

# The Bible

## The book that changed the world

### How do Christians use the Bible?

The Bible is the main reference for teaching, guidance and worship for Christians - looking at the life of a Christian can help children understand what this really means.

Eric Liddell was one such Christian whose life reflected his faith in God. Below is an outline of his life - also shown in the film Chariots of Fire.

#### ERIC LIDDELL

- Mother/Father both Scottish, Eric born in China where his father was a missionary - in 1902.
- Sent to school in South London - became a good sprinter and rugby player.
- Missed his family but received letters which encouraged him in his faith.
- Leaving school went to Edinburgh University to study Science.
- At University his athletic skills were spotted - selected to play Rugby for University and then for Scotland. Became famous in Scotland.
- Harold Abrahams (Jew) and Eric Liddell were both selected to join the GB team for the Olympic Games in 1924 in France. Both were to run in the 100 metres sprint.
- 100 metres heats were to be run on a Sunday - this was not possible for Eric Liddell. He wouldn't run - *"Sunday is the Lord's Day - a day for prayers not for sport"*.
- A difficult time for Eric - he had always dreamt about winning a gold medal in the Olympic Games! The officials tried to change his mind - he wouldn't - he put God first.
- The officials changed his race - Harold Abrahams ran the 100 m - Eric Liddell was to run the 400m, which was not his distance, but he was prepared to have a go!
- Eric got through the heats- to everyone's surprise - and the day of the final came.
- On your marks..... get set..... GO 100m.....200m.....300m.....
- Crowds cheered - were amazed as Eric won and even broke the World Record.
- After the Olympics Eric returned to Edinburgh as a hero. Everyone thought he would carry on racing. After finishing University he wanted to return to China - to join his parents as a Missionary - telling people about Jesus.
- In 1925 the year after his gold medal victory, he returned to China and began to teach Science. He did this for about 10 years - but was challenged by seeing many needy people living on the streets. From then Eric worked among the Chinese street people.
- Then the Japanese invaded China. In 1943 he was arrested by the Japanese and sent to a prison camp.
- He died in 1945, shortly before the end of the war.
- Scotland's greatest runner and athlete gave up his whole life for God - taking what the Bible said seriously.

**Worksheet** See the **Eric Liddell worksheet** - within an Olympic Gold Medal outline children can choose a scene from his life to illustrate how he took the Bible seriously.

**Discussion topic** Discuss together which part of the Bible influenced Eric Liddell's decision.