



Valley Christian Football Culture

Program Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission:

We are training to become fierce and loving men who follow Jesus Christ, lead in our community, and strain for excellence in football.

Our calling is taken from the following passage of scripture: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). Real manhood requires a paradox – men are created by God to be fierce and loving, tenacious and tender. Football, with its physically aggressive nature and teamwork-centric structure, is the ideal vehicle through which to instruct and grow the modern American male into the full, God-ordained man he was created to be. By following and loving the teachings and person of Jesus Christ, leading through service in our community, and straining for competitive excellence on the field, Valley Christian football trains men (coaches, players, and parents alike) to be relentless, tender, tenacious, compassionate, disciplined, tough, fierce, and loving.

Vision:

The Valley Christian football program aims to win the hearts and respect of our teammates and community by adhering to a platform of influence built on the growth of steadfast Christian character, the diligent pursuit of achieving our academic potential, and the tenacious commitment to imposing dominance on the football field. All of these efforts are a response to God’s love for us and exist for the chief purpose of bringing glory to His name.

We recognize that there are many facets of life for the members of our program and hold the conviction that each deserves our best effort. As laid out in scripture, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might...” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). We primarily emphasize excellence in character, academic achievement, and dominance on the field because the combination of these three within a football program establishes high influence – with those in our school and the broader community. We seek to attain this influence for the cause of honoring the name of Jesus Christ, as well as Valley Christian Schools. When we achieve dominance on the field, we are establishing a tradition that goes beyond glorifying Valley Christian football. Though Valley Christian football is a cause we will fight and sacrifice for, the advancement of Christ and his kingdom is a cause we will live and die for.

Core Values:

1. Keep Football in Perspective: “Live your life with courageous ferocity”

We understand that football is valuable only as much as it translates to other, more important aspects of life. We embark on the relentless pursuit of success with the mindset that achieving, or not achieving, victory does not define us. Our understanding of courage is such that we are bound to pour out all we have into the fight, yet can carry the burden of defeat with heads held high. Rainer Martens spoke of this idea: “It is easy to lose sight of the long-term objectives – helping athletes develop physically, psychologically, and socially – while pursuing the short-term objective of winning the

contest because the rewards for winning are immediate and powerful.” We recognize and desire the “immediate and powerful” rewards for winning, but also understand that football should teach us more about integrity, work ethic, toughness, responsibility, respect, and relationship than it does about scheme or technique. This core value requires that we strain harder than anyone else in the pursuit of victory, and yet do not receive our worth or identity from the result of a contest, season, or career.

2. Partnership and Accountability: “Expect the best from each other”

It is critical that we trust that each member of the program desires to be his best individually and that we all desire to be our best collectively. The partnership between every member of this program is built on an underlying “benefit of the doubt.” I know you want to do your best, and it is my job as a leader to help you get there – even if you are not always sure of what to do. “Athletes are motivated not by fear of the coach but by a desire for personal satisfaction” (Martens). This is the sort of motivation we strive for, a motivation that is internal and unique for each member of the program. For this partnership to work, everyone (starting with the head coach) must submit himself to accountability. Accountability is the tool by which our individual partnerships are honed and strengthened; it should be received with a positive and resolved attitude.

3. Staying Power: “A Man’s Greatest Strength”

This core value is taken from the chapter of the same name in Stu Weber’s book *Tender Warrior*. Weber writes, “The calling of every man is to offer stability to a world full of chaos” and “The ability to make and keep promises is central to manhood.” This core value is about endurance, not quitting, sticking to your commitments, and providing stability in chaos. Staying power is perhaps the most important character trait a man can develop through football; it is essential in building a career, committing to a wife, and raising a family. When you commit to playing a year of football for this program, you see that commitment through. When training gets hard, we lose a few games, you are not getting playing time, or your college scholarship does not come through – you endure. In a culture full of men who run from their commitments, we will square our shoulders, and we will stay.

4. Sacrificial Loyalty: “Let the cause motivate you”

We experience success as a program, not individually. As such, it is critical that every member of this program (coaches included) recognizes his place and accepts that his role is important only as much as he can submit himself to the cause of the program. We accept that our motivation is rooted in furthering the program above personal success. People fight for personal glory as long as they know they’re going to live to experience the glory and to reap the fame, but people who fight for causes are willing to die – because the cause lives beyond them. Someday (perhaps tomorrow) we will be called to practice sacrificial loyalty to our wives, our children, our friends, or our places of employment – the ability of every man in this program to be driven by a commitment to the cause is imperative for our success now, and your success as a man later. Most importantly, the Lord Jesus Christ demands that His cause live front and center in your life – following Jesus is an undertaking that certainly costs a man his whole life. We will learn how to sacrifice ourselves for loyalty to a greater cause.