

Let The Redeemed Say So

We are called to practice gratitude in every situation (Colossians 3:17; Ephesians 5:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:18). Gratitude has a distinct, positive impact on our relationships, as well as our physical and mental health. It enhances empathy, reduces aggression, improves self-esteem, and leads to better sleep. But gratitude does not happen naturally. It must be purposed and practiced. That is why Psalm 107:2 tells us to *let the redeemed of the LORD say so*. There is power in verbalizing our gratitude to our Heavenly Father, friends, family, and co-workers. Here at Beltway Park, we are immensely grateful for the way God has worked in and through us as a church family in the last year (see the full report at beltway.org/annualreport).

GET THINGS STARTED

How would you rate your practice of gratitude? Does your level of gratitude tend to be affected more by discontentment or by comparison (or maybe another factor)? Would you consider yourself a person who verbalizes gratitude often or rarely, and why?

GO DEEPER

1. From 1 Thessalonians 5:18, what is the difference between giving thanks *in* all circumstances (as the verse indicates) rather than giving thanks *for* all circumstances? Why is this distinction important?
2. Psalm 107:2 emphasizes that the redeemed of the Lord should *say so*. Why does the psalmist tell us to verbalize gratitude rather than just thinking gratefulness? How do our words of gratitude empower the abundant life Jesus longs for us to experience?
3. What does it look like to *purpose* and *practice* gratitude regularly? What are some practical tools to help us be intentional in expressing gratitude?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What are you most grateful for in this season? How has God moved or been revealed in your life recently that is worthy of gratitude?
2. What steps do you need to take, or what tools do you need to use, to help you become more *purposeful* and *practiced* in expressing gratitude? What is a realistic goal for you when it comes to expressing thankfulness?
3. What part(s) of the Beltway Annual Report that Pastor David presented stood out to you, and why? What did you possibly learn about Beltway that you did not know before? What are you personally grateful for at Beltway Park?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time in an atmosphere of prayer to simply express thanksgiving to God. Thank Him for who He is in His character and nature, as well as for what He has accomplished for you. Thank Him for what He is showing and teaching you in this season about Himself and about you. Thank Him for the ways He is working and moving within you and within your key relationships. And thank God for what He is stirring and accomplishing in and through Beltway Park.