

Character? **ELIZABETH**

Scripture Passage: Luke 1:24-25, 39-45

Attribute: Thankfully Aware

The importance of being thankful for what God's done in our lives is probably a concept we're pretty familiar with. Especially considering that Thanksgiving was only a few weeks ago! But if we're not careful, we can be tempted to see this is "basic" or as something we've already figured out. *"Yeah. I get it. I'm thankful to God for what He's given me."*

However, Elizabeth teaches us that our thankfulness to God should go so far beyond a simple recognition of the things He's done in our lives!

Elizabeth shows us that not only should we have a deep awareness of what God has blessed us with, but an even deeper and more personal acknowledgment of God as *the source* of the good things in our lives. Let's see where we find examples of this in Elizabeth's life.

In verse 25, we see Elizabeth responding, perhaps internally or to Zechariah, to God's blessing: "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people" (NIV). Elizabeth acknowledged God's solution to her problem, but she also acknowledged the Lord's favor. *God is no pragmatist.* The good He does in our lives is motivated not on functionality, but out of His unfailing love for us, His children.

In verses 42-45 we see Elizabeth really cut loose! Filled with the Spirit, she pours out blessings and thankfulness on Mary. But see her words in verse 43. Once again Elizabeth acknowledges the personal side of God's blessing, the favor and good graces He has shown to her.

Elizabeth reveals to us that she has an intimate understanding of God's character and His heart. More than just a simple thankfulness, she attributes grace and goodness to God as the source of her blessing. In this way, she demonstrated a tender awareness of God's hand in her life.

Look around you today. Look at the blessings, both material and immaterial, and ask yourself: *do I see all that I have as a result of God's favor on me?* Maybe today is a great reminder to stop and lift thanks to God, not just for your stuff, but thankfulness that a good and loving God has looked down on you with grace, and love, and favor.

Elizabeth expressed thanks clearly and abundantly. Why don't you give it a try?

Food For Thought . . .

1. What is the biggest obstacle in your life keeping you from a deeper awareness of God, and His great love for you, as the source of all your blessings?
2. What tangible thing can you do today to limit the effects of this obstacle?
3. Are there some practical ways you can lead your students to grow in their attitude of thankfulness and gratitude?
4. Describe the relationship between your own attitude of God's favor and blessing, and your willingness to in turn bless others.