything about baseball—being in the field, batting, even stretching to warm up. This year, he had spent hours with his dad throwing pitches. He had read and studied and practiced until he was one of the best players on his team.

And his hard work had paid off. He had been invited to pitch for the league’s honors team. That meant his season would last four weeks longer.

But when Ethan saw the team schedule, he felt his stomach sink clear down to the tips of his toes. More than half the games were scheduled for Sundays.

His mother gave his shoulder a comforting squeeze. “Oh, Ethan. I’m sorry,” she said.

Ethan knew that his family didn’t play sports on Sundays, but this was honors! It was a big deal!

“So I can’t play?” he asked, trying not to sound too much like he was begging. Maybe he could make an exception, just this once. Next season he could go back to not playing on Sundays.

“Why don’t you think about it and pray about it?” Mom suggested.

Ethan nodded. He hated to admit it, but he already knew that keeping the Sabbath day holy was more important than any sports game.

By bedtime Ethan had his answer. He wouldn’t play in the Sunday games, so he would turn down the

invitation to play on the honors team.

Still disappointed, he knelt next to his bed and said a prayer. He didn’t ask if he should play baseball on Sunday; he already knew the answer was no. Instead, he pleaded, “If there’s a way I can play honors, please help me find it. I really want to play, but I won’t play on Sunday.”

The next afternoon while the team was warming up for their game, Ethan pulled his coach aside. “Coach, I’m happy you asked me to play on the honors team, but I don’t play ball on Sundays,” he said.

“What if you just played the other games?” his coach asked.

Ethan shook his head. “It wouldn’t be fair since I’d be gone more than half the time.”

“OK, Ethan. I understand. I’m sorry you can’t play, but I respect your decision.”

Ethan was glad his coach didn’t seem angry or disappointed. Now that he had made the choice, Ethan felt like a weight had been lifted from him. He knew he was good enough to play on the team, and that would have to be enough for him.

Toward the end of the season, the coach called Ethan away from practice. “Ethan, the other coaches and I think you have earned a spot on the honors team,” the coach said. “We did some rearranging and managed to

get it so we only have one game on Sunday. No one expects you to play that game. Would you be willing to play on the team?"

Ethan stared at his coach in shock before yelling, "Yes!" He felt like he was flying as he ran to join his team, knowing he had four more weeks of games ahead of him.

That night he knelt by his bed again and thanked Heavenly Father for giving him the courage to do what he knew was right. "And for letting me play honors," he added. ♦



**"I will do those things on the Sabbath that will help me feel close to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ."**

My Gospel Standards

