



Our Values

Where is God taking Us? Week 2

September 16, 2018

LEARNING GOALS

- Understand the role values play in a church.
- Understand Bellevue's Values.
- Understand how Bellevue's Values make an impact on us as individuals and as a Life Group.

OUTLINE

1. **INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW - "WHERE IS GOD TAKING US?" SERIES**
2. **OUR VALUES**
 - i. What role do values play at Bellevue?
 - a. Purpose and Acts 2
 - ii. What are Bellevue's Values?
 - a. Explanation of our Values
 - iii. What do Bellevue's Values mean to me?
 - a. Shared values
 - b. It starts in me!
 - iv. How do Bellevue's Values impact our Life Group?
 - a. Life Group Assessment findings
 - b. Take home worksheet

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW

Last week, we began a series entitled, "Where is God Taking Us?" The goal of this series is to align our Life Group with the Lord's direction for our church. We are engaging all elements of the Vision Frame.

*(Teacher, point to the **Vision Frame storyboard.**)*

Our Vision Frame has four sides that frame where we believe God is taking our church. These sides define **what** we are doing, **why** we do what we do, **how** we get involved, and **when** we are on target. The center of the frame is our Vision, a work of God so wonderful you'll want to be a part of it!

Last week we focused on Bellevue's Mission.

Who would recite our mission statement for us? *Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples.*

Bro. Steve says our Mission could be the mission statement of any evangelical, Gospel believing, Bible preaching church in America.

So what sets us apart? What makes Bellevue unique when compared to other churches?

We believe it is our Values! More than any other element of our Vision Frame, our Values articulate Bellevue's identity.

(Teacher, point to the Values on the Vision Frame storyboard.)

In this week's lesson we focus on Bellevue's five Values.

*(Teacher - **Pray** - Thank the Lord for His Presence in your Life Group and for the clarity of direction He has given our church. Ask God for Spirit guided teaching and for receptive ears willing to obey the teaching of God's Word.)*

OUR VISION

What role do our Values play at Bellevue?

When you hear the word, "values", what do you think of?

(Teacher, listen to responses, allow the definition of values to build in the lesson.)

Why do companies or organizations have values? What purpose do they serve?

(Answers will vary.)

I'm going to read three values from three different companies. I want to see if you can guess which company is characterized by which value. The three companies are Starbucks, Google and JPMorgan Chase (the largest bank in the United States).

The first value example is: "Exceptional client service."

Does this value belong to Starbucks, Google or JPMorgan Chase? (JP Morgan Chase)

The second value is: “The need for information crosses all borders.”

Does this value belong to Starbucks, Google or JPMorgan Chase? (Google)

The third value is: “Creating a culture of warmth and belonging, where everyone is welcome.”

Does this value belong to Starbucks, Google or JPMorgan Chase? (Starbucks)

A company’s values define success for their business. A bank values servicing the client, a technology company values sharing information, and a coffee shop values creating community. Businesses need to define their most important value.

How does a church benefit from having well-defined values?

(Answers will vary.)

Acts chapter 2 gives us a clear picture of what the early church valued. Verse forty-two provides a description of what the early church experienced together.

(Teacher, have someone read Acts 2:42 and ask members to listen for what the early church valued.)

Acts 2:42 *They were continually devoting themselves to the **apostles’ teaching** and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to **prayer**.*

From this glimpse of the early church, what did they value?

(Answer: teaching, fellowship and prayer)

In 2011, while developing our Vision Frame, Bellevue set out to solidify our Values. Rather than creating something new, Bellevue reflected on what has been important to our church for over 115 years.

Bellevue has been all about Jesus, the Bible, people, doing our best for the Lord, and caring for the city. We prayerfully identified the most deeply held ideals at Bellevue.

What are Bellevue’s Values?

Can someone name one of Bellevue’s five values?

(Teacher, please read aloud all five Values from the Vision Frame storyboard.)

Our Values represent what is most important to Bellevue and reveal our DNA These Values the fire that burns in our heart. *(Teacher, point to Sticky on the storyboard.)*

Our Values explain **WHY** we do what we do. For example, **WHY** did over 1,300 people go visiting on two hot August Sunday afternoons to Build Relationships | Share Jesus?

- **WHY?** Because we value intimacy with Jesus, we want others to have a passionate relationship with Him.
- **WHY?** Because we value biblical truth, we want to obediently “go” and make front porch visits.
- **WHY?** Because we value intentional hospitality, we welcome people to our church from their doorstep.
- **WHY?** Because we value ministry excellence, we share gift bags full of quality resources designed to help people spiritually.
- **WHY?** Because we value city renewal, we share the Gospel, which is the key to investing in the redemption of the people of our community.

(Teacher, point to the large “WHY” word on the storyboard)

Essentially, our Values are the **why** behind our desire to Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples!

Let’s take an in-depth look at each of our five Values.

(Teacher, provided below is a summation of five sermons Bro. Steve preached in August of 2014. Please look ahead in the lesson to prayerfully decide how to use the content.)

Value #1: Intimacy with Jesus

Main Idea: *Pursuing a passionate relationship with Jesus above all*

At Bellevue, we believe a person’s relationship with Jesus Christ is the most important priority of life.

Text: Luke 10:38-42 – the account of Jesus’ time with Mary and Martha

Discussion questions for intimacy with Jesus:

- What do verses 39-40 tell us about where Mary and Martha placed their individual focus?
 - Mary was seated at the feet of Jesus focused on Him.
 - Martha was distracted and focused on preparing a meal.
- In verses 41-42, what did Jesus observe about Martha and what did He tell her?
 - Martha was bothered by many things (distractions) but only one thing (intimacy with Jesus) was necessary.

- What distractions get in the way of intimacy with Jesus?
- What would it take for someone to have greater intimacy with Jesus?

Illustration for intimacy with Jesus:

Early in his career, Thomas Edison invented a vote-recording machine for use in legislative chambers. The machine would replace the tedious business of marking ballots, counting them, etc. Elated with the prospects, Edison obtained a patent—his first—and headed for Washington. Eagerly, he demonstrated his machine to the Chairman of Congressional Committees. While complimenting Edison on his ingenuity, Edison was promptly turned it down. “Filibustering and delay in the tabulation of votes are often the only means we have for defeating bad or improper legislation,” he told Edison. The young inventor was stunned. The invention was good; he knew it and the chairman knew it. Still, it wasn’t wanted.

Point: Are you busy about pursuits of this life that are not what Jesus wants from you? Jesus wants you to have a personal, intimate relationship with Him.

Applications for intimacy with Jesus:

- Intimacy with Jesus only happens when we pursue Him.
 - Having a place and a purpose will enrich your prayer time.
- Intimacy with Jesus is maximized with a plan.
 - Taking in biblical truth through a reading plan is beneficial.

Bro. Steve quotes:

- “We are a Jesus church.”
- “God created you to be intimate with Him and until you come to that place, you will never be satisfied with life.”

Value #2: Biblical Truth

Main Idea: *Treasuring God's perfect Word as our standard for life and faith*

Generations of believers at Bellevue, both past and present, have treasured God's perfect Word as our standard for life and faith. This Value provides a firm foundation, tested and sufficient for every need.

Text: II Kings 22:8 and 11-13 – an account of what happened during the renovation of the temple that King Josiah ordered

Discussion questions for biblical truth:

- In verse 8, what was Hilkiah the high priest so excited about?
 - He found the book of the law, the Holy Scripture! (This was likely either Deuteronomy or the first five books of the Bible)
- In verses 11-13, what impact did hearing God's Word have on the King?
 - He was under conviction and tore his clothes in repentance, realizing their ancestor's disobedience.
- How can we show an excitement for God's Word, as a newly found treasure?
 - How does biblical truth impact us today?

Illustration for biblical truth:

It has been said that when the famous missionary, Dr. David Livingstone, began his trek across Africa he had 73 books totaling 180 pounds. After traveling 300 miles, Livingstone was obliged to throw away some books due to the fatigue of those carrying his baggage. As he continued on his journey his library volume grew less and less, until one book remained—his Bible.

Point: We are to treasure the biblical truth in God's Word above all else for guidance and gospel advancement.

Application(s) for biblical truth:

- Treasure God's perfect Word through daily reading.
 - Have a daily Bible reading plan. bellevue.org/challenge
- Memorize biblical truth.
 - Create a system that works for you (cards, phone app, etc.).
- Meditate on the passages you read throughout the day.
 - Write down specific insights you gain through taking in scripture.

Bro. Steve quotes:

- "We are a Bible church."
- "Once the Word of God gets in you, it's going to get out."

Value #3: Intentional Hospitality

Main Idea: *Welcoming every person with the love of Jesus*

At Bellevue, our hearts burn with a sense of the inherent value of every person. We see each life as one loved by Jesus in His ultimate sacrifice and loved by us through our selfless service.

Text: Acts 10:1-15 – This is the account of Cornelius and Peter. God opened the door for Peter take the Gospel to the Gentiles, signifying that God loves all people and wants us to do the same. Cornelius was a devout Gentile who had yet to enter into New Testament salvation. He was one of the first Gentiles after Pentecost to hear the good news of Jesus Christ's forgiveness.

Discussion questions for intentional hospitality:

- What do verses 3-5 reveal about God?
 - God desires to draw all men to Himself. (John 6:44)
- What did God communicate to Peter in verse 15 and what happened because of his obedience?
 - God told Peter to not consider unholy what He had cleansed. In verses 17-23 the Spirit tells Peter that three men are looking for him and that he should go with them without hesitation. As a result, Gentiles heard the good news of Jesus and were saved.
- Why are we hesitant to take the Gospel to some people?
 - Fear, intimidation, rejection, judgment, or their sin
- Who does Jesus want us to welcome with His love?
 - We are to love the lost, reject no one, and welcome every person with the love of Jesus.
- Can you remember a time when you felt welcomed so sincerely that your experience made a lasting impression?

Illustration for Intentional Hospitality:

One stormy night a couple entered the lobby of a small hotel and asked for a room. The manager said they were filled, as were all the hotels in town. "But I can't send a fine couple like you out in the rain," he said. "Would you be willing to sleep in my room?" The couple hesitated, but the manager insisted. The next morning when the gentleman paid his bill, he said, "You're the kind of man who should be managing the best hotel in the United States." The manager smiled politely. Over the years, a friendship developed between these two men. A few years later, the small hotel manager received a letter from his friend inviting him to New York. A round-trip ticket was enclosed. When the manager arrived, his host took him to the corner of 5th Avenue and 34th Street, where a magnificent new building stood. The gentleman's name was William Waldorf Astor and the hotel was the original Waldorf-Astoria. The manager, George C. Boldt, became its first manager.

Point: How you welcome others leaves a lasting impression!

Application(s) for intentional hospitality:

- Go out of your way to make a great first impression.
- Engage people of varying ethnicities and cultures.

Bro Steve quotes on intentional hospitality:

- “We are a church for all people.”
- “We want you to be proactive about being kind and loving to other people.”

Value #4: Ministry Excellence

Main Idea: *Reflecting the character of God in service to others*

At Bellevue, we desire that others experience ministry that clearly illustrates the character of God. We fulfill our Mission to Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, & Make Disciples with a whole-hearted passion to honor Jesus in every aspect of ministry.

Text: Matthew 14:14-21 – an account of Jesus feeding the 5,000

Discussion questions for Ministry Excellence:

- What does verse 14 tell you about how Jesus engaged others?
 - He saw people’s needs and felt compassion.
- What do verses 15-18 teach us about serving others?
 - We may feel insufficient but God provides the resources.
 - We need to commit our resources to Jesus and He will overcome all odds.
- What do verses 19-21 teach we can experience when we serve the Lord?
 - We can experience miracles and satisfaction.
- In what ways have you experienced ministry excellence at Bellevue?

Illustration for ministry excellence:

Two hair salons in serious competition kept cutting prices to attract business. Finally, one salon put out a sign that read: Haircuts—Only \$2! Not to be outdone, the other salon put up a sign that read: We repair \$2 haircuts!

Point: Striving to do your best for the Lord will maximize your impact.

Application(s) for ministry excellence:

- Serving in the local church is a calling for every Christian.
- Know your gifting(s) and serve accordingly. Online assessments are available to

- help identify your spiritual gifts. bellevue.org/serve-in
- The character of God is reflected through your service.

Bro Steve quotes on ministry excellence:

- “We desire that our church reflect the character of God serving others.”
- “The Lord doesn’t need our ability. He needs our availability.”

Value #5: City Renewal

Main Idea: *Investing in the redemption of the people of our community*

For over a century, Bellevue has invested in the redemption of those in our community. Bellevue will continue to be a catalyst for spiritual awakening in Memphis and beyond.

Text: Jeremiah 29:4-7 – the account of Jeremiah’s letter to the Jewish people living in exile in Babylon

Discussion questions for city renewal:

- Although God’s people found themselves in a corrupt city, what are they instructed to do in verses 4-6?
 - They were to build houses, settle down, plant gardens, marry, and have children so as to not decrease in number.
- What does God instruct in verse 7 and what is the promise at the end?
 - “Seek the welfare of the city... when it has prosperity, you will prosper.”
- How can we seek the welfare of Memphis?
- What gift/talent do you have that can be used for city renewal?

Illustration for city renewal:

In 1972, a distraught, hostile man slipped into St. Peter’s Cathedral in Rome with a hammer and began to destroy Michelangelo’s beautiful sculpture The Pieta. The cherished work of art was severely damaged. Experts, working with the utmost care and precision, made every effort to restore the treasure. Interestingly, during restoration, a previously unknown monogram of Michelangelo was discovered on the palm of the Madonna’s left hand. Point: God brings beauty out of ashes! (Isaiah 61:3) God can bring spiritual awakening to Memphis!

Application(s) for city renewal:

- Educate yourself on the culture and keep current on the events of our city (news, newspaper, magazines, events, etc.).

- Ask God to give you a burden for some area of our city that needs the Gospel.
- Unite with diversity in the church to be a witness/testimony/example to a city in need of Jesus.

Bro Steve quotes on city renewal:

- “Some of you can reach people that no one else can reach.”
- “We invest for the opportunity to share the Gospel.”

What do Bellevue’s Values mean to me?

What is one reason you decided to join Bellevue?

(Teacher, listen to responses, generally responses align with one of the five Values.)

Much of what I heard aligns with our Values. This agreement is “shared values.”

People who have the highest level of commitment and loyalty to Bellevue are those whose personal values align with those of the church. In other words, people with the same values stick together!

As a matter of fact, the more you talk about how your values align with the church you attend, the more people will be drawn here. A great way to communicate this to others is to speak of our Values.

Let’s go back to last week’s exercise of inviting your restaurant server to Bellevue after you pray for them.

Does anyone remember what we suggested you say if they ask, “What are we doing in that large church?”

We suggested last week that you share our Mission by saying, “We are learning to Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples. That’s the kind of people we believe God is calling us to be!”

Today, let’s add to that discussion. Invite your server to church and give them a peek at what is important to us by saying, “If you visit Bellevue on a Sunday morning, you will see that we are seek to be all about Jesus, the Bible, people, doing our best for the Lord, and caring for this city.” *Likely, the person will find these values attractive as well!*

If you talk about what is important to us, you will be a contagious carrier of our Values to an outside world! Sticky, our Vision Frame character, says, "It starts in me."

How do Bellevue's Values make an impact in our Life Group?

Our Life Group is an environment where our five Values should be experienced.

When people visit our Life Group, they should experience a class that is "all about Jesus, the Bible, people, doing our best for the Lord, and caring for the city!"

How are we demonstrating these Values during our weekly time together? Let's look at your feedback from our class assessment a few weeks ago.

(Teacher, review question 7 responses for your class results.)

Our assessment results revealed that the most evident Value experienced in our Life Group is _____.

Behind our strongest value in decreasing order is: _____, _____, _____ and lastly _____.

Which Value could we emphasize more during class time?

How could centering our class around Bellevue's Values empower us?

How could adherence to our Values strengthen our alignment with where God is taking our church?

Because we have clear values to guide us, we can better decide what to commit to as a Life Group. When a group operates based on Values, the members (who share those same values personally) have a more positive experience.

(Teacher, begin to distribute the handout to class members.)

I want each of you to take this worksheet home and fill it out this week. It simply says: "As a Life Group, we can redesign the experience we share together by assigning a 'demonstrated by' statement to each of our Values. Please take time this week to pray, write a statement for each Value, and bring this worksheet to class next Sunday."

1. Intimacy with Jesus

Pursuing a passionate relationship with Christ above all else

We could demonstrate this weekly in our Life Group by....

2. Biblical Truth

Treasuring God's perfect Word as our standard for life and faith

We could demonstrate this weekly in our Life Group by....

3. Intentional Hospitality

Welcoming every person with the love of Jesus

We could demonstrate this weekly in our Life Group by....

4. Ministry Excellence

Reflecting the character of God in service to others

We could demonstrate this weekly in our Life Group by....

5. City Renewal

Investing in the redemption of the people of our community

We could demonstrate this weekly in our Life Group by....

As your Teacher, I'm excited to see how the Lord will use these worksheets to stimulate new thoughts, priorities, attitudes, and behaviors that can be expressed when we are together!

Let's ensure that all five Values are experienced in our Life Group.

Let's embrace the value of our Values!

(Teacher, pray and close the class).

Compiled by Alex Leon with Tim Shelton, *Adult Ministry Pastors*

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