

THE FOOTY DECISION



Sam wanted to play footy, but he also wanted to keep the Sabbath day holy.

By Noelle Barrus
(Based on a true story)

Sam watched the red ball soar toward him. He caught it just like he had practiced with Dad. It was his first day at footy practice and his first year playing on a real team.

At the end of practice, Sam waved goodbye to his teammates.

"See you next week!" one of them said.

Sam climbed into Mum's car to go home.

"I just found out that the games for your footy team are on Sundays," Mum said. "What do you think we should do?"

Sam was quiet. If he went to church on Sunday, then he wouldn't get to play footy with his team. But if he went to his games, he probably couldn't make it to church. He wanted to do both! "Could we go to the games that are before church?" he asked.

"It takes us an hour to drive to church. Plus, we need time to get ready before we go," Mum said.



Sam knew Mum was right. He had a little sister and baby brother. It always took a long time to get everyone ready for church.

"But the most important thing is that we want to do things on Sunday that remind us of Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father," Mum said. After a minute she added, "Maybe you could go to footy practice on Thursdays and go to church on Sundays."

Sam looked out the window. He liked going to church and learning

about Jesus on Sundays. He knew that one way to be like Jesus Christ was to keep the Sabbath day holy. But he would be sad to miss his footy games.

Sam didn't know what to do. Then he had an idea.

"Let's pray about it," said Sam. "I'll say a prayer while you keep driving." He folded his arms and closed his eyes. It felt a little strange to pray in the car. But he knew he could pray anywhere. In his prayer, he explained to Heavenly Father what happened.

"Please help me make the right choice," he said. When he was done, he said amen. Mum said amen too.

Sam had a warm feeling in his heart. He knew what to do.

"What do you think?" Mum asked.

"I want to go to practice on Thursdays and church



on Sundays." Sam smiled. "I know it's important to make Sunday special."

"That sounds like a great plan," said Mum.

That week, Sam went to footy practice on Thursday. On Sunday, he went to church. He learned more about Jesus. Sam was glad he got to go to both church and footy, even if he couldn't play in the games. It felt good to keep the Sabbath day holy. ●

This story took place in Australia.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUTH BENNETT

FOOTY is a sport played in Australia. It is also called "Aussie rules" or "Australian football." Players can kick, throw, or run with the ball. What games do you play where you live?