



cell outlines | week one

These Cell Outlines are written by ALOVE UK. They are available each week from our web site. For more information and other cell resources, visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/love/resources

ERIC LIDDELL

You Will Need

Bibles
Pens/paper
Laptop or some other way of accessing clips from YouTube

WELCOME

Here are two different icebreaker activities you can choose from along a sporting theme. (There is a much longer 'mini Olympics' activity attached at the end if you have a lot of time!)

Who Am I?

On small slips of paper write down the names of numerous athletes. (Best if they are the more prominent athletes from the Olympics or the more famous athletes from a variety of sports.)

Tape the names of Olympic athletes to the back of group members. The task of the students is to discover which Olympic athlete's name is pinned on their backs by asking only 'yes' or 'no' questions. This continues until everyone has learned the name of the famous Olympic athlete on his/her back. Then go around the group and ask each person their favourite Olympic sport, and other information you might like to know.

Design a game

Materials: two of everything – buckets, small balls, large balls, beach balls, hula hoops, frisbees, marbles, anything else you can think of.

Divide the materials evenly and give a set to each team. Give them five minutes to make up their own game using each item in one form or another. Then use the games, or combine the best bits from each game, in a relay race. As each team member finishes, have them sit down. The first team to complete everything and have all their members sitting down wins. Perhaps you could have some 'gold' medals to hand out to the winning team!

WORD

Watch the YouTube clip 'He who Honours God'. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwyltmUR3MU>

This clip is from the famous film *Chariots of Fire* which won four Oscars in 1982, including that for Best Film. Ask the group if they know who the film is about, why that person should have a film made about him, and what he was most remembered for.

Read the story of Eric Liddell together (story attached at the end).

I can say that she has truly impacted my Christian life in many ways, and I thank God for her testimony, her writings, and I love her poetry!

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Questions for discussion

- What inspired you/stood out for you the most about Eric Liddell's story?
- What sacrifices did Eric make in order to follow God wholeheartedly?
- How do you think you would respond when faced with similar sacrifices?
- In what ways do you think that living as a Christian is like being an athlete and running for gold? (Look at 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, Hebrews 12:1.)

Eric Liddell famously said:

'I believe that God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. When I run, I feel his pleasure.'

- What gifts and talents has God given you?
- Do you feel 'God's pleasure' when you use them?
- How do you / can you use these gifts to bring pleasure to others and to God?
- How do you / can you use your gifts to serve God?

Eric's last words were 'It's complete surrender'.

- Do you feel that you are completely surrendered to God? Why or why not?

WORSHIP

Use this quote from Eric Liddell to inspire a group time of prayer and worship.

You came to see a race today. To see someone win. It happened to be me. But I want you to do more than just watch a race. I want you to take part in it. I want to compare faith to running in a race. It's hard. It requires concentration of will, energy of soul... I have no formula for winning the race. Everyone runs in her own way, or his own way. And where does the power come from, to see the race to its end? From within. Jesus said, 'Behold, the Kingdom of God is within you. If with all your hearts you truly seek me, you shall ever surely find me.' If you commit yourself to the love of Christ, then that is how you run a straight race.

WITNESS

'We are all missionaries. Wherever we go, we either bring people nearer to Christ, or we repel them from Christ'

(Eric Liddell)

Which do you do?

Further Resources

Eric Liddell: Pure Gold by David McCasland

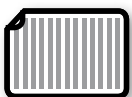
The Flying Scotsman by Sally Magnusson

Eric Liddell - Something Greater than Gold by Janet & Geoff Bengie

Eric Liddell: Running For A Higher Prize A Hero for Young Readers by Renee Taft Meloche

The Eric Liddell Centre <http://www.ericliddell.org/>

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Letter From Eric Liddell to his family in 1938

<http://www.ericliddell.org/eric-liddell/personalcorrespondence/ehl-letter007/index.html>

Actual footage of Eric Liddell winning in 1924

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRdrtp5YAxU&feature=related>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Liddell

<http://www.heartscotland.com/Categories/eric-liddell.htm>

<http://www.historymakers.info/inspirational-christians/eric-liddell.html>

http://myhero.com/go/hero.asp?hero=ELiddell_potter_07

https://www.videoscristianos.org/pdf/TorchLiddell_Leader.pdf

The Story of Eric Liddell

Eric Liddell was born in North China on 16 January 1902, second son of the Rev and Mrs James Dunlop Liddell, who were Scottish missionaries with the London Missionary Society. Liddell is known to most of us for his unwavering Christian convictions during the Olympic Games as portrayed in the Oscar-winning movie *Chariots of Fire*.

At the age of six, he and his brother Robert, eight years old, were enrolled in Eltham College, a boarding school in England for the sons of missionaries. Their parents and sister Jenny returned to China. At Eltham, Liddell was an outstanding sportsman, and became well known for being the fastest runner in Scotland. Newspapers carried the stories of his successful track meets. Many articles stated that he was a potential Olympic winner, and no one from their country had ever won a gold medal before. The hopes of the Scottish nation rested on Eric.

In 1920, Eric Liddell entered the University of Edinburgh, eventually graduating with a science degree after competing in the 1924 Olympic Games. During his college years, rugby was Eric's sport of choice, and he played with distinction both for the University and later on Scotland's national team.

However, his true athletic talent was running, so he set aside rugby to concentrate on preparing for the 1924 Paris Olympics. Liddell was a committed Christian and refused to run on Sunday, with the consequence that he was forced to withdraw from the 100 metres race, his best event. The schedule had been published several months earlier, and his decision was made well before the Games began. Liddell spent the intervening months training for the 400 metres, an event in which he had previously excelled. Even so, his success in the 400 metres was largely unexpected. The day of 400 metres race came, and as Liddell went to the starting blocks, an unknown man slipped a piece of paper into Liddell's hand with a quotation from 1 Samuel 2:30, 'Those who honour me I will honour.' Liddell ran with that piece of paper in his hand. He not only won the race, but broke the existing world record with a time of 47.6 seconds. He gave the secret of his success as 'I run the first 200 metres as fast as I can. Then, with God's help, I run harder.'

After the Olympics, Eric Liddell began his life's work as a missionary to China, following in his parents' footsteps. He served in North China from 1925 until his death in 1945. Liddell's first job as a missionary

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was as a teacher at an Anglo-Chinese College for wealthy Chinese students. It was believed that by teaching the children of the wealthy that they themselves would later become influential figures in China and promote Christian values. He used his athletic experience to train the boys in a number of different sports. One of his many responsibilities was that of superintendent of the Sunday school at Union Church where his father was pastor.

Living in China in the 1930s was potentially very dangerous and in 1937 Eric was sent across to Siochang – Japanese occupied territory – to work at a rural mission station where his brother was a doctor. The mission station was severely short of help and the missionaries who served there were exhausted. There was a constant stream of local people who came at all hours to get medical treatment.

In 1941 life in China was becoming so dangerous that the British Government advised British nationals to leave. Sending his wife, Florence, who was pregnant with their third daughter, and their two daughters to safety in Canada, Eric Liddell elected to stay.

The villages Liddell worked in suffered many hardships as a result of the warring between Communists and Nationalists. On one day, the Communists would pillage and destroy a village and then leave. Later, on another day, the Nationalists would come and do the same thing. Liddell's job in the area was evangelism and to encourage the Christians already there. The work was dangerous. Travelling in the countryside with Communist and Nationalist forces equally hostile to missionary work put Liddell in harm's way on a regular basis. But he faithfully covered the territory on foot or by bicycle, visiting churches, preaching and dodging the bullets as the Japanese invaded.

On one trip, he heard of a Japanese man who was left to die 20 miles away. No one would help him for fear the Japanese would kill them. Eric found the man, loaded him into a cart and was determined to get him to a hospital. That night he could not sleep worrying about the fact the Japanese would kill him on the spot when they caught him. He opened his Bible and his eyes went to the following verse: Luke 16:10 – 'He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.' After reading that, he was able to go right to sleep. The next morning, the Japanese troops were everywhere, but they never searched his cart. On the way he rescued another victim whose neck had been slashed execution style by the Japanese. He got them to the hospital. The first man died, but the second recovered and became an outstanding Christian artist.

In 1943, Liddell was captured and imprisoned in a Japanese internment camp with members of the China Inland Mission and many others. Life in the internment camp was hard and brutal. But Eric was not dissuaded by his circumstances. He worked tirelessly in the camp, doing just about anything that needed to be done: helping the elderly, teaching at the camp school Bible classes, arranging games and also by teaching the children science. He was known to the children as Uncle Eric. His secret was rising at 6 am and huddling secretly at a small table with a peanut oil lamp studying the Bible and adding to his notebook. Of course, many hours were spent in silent prayer.

In 1944, Liddell became ill. The doctors did not have the resources to diagnose the real nature of the problem. In his last letter to his wife, written on the day he died, he talked about suffering a nervous breakdown in the camp due to overwork, but actually he was suffering from an inoperable brain tumour. In spite of tremendous pain, Eric Liddell maintained his faith, courage and kindness towards others until the end. On 21 February 1945 he began coughing uncontrollably, and as friends came to his aid, he lay back and uttered the words 'It is surrender'. He died five months before liberation and never having seen

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his third child. He was greatly mourned not only at the Weih sien Internment Camp but also in Scotland as well. A fellow prisoner, Langdon Gilkey, was later to write, 'The entire camp, especially its youth, was stunned for days, so great was the vacuum that Eric's death had left.' According to a fellow missionary Liddell's last words were, 'It's complete surrender' in reference to how he had completely surrendered his life to his God.

In 2008 it was revealed by the Chinese authorities that Liddell had given up an opportunity to leave the camp and instead gave his place to a pregnant woman. Apparently, the Japanese did a deal with the British, with Churchill's approval, for prisoner exchange. Therefore, because Eric was a famous athlete he was one of the chosen as part of the prisoner exchange. However, he gave his place to another. This information was released near the time of the 2008 Beijing Olympics by the Chinese Government and apparently news of this great act of sacrifice came as a surprise even to his family members.

Eric Liddell was a man who was truly committed to the cause of Christ. He chose to live a dangerous, materially unrewarding life in China, serving his God, when fame and riches were within his grasp. He had the opportunity to leave China but he chose to stay. He poured his life into the work of reaching the lost in China. He worked for a prize far greater than gold, even Olympic gold. His greatness of heart and unwavering conviction are an inspiration to people of faith everywhere.



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Olympic Themed Ice Breaker

Split the group into teams by countries either real or fictitious and talk about re-creating the fervour, feelings and desire of an Olympic event.

Give 10 to 20 minutes for teams to introduce themselves and produce a national identity. This could include a flag, emblem, song, national costume etc.

Set up a Round Robin of 'Olympic Events' – for example:

- Javelin using foam javelins
- Shot put using foam shots
- Jumping from a standstill – furthest wins
- Standing on one leg – longest time wins
- Team skiing around a few cones – make your own set of skis using two planks and a sling for each person
- Tug of war
- Space hopper race – great fun
- Quoits
- Paper darts – furthest flight wins
- Giant jenga – tallest tower wins
- Frisbees for discus
- Mini golf
- Bean bag chuck into a bucket

The list of possible games is endless – just use your imagination.

Have a few adjudicators on hand with stopwatches. Split everyone into teams and have a buzzer or something similar to start each round and a whistle to end each round. Make rounds short – about ten minutes per game. Fast and furious is always best if somewhat chaotic!

Get a few medallions and make a few laurel wreaths and end with an Olympic medal ceremony!

Taken from: <http://ice-breaker-ideas.com/corporate-ice-breakers/conference-ice-breakers/>

