

6 Marks of a Willing Mentor

Elizabeth and Her Expectant Joy



Women's relationships are extremely important to God and are used to shape us into the women God has created and called us to be. My favorite biblical story about mentoring is

from Luke 1: the story of Elizabeth and Mary. Through just a few words of Elizabeth's expectant joy, we see a picture of a willing mentor who opened her heart and her home to a young woman in need. With just a glimpse into their time together during their miraculous pregnancies, we learn volumes about mentoring.

1. If you have had mentors, you know some of the characteristics that make them a positive influence in your life. Elizabeth exhibited these characteristics. Luke 1:5-7 reveals that Elizabeth is a righteous woman, a priest's wife, and was childless. What happened in vv. 8-25 that would change Elizabeth's life?

2. After the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would become the mother of Jesus (vv. 26-38), the much younger Mary went quickly to the much older Elizabeth's house (vv. 39-40) revealing to us that they shared a special relationship. Elizabeth's reaction to Mary's arrival in Luke 1:41-45, identifies

six marks of a willing mentor.

A willing mentor . . .

1. Looks with admiration at what God is doing in the life of her mentee. Elizabeth is not jealous of the role of a younger Mary in God's kingdom. Which phrases in vv. 41-45 reveal this?

On the back of this sheet, use Philippians 4:8-9 to list the types of encouragement you could give your mentee.

2. Allows her mentee to take up "space" in her world for a period of time. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth, according to Luke 1:56?

No one else could have understood these miraculous pregnancies like Elizabeth and Mary did, and so God made sure they got together. What a loving, attentive God we serve! On the back of this sheet, list ways God could use your unique experiences in the life of your mentee based on 2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

Did you know
Elizabeth's voice was
the first human voice
to confirm Mary's
miraculous pregnancy?

3. Is consciously aware of God's activity in her mentee's life and expresses joyful exuberance in that activity. What joy is revealed in vv. 41-45?

Elizabeth was the first human voice to confirm to Mary that she was indeed pregnant with the Messiah. (Note: it wasn't Joseph or any other man who confirmed it.) On the back, list some ways God could use your voice in the life of your mentee based on Philippians 1:3-8.

4. Expresses her thoughts with humility. Using Elizabeth's example and James 3:13-18, think of things your mentee could teach you and list them on the back.

5. Takes time to listen to the heart cry of her mentee. Mary's song of praise (vv. 46-55) may have been the first time she was able to talk aloud about her miracle. Elizabeth was her safe place. Use the back to list how James 5:13-16 indicates how God could use you to be a safe place for your mentee.

6. Realizes that as she fulfills her mentor role, God is doing a new thing in her own life as well. Elizabeth acknowledges God's Spirit at work in her life in response to Mary's miracle. Use the back to list ways God uses the older generation in the lives of the younger generation (see 2 Tim. 1:3-7)?

Elizabeth's expectant joy—in the midst of her own major life changes—provided the encouragement and warm reception needed by a much younger woman facing her own unique challenges. Let's follow her example!