

# Family Devotional

From July 3, 2016

Decode:

Supplies:

- White Paper
- White Crayon(s)
- Water Colors
- Water
- Brushes



Give each person a white piece of paper and let them draw or write a nice message in the white crayon. It won't be visible at first, but it soon will be! Then pass it to the person next to them. Brush water colors over the paper to reveal the hidden message.

Have you ever played detective or been reading a mystery book with a surprise twist? How did you feel when you discovered the truth? Let's read a story about Paul who uncovered one of the greatest mysteries of all time.

## Read & Reflect: Ephesians 3:1-12

What was the mystery that God revealed to Paul? Ephesians 3:6

The Israelites had grown up with the understanding that they were God's people and he loved them, but they thought that good news was only for them. However, when Jesus came, he said, "I didn't just come for the Israelites, I came to save everyone that would believe in me." Now this was God's plan all along, revealed in the Old Testament, in the words and life of Jesus, and in how the Holy Spirit worked through the Apostles, but many Jewish Christians, and gentiles who wanted to be Christians, still did not understand. So God, through the Holy Spirit, gave this wonderful message to Paul to share with the world!

How did Paul feel about this news? What was his response?

What does this message mean for us? Unless your family is of Jewish decent then you are a gentile too. Most of us have grown up hearing that Jesus loves us and wants us to be part of his family, but take a minutes to imagine you are hearing this news for the first time. Imagine that God is a king in a far off distant palace and you believe you'll never get to meet or see him. Then someone comes and tells you, "The doors to the palace have been opened wide and the king is waiting for YOU!!!" Reread Ephesians 3:12. Jesus gives us the freedom and confidence to approach our heavenly Father boldly as a beloved child.

Not all the Israelites where happy about this revelation, they wanted to be God's special people. But the really cool thing about God's love is that it has no limits. When we tell others about Jesus, we actually come to better understand the love God has for us as we see others being loved by God too!

It's easy to think everyone has heard this message before, but not everyone knows or understands that Jesus loves THEM! Just like God trusted this important message to Paul, he has trusted this message to YOU as well!

**Challenge:** Find a way to tell someone around you that God loves them! You can use your words, but you can also use your actions. Think of a neighbor, friend or family member that is having a rough day or just needs to

know they are loved. You could make them a card, bake cookies, give them a hug, read to them or anything else you can dream up that shows them God loves THEM!

**Remember:** Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on 1 John 3:1a this week.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us,  
that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

**Respond:** "Dear God, thank you for revealing your great plan to Paul and his obedience to share this message with the world. Help us to know who needs to hear this message of love today and know there is a place for them in your family ..... Amen!"