

Hidden Names

For families to share at home this week. About 15 minutes, best for ages 4–10, with something for grown-ups too.

READ TOGETHER · ROMANS 16:1–2, 7

At the end of one of his letters, Paul wrote a big thank-you list. He named lots of people who helped him tell the world about Jesus.

The very first person on the list was a woman named **Phoebe**. She was a leader in her church, and Paul trusted her to carry his letter all the way to Rome. Paul also thanked **Junia**, and he called her an apostle, someone sent out to share the good news!

Grown-ups, you might say: For a long time, some people said girls and women should stay quiet in church. Some Bibles even changed Junia's name to a boy's name, because people couldn't imagine a woman being an apostle. But God never forgot her name. God knows every name, and God wants every voice to be heard, including yours.

TALK ABOUT IT

For younger kids:

- How do you feel when someone says your name in a happy voice?
- Who are some people who help you learn about God?

For older kids:

- Have you ever had a good idea that nobody listened to? How did that feel?
- Why do you think it matters that Paul wrote down Phoebe's and Junia's names?

For grown-ups to share:

- Tell about a woman who helped you learn about God. What do you remember about her?

TRY THIS: THE HIDDEN NAMES GAME

You'll need small slips of paper and a pencil.

- 1 Write the names of women who have taught your family about God on slips of paper: a grandma, an aunt, a teacher, a pastor, a neighbor. Add **Phoebe** and **Junia** too!
- 2 One person hides the slips around the room while everyone else closes their eyes.
- 3 Everyone hunts for the hidden names. When you find one, read it out loud in your biggest, proudest voice.
- 4 For each grown-up name, share one way that person showed God's love.

Family challenge for the week: Pick one name you found and say thank you to her this week. Draw a picture, make a card, or give her a call.

Tip: Grown-ups, kids learn a lot by watching who we thank. Let them see you thank the people who often go unnoticed.

PRAY TOGETHER

One person reads a line, and everyone repeats it with the motions.

Dear God, (fold hands)

thank you for knowing my name. (point to yourself)

Thank you for Phoebe and Junia (hold up two fingers)

and everyone who taught us about you. (hands on heart)

Help us listen to every voice (hands cupped behind ears)

and use our voices for love. (hands out wide)

Amen! (clap!)