



Our Strategy

Where is God taking Us? Week 3

September 23, 2018

LEARNING GOALS

- Realize the need to offer clear steps for individuals to take.
- Understand the biblical context for taking steps to grow in our faith.
- Understand Bellevue's Strategy of six proven pathway steps.
- Grasp how our Strategy makes an impact on us as individuals and as a Life Group.

OUTLINE

1. **INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW - "WHERE IS GOD TAKING US?" SERIES**
2. **OUR STRATEGY**
 - i. Why do people need clear steps to take?
 - a. Bring order to overwhelming places
 - ii. Who took steps of faith in the Bible?
 - a. Biblical examples
 - iii. What are the next steps provided in Bellevue's Strategy?
 - a. Six proven pathways
 - iv. How does Bellevue's Strategy make an impact on me and my Life Group?
 - a. Strategy exercise
 - b. Life Group Assessment findings

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW

The goal of our current series, "Where is God Taking Us?" 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 looked at our Values, which represent what is most important to Bellevue. The Values reveal the fire that burns in our heart.

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

In this week's lesson we focus on Bellevue's Strategy.
(Teacher, point to the Strategy aspect of the storyboard.)

*(Teacher - **Pray** - Thank the Lord for His Presence in your Life Group and for the clear 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 STRATEGY

Why do people need clear steps?

Let's consider this question: What brings order to overwhelming environments?

Raise your hand if you have traveled through Atlanta's International Airport?

What makes Atlanta's airport an overwhelming place, especially for first time travelers?

Atlanta hosts the busiest airport in the world accommodating over 260,000 passengers daily. Over 2,600 flights arrive and depart from 209 domestic and international gates.

Imagine arriving at a gate in Concourse F, the furthest point from the airport's main terminal. You are told to catch a train to baggage claim, find your luggage at the correct one of 17 carousels, ride a specific bus to your exact rental car company, and locate a certain car reserved and parked in one of the 9,900 rental car parking spaces just for you? You would quickly ask for detailed directions to know your next steps!

By show of hands, who has visited New York City's Grand Central Station?

What makes it an overwhelming place for first time visitors?

Grand Central Station is similar to an airport for trains. The terminal offers subway and commuter rail service to nearby counties and states. It serves 60,000 people daily from 44 platforms on 56 tracks leading in a variety of directions.

Imagine walking up to the ticket counter and purchasing a ticket to Connecticut. Your train leaves in nine minutes from track 47 on level 32? You would quickly ask for your next steps!

Last time, by show of hand, who can remember their first visit to Bellevue Baptist Church?

What could make visiting Bellevue for the first time an overwhelming place?

Bellevue sits on over 300 acres, with over 4,700 parking spaces, and 52 entry doors. Our main building includes over 700,000 square feet and includes a Worship Center with seating for 6,600 people. There are 35+ large format rooms, 240+ Life Group rooms, 50+ restrooms, a chapel, a bookstore, a cafeteria, a library, two cafes, a prayer room, and an under construction indoor playground—all inside the main building!

Individuals interested in our church would quickly want to know their next steps.

Let's go back to my original question: What brings order to overwhelming environments?
The answer is: clear next steps!

When someone receives guidance on his or her next step, they sense order in what could be an overwhelming experience.

Taking steps is a biblical concept. Often God called upon people throughout the Old and New Testament to take steps of faith.

Who took steps in the Bible?

Who are people from the Old and New Testament who took “*steps of faith*” which allowed God to do something **BIG** in their lives?

What steps did they take?

(Teacher, possible names could include Moses, David, Peter, Daniel, Mary, Paul, and Nehemiah. Please choose from the following examples for use during discussion. Expand on these descriptions to fit your teaching style and allotted time).

- **Moses** – Exodus 3:7-12 - God challenged Moses to take a big step to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. His trip included many challenges.
- **David** – I Samuel 17:40-47 - David challenged the giant Philistine (Goliath) to a duel and killed him with one small stone! David's faith, even as a young man, continued to grow. He was later described as a man after the heart of God.

- **Peter** – Matthew 14:28-33 - Peter stepped out of the boat. He walked on water while the others sat and watched. Peter’s faith was demonstrated and strengthened.
- **Daniel** – Daniel 1 - Daniel didn’t want to defile himself by eating and drinking of the King’s food. He took a step of faith and asked the chief of the eunuchs to eat vegetables and drink water for 10 days. The original Daniel Plan was a big step of faith!
- **Mary** - Luke 1:46-56 - Mary took a faith-filled step and accepted her role as the maidservant of the Lord. She magnified the Lord and proclaimed His sovereignty.
- **Paul** – Acts 9:1-19 - Paul had a life-changing encounter with the Lord on the road to Damascus. Paul’s big steps resulted in three missionary journeys and writing half of the New Testament.
- **Nehemiah** – Nehemiah 2:1-20 - Nehemiah took big steps by asking the king to go back to his hometown to repair the walls around Jerusalem. Although confronted with many obstacles, Nehemiah remained dedicated to the task and completed the project.

Each of these biblical examples received guidance from the Lord for their next step. This clarity provided direction and confidence to a seemingly overwhelming experience.

How does Bellevue’s Strategy provide clear next steps?

Getting involved at Bellevue can be an overwhelming experience.

If a guest were to ask you how to get involved at Bellevue, what would you say?

If someone asked how he or she could grow spiritually, what would you suggest?

Those are all good suggestions!

As a church, we have developed a strategy that points people toward taking six steps. These six steps are our proven pathways and they define **HOW** we get involved!

(Teacher, please point to the “How” statement and the six Strategy icons on the storyboard).

If someone wants to grow to Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples more, **how** could they begin? They can take these six steps! Involvement at Bellevue can help someone grow in his or her faith.

New members hear, “Our Strategy is made up of six proven pathways to accomplishing our Mission at Bellevue.”

Let's take a look at these six proven pathways individually.

*(Teacher, distribute the **Strategy sheets** that list all six proven pathways in vertical order.)*

The first three proven pathways are steps to be taken on a **weekly** basis.

❖ **Worship**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word "Worship" on the handout.)

Psalm 122:1 - I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

Who will share what you like most about our worship services and the worship experience?

How does worship help you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

❖ **Connect**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word "Connect" on the handout.)

Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

What do you like most about our Life Group and the Life Group experience?

How does your connection in our Life Group help you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

❖ **Serve-In**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word "Serve In" on the handout.)

1 Peter 4:10 - Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

Who will share what you liked most about your favorite Serve In experience?

How has Serving In on Bellevue's campus helped you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

Check out **Bellevue.org/serve-in** for opportunities to volunteer on our campus.

The second three proven pathways are steps to be taken **regularly**.

❖ **Equip**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word “Equip” on the handout.)

Ephesians 4:11-12 - And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ;

Who will share about your involvement in an Equip class or Discipleship Group? What did you like most about the experience?

How can attending an Equip class or being involved in a Discipleship Group help you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

I encourage you to enroll in a class this fall. The Equip semester begins September 5th. Check out **Bellevue.org/equip** for a list of classes and schedules. Equip booklets are also available for pick up in the lobbies.

❖ **Serve-Out**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word “Serve Out” on the handout.)

Jeremiah 29:7- But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Who will share about your experience Serving Out? What did you enjoy most?

How can Serving Out help you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

Check out **Bellevue.org/serve-out** for opportunities to Serve Out in Memphis and beyond.

❖ **Awake**

(Teacher, have someone read the description under the word “Awake” on the handout.)

2 Chronicles 7:14 - If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Who will share about your experience in an Awake Service? What did you like most?

How can attending an Awake service help you Love God, Love People, Share Jesus, and Make Disciples?

Watch for the next Awake service coming soon on a Sunday night at Bellevue.

If someone asks for steps to grow in their faith, you could share the proven pathways:

First, attend Worship services.

Second, Connect in a Life Group.

Third, find a place to Serve In.

Fourth, attend an Equip class.

Fifth, Serve Out locally or internationally.

And finally, worship with us at our Awake services.

We would not recommend all steps to be taken at once. However, we can confidently say each step helps grow an individual's faith and also, collectively, helps accomplish Bellevue's Mission!

These six proven pathways are not requirements. Rather, the pathways are a map to the many offerings available at Bellevue and provide direction for next steps. We often say, "Our Strategy serves as a flashlight to help you clearly see your next step to living out the Mission."

Remember the statistics of our church building—the number of acres, doors, rooms, and seats? When you include the offerings, programs, and events, this church can be overwhelming! Our Strategy brings order by simply saying, "Six! There are six steps to take—that's it."

A psychologist designed a now-famous grocery store experiment to evaluate how the number of choices impact people's ability to make decisions. They used different displays of jam. When the store displayed 24 types of jam, they sold very few. However, when they narrowed the display to only 6 types of jam, they sold ten times more jam! Their findings were: people freeze up when offered too many choices. Thus, fewer choices help people make more efficient and confident decisions.

Similarly, our Strategy provides order to what could be an overwhelming environment. The Strategy provides clarity by saying, "We want you to take six steps—that's it!"

How does Bellevue's Strategy make an impact on me and my Life Group?

What about you? Have you recently considered your spiritual growth strategy? What is your next step toward Loving God, Loving People, Sharing Jesus, and Making Disciples?

I want to illustrate how much more efficient you can be when you have a strategy.

(Teacher, hand out the Strategy Grid. Everyone will need a pen.)

To participate, everyone needs a sheet and a pen. Turn to the side of paper with the title: *Without Strategy*. Next, take your pen and place it on the number “1” at the bottom of the page. When I say, “GO”, draw lines to connect the numbers in sequential order. For example, draw a line from the number 1 to the number 2, then to 3, then to 4, and so on. Do not lift your pen. You will be timed for 30 seconds. Continue connecting numbers until I say, “STOP”.

Ready — Set — GO!

*(Teacher, yell **STOP** at the 30-second mark.)*

Raise your hand if you were able to reach the number 10? How many of you reached the number 15? 20? 30? Who had the highest number?

Now, flip your paper over to the side titled: *With Strategy*

(Teacher, read these additional instructions slowly to allow time to complete the task.)

Locate the dot at the top and bottom of the page. Draw a vertical line to connect these two dots. Second, notice the dots on the left and the right side of the page. Likewise, connect the left and right dots with a horizontal line.

You’re doing great! Now, we’re going to label these 4 sections:

- Write the letter ‘B’ in the top left corner.
- Write the letter ‘C’ in the top right corner.
- Write the letter ‘D’ in the bottom left corner.
- Write the letter ‘A’ in the bottom right corner.

Once complete, your sheet should look like the picture to the right.

(Label a sheet in advance and hold it up as an example.)

"Without Strategy"		"With Strategy"					
B	54	59	C				
2	42	6	22	35	71	91	19
46	78	18	58	67	87	7	95
62	94	50	34	27	75	99	47
66	14	90	30	79	51	39	11
82	74	26	70	3	63	55	31
10	86	98	38	43	83	15	23
60	72	32	56	93	37	73	61
8	28	76	68	53	69	5	97
20	48	64	4	45	9	65	25
40	80	12	88	57	77	89	29
92	52	16	84	49	81	21	41
96	44	24	36	13	17	85	33
D	100	1	A	ADULT LIFE GROUPS			

When we try the exercise again, begin with your pen on number 1 which is in section A. Draw a line to number 2 which is in section B. Number 3 is in section C and number 4 is in section D. Number 5 is back in section A. Continue to connect numbers by looking in sections using the repeating order: A—B—C—D.

By dividing the group of numbers into four quadrants, the pool of numbers is narrowed from 100 to 25 numbers. Your new pattern includes a number and section sequence.

Let's try this exercise again using the new pattern. Place your pen on the number 1. When I say, "GO", begin connecting the dots to number 2 then 3 then 4 without lifting your pencil. Go as fast as you can. You will have 30 seconds. Listen for me to say, "STOP!"

Ready — Set — GO!

*(Teacher, yell **STOP** at the 30-second mark.)*

Who achieved a higher number this time around? How much higher?

What does this exercise teach us?

When you know where to go, you can arrive more efficiently!

Let's apply this to today's emphasis. This exercise reminds us to personally consider the proven pathways. Are you attending Worship and Connecting in our Life Group? Just as going from A, to B, to C, to D on the handout allowed more progress, maybe consider your next step on the proven pathway. Your step of faith could include Serving In or Serving Out. Or, you could register for an Equip class.

(Teacher, review your members' responses to question 8 in your Life Group assessment to provide the following information.)

According to our class results from the on-line assessment, our class:

- Is involved "almost always" in _____
- Is involved "about 50/50" in _____
- Is involved "hardly ever" in _____

As your teacher, I'd like to challenge you to...

(Teacher, please pray about how to challenge your group in Strategy steps to encourage your members to take a next step of faith.)

When we, individually, take steps of faith using the proven pathways, we, as a class, also accomplish the Mission of Bellevue.

I believe the Lord will use the proven pathways to transform us into the kind of people we believe God is calling us to be.

(Teacher, pray and close the class.)

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