

REVIVALIST LIFESTYLE

When you are in different environments you are often wondering, “What are the rules?” because you need to know them so you’ll know when you’ve scored a goal or when you’ve stepped out-of-bounds. Well, at BSSM our rules are buried beneath the values we are trying to get you to adopt. In other words, we’re more worried about you breaking our values than our rules—but we still have rules. It’s how we corporately respond, if and when they are broken, that is key.

God has called you to BSSM and our mission is to develop the *revivalist* in you.

REVIVALIST: (n) a *believer* who is *focused* and *passionate, willing to pay any price* to live in *community, purity, and power* because they are *loved by God*, whose manifest presence *transforms lives and cultures*.

Over the years, we have learned the important truth that who we are becoming is both expressed and affected by simple choices and behaviors. These choices and behaviors produce a lifestyle. Based on your call to become a revivalist, we have a set of expectations that we want you to adopt as your own.

Ultimately, we want your choices to flow from who you are. However, some things are first learned from the “outside in.” In other words, we adopt them before they feel quite natural or necessary because they help shape our inner world. School is often an “outside in” experience. For example, we didn’t know the English language, but we imitated and adopted a set of behaviors, principles and exercises and eventually learned it.

The following is a practical expression of choices and behaviors that flow from your core mission of becoming a revivalist. We have found them very helpful in creating an atmosphere that advances the Kingdom. Let’s break down the definition of “revivalist” and demonstrate the choices and behaviors we believe naturally flow from it.

“believer”— We expect you to grow in the truth, come to love it, deeply enjoy its value to save and transform, and ultimately, to radically live it. So, among other things, being a “believer” is expressed in the following simple behaviors:

- Spend time learning and understanding the foundational statement of faith, BSSM’s Core Values and the Kingdom Foundation studies. Let them build a strong foundation for your beliefs and transform the way you live out your life.
- Do the homework that you have been assigned with faithfulness, knowing that God can use it to transform your mind. Turn assignments in on time in order to be ready to discuss and integrate the truth they contain into your life.

“focused”— “*You can have anything you want, but you can’t have everything you want.*” Focused people make a “To Do” list and a “Not To Do” list. Students with focus have a “yes” in their spirit so strong they can say “no” to distraction and compromise. Focus is key in accomplishing all that God has called you to become. So, at the very least, focus is expressed by the following:

- Come to class on time and participate. Unlike college, we expect you to be in class. So our leaders and Third Year students will address you if you are not in class.
- Quiet down immediately when someone begins to address the class.
- Give whoever is speaking the honor of your full attention. Which means not being on Facebook etc. or the web or your phone, or texting during class. Studies have really proven that multi-tasking (splitting your focus) harms your learning. Unplug from the culture of distraction for 5 hours 4 days a week for 9 months and enjoy the growth you’ll experience. We know you will manage yourself, but leaders and Third Year students might help by instructing you to close your computer or devices in order to refocus.
- Please get enough rest so you are able to enjoy being in class.
- Always turn your chair and/or body to face the speaker.

- Turn your cell phone ringer off and don't answer it in class. Return calls at the break or after school. (This radical revivalist behavior is actually quite refreshing for everyone.)

“passionate”— When we are passionate about something, our whole being is engaged. Our mind, emotions, bodies and energy are all directed at the “thing” that has captured us. Obviously, the Lord Himself is the One we encourage you to direct your passion towards. As you love Him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, you tap into His passion for His Church, the lost, and yourself. Imagine a “passion continuum” or scale; in other words, you might say, “I’m a 2 on the passion scale of ‘1 to 10.’” Then this year will be a great success if you become a “6” by year’s end. We don’t expect everyone to be a 10— though many will be—but we do expect growth. At the very least, the core value of passion is expressed in the following:

- Worship with your whole being. Worship is not free time, nor a time for conversation, or necessarily “soaking” time. It is a vital sacrifice we bring to the King every day. It is a step beyond convenience. It does take a purposeful heart to worship every day with joy, but He is so worth it! Allowing yourself to become disconnected or uninvolved is not a healthy option, and leadership will address it if we see this in your life.
- Allow your passion to be revealed in excellence. Some of the work you are asked to produce is only viewed by you and God. That should be enough for you! If you find yourself trying to cut corners or “beat the system,” you are completely missing the whole point of this school!

“willing to pay any price”— You are already well aware of what it has cost you to attend BSSM. We recognize and value your sacrifice. Still, there is more. BSSM is not just a “Monday through Thursday” school. Rather it’s an eight-month school and it costs far more than money to attend here. If you’re unwilling to pay the price, we might have to say to you, “Okay, we accept your resignation; pray about coming back next year.” “Willingness to pay any price” looks like the following attitudes and behaviors at a minimum:

- We don’t want you to miss a day of school, but you are allowed 16 absences. Please don’t treat these absences as something to “spend” to go snowboarding, extend vacation or take a day off. This is exactly what we don’t want you to do! They are for crises and unavoidable situations that often arise. We expect you to manage these 16 absences so you will not require more— no matter what unexpected circumstances arise.
- You are responsible for managing these absences. If you come close to your limit, initiate a conversation with your leaders before they talk to you and tell them how you will solve this situation.
- Don’t check in and then leave to have a conversation or get a coffee so you’re “on time” but not present.
- It is our expectation that you very seldom have to leave class early. If you must, please let your RGP or Third Year student know.
- Attendance at services, outreaches, conferences and other events is a large part of our school experience. So, we expect you to faithfully attend on time when you are scheduled.
- Don’t schedule an appointment—except for Revival Group Pastors (RGPs)—during class. On rare occasions you can check with your Revival Group Pastors if nothing else can work out.
- Leading with “a king’s heart and a servant’s hands” is one of the core values of a revivalist. So, we ask you to serve a whole lot. Be quick to volunteer whether it be helping to setup chairs or serving at a banquet. Your leaders have been setting an example in this area for years. One important lesson they have learned is that “the seat of service often turns into the throne of destiny.”
- BSSM is dependent upon your faithful payment of your school tuition. None of our money comes from the church’s general fund. “Paying any price” looks like getting a job, diligently getting support from your home church, or giving up something important or pleasurable (like a latte or a trip home) in order to keep your school tuition and housing bill current.

“community”— Our behavior deeply affects one another. We are not our own, we have been bought with a price and placed in a family. We can help each other soar or knock the joy out of each other. As leaders, the poor choices of fellow leaders or our students are one of the most painful experiences in our lives. Community is one of God’s most powerful tools for changing us into His likeness. Learning to forgive, get along, confront, encourage, take responsibility for each other, and cultivating the desire to seek someone else’s “highest best” above our own is the definition of maturity. So, at a minimum let’s:

- Realize your Christian freedom is not an end in itself. It is not the goal; rather it is a tool for building something beautiful. Freedom provides the space and opportunity to truly love. Will you love? Will you choose what is best for the beloved or the family? Will you use your freedom to protect our connection and our hearts or for selfishness? “You my brothers were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather serve one another in love” (Gal. 5:13). When you yell “freedom” in worship, we hope you understand the true definition and purpose of this freedom.
- Confront one another in love. If someone is doing something scary or destructive, then tell them. If they don’t make a change quickly, bring in another believer, and if they still don’t respond tell your RGP. Help each other by speaking the truth in love. You are responsible to confront fellow students making poor choices. If your roommate, small group member, friend or classmate is making poor choices regarding school responsibilities (outreach, attendance, etc.), alcohol or sexuality, confront them. Tell them, “You need to get help from your RGP or I’m going to get help for you.” Turn on the lights! You would be saddened at how many painful things needlessly happen because someone “looked the other way” until it blew up. If someone is making poor choices about drugs or spending time in their bedroom with their girlfriend/boyfriend behind closed doors, love them enough to get involved. Knock on the door. Talk to them about your concerns. When someone confronts you, welcome his or her input. You are not perfect you need this input. They care about you. Our culture of freedom exists because we freely confront and call out the greatness in each other, not because we pretend not to see peoples’ poor choices or sin. Polite society lies and implies it is none of our business but God says we are our brother’s keeper. We have an honor code around here. “I love and honor you too much to let your poor choices go unchallenged by love and holiness.” Here’s how to start, “I am concerned when you (non-blaming description of the problem) because _____, so could we agree to _____? And let’s keep checking in with each other because _____.”
- To bring out the best in each other, and recognize that we really are in community, we want you to bring strength and help into your dating life. We recommend talking to leaders in your life before, during and after pursuing a relationship. At a very minimum, we expect you to inform your small group leader and RGP as soon as possible if you begin a relationship. Let’s plan together, as they would love to help you figure out how you are going to honor God in your relationship, who you will be transparent with and who you will draw upon for help and wisdom going forward.

“purity”— A good definition of grace is “the underserved love of God and His power to change me and situations.” The Lord gives us grace to walk in purity. Holiness is really wholeness. The Lord asks us to walk in purity because it is life giving! Sin hurts you, other people, and God. Not only that, it makes people crazy. Really, sin makes you crazy. You may hear it a lot when we apply discipline because we believe it so deeply, but your leaders will say something like, “What were you thinking, because you are way too awesome to be behaving that way!” Christians should never take a “break” or “vacation” from our character or the core values of Scripture. Grace gives us the power to change and stay changed. If you find in your heart the thought that you need a break from holiness, it reveals a dangerous condition of your heart that Father is ready and able to heal. BSSM’s environment of freedom requires a high level of connection to God and community, and self-management. We are calling out the royalty in one another, not just trying to abstain from sin.

At the very least, purity looks like the following:

- Do your homework well and with the right heart. A while back, we had a student purposely write down wrong answers just to see if someone was reading her work. Our question is, “How’d that work out for you? Do you feel like you’re on the road to becoming a revivalist?!”
- Truthfully record your attendance and Bible reading, etc. Don’t mark down that you finished your reading if you haven’t. Who you are becoming (a person of integrity) is far more important than short cuts, looking good, or avoiding conflict over your choices. Your growing integrity is more important than graduating.

- Deal with your spouse and/or roommates with absolute integrity and service. Live simply for this season so you can pay your bills on time. How you treat the people in your home is deeply important to God and, consequently, to us.
- **Sexual Wholeness:** Seek to "be imitators of God" with "not even a hint of sexual immorality, or any kind of impurity," living as "children of light" and finding out "what pleases the Lord" (Eph. 5:1-12). This standard governs our private and public life. Let your sexuality be expressed in a way that pleases God. The Father has blessed marriage with the gift of sex and married couples are obviously expected to be faithful in body, heart and mind. All of us who remain unmarried are expected to honor God and one another with our sexuality. Jesus never used another person for His own gratification and called it love. Rather, His sexuality was a blessing to Himself and others around Him. Pornography is not the Father's best for any of His children. It objectifies, traps, and degrades people. Viewing it diminishes a believer's confidence and voice and creates a painful "di-vision" in our heart. If the enemy is trying to get a "foothold" and trap you in this temptation, get help and stay connected to friends and your RGP, and find some accountability partners.
- **Substance Abuse, Marijuana Use, & Tobacco Use:** Of course, we expect students to comply with all local laws and regulations of our government regarding substances that are legal and illegal. We ask that students refrain from the use of marijuana. It may be legal, you may feel it is your right, but as a community we generally do not think it to be the Father's best for you. In this area "willing to pay any price" means abstaining while a student with us. As for tobacco use, we encourage any Christian in our congregation struggling with an addiction to tobacco to listen to the Spirit about the timing and grace to fight and win this battle. However, for BSSM students, the bar is higher. Those with an addiction to smoking are called to give it up NOW for the glory of God as it limits the effectiveness of your ministry with us. We don't empower people who smoke habitually to be on the Ministry Team because, at the very least, the smell of the addiction is a distraction to the one receiving prayer as they may wonder, "How can you help break me into freedom when you don't possess it yourself?" The solution is NOT to give up being on the Ministry Team but rather to give up the cigarettes! There is grace in this house to succeed in this area. Also, be sober-minded concerning frequent, and/or public tobacco use in cigarettes (or e-cigarettes), pipes and cigars. You wouldn't be the first to fool yourself in this area. You might not be as free as you think you are so check it out with people who love you. You're not just managing your behavior. Your managing your influence and leadership.
- **Alcohol Consumption:** In the area of alcohol, we don't make a strict rule concerning its use because Scripture doesn't—except to never be drunk (Eph. 5:18), and this is our expectation that you will never be drunk (from alcohol!). Our state government does have strict rules. For instance, California law prohibits alcohol use for those less than 21 years of age (no matter your country of origin). There should be no parties with alcohol, as we want our younger brothers and sisters and those recovering from addiction to feel right at home. One is legally considered drunk and may not drive with a .08 or higher blood alcohol content. We obviously expect you to obey these laws but the spirit of the law is more important. From our perspective alcohol is not a necessary key to fun, a party, a mood swing, relaxation, distraction or easing pain. Especially at these times, alcohol is a counterfeit of something the Holy Spirit has for us.

Our freedom is given to us so that we may serve one another in love. Though Scripture has given us freedom to drink alcohol, this choice potentially impacts our church's influence and your individual influence when you are drinking regularly, publicly, or at parties with one another. We don't want the fear of punishment to control us, but we do want honor, respect, and wisdom to moderate our choices in order to protect our influence and insure that it is positive. We must carefully weigh how we might be a stumbling block to other Christians – and even unbelievers who may ignore our example to live a supernatural gospel – because of the choice to drink in excess, or even at all. Consider your fellow classmates recovering from alcoholic addictions, leaving a destructive "party" lifestyle, or who are under age - anyone who may be tempted because of our freedom. All this to say that we are asking love, wisdom and honor to be foremost in your heart as you weigh and perhaps moderate the exercise of your liberty in the area of alcohol. Embrace and guard your role as an influencer as seriously as we do.

Note: On mission trips, alcohol use is absolutely prohibited. There are just too many hazards where we can be hurt or hurt the local Christian community. This is yet another example of laying down our freedom for a higher good.

“power”— the Good News without power is not good news. Paul was glad in 1 Cor. 2 that his preaching wasn’t with persuasive words but demonstrations of power. Throughout the year, you will have lots of opportunities to allow the power of God to be demonstrated through you. One of our goals for you is the same as Christ’s assignment for the Twelve in Luke 9—that every student would know how to drive out demons, heal the sick and preach the Kingdom.

- Make the most of your opportunities as you serve on the ministry team, children’s ministry, outreach team member or mission trip team member, etc.

“loved by God”— all of this we do because we are loved, not to earn the love of God. Pastor Kris is fond of saying, “We work from love, not for love.” Jesus died so that He might have relationship with us; don’t let go of this in the swirl of activity that is BSSM.

- Let all other motives, be they a desire to change the world, to be a person of vision who’s “great for God,” or the drive to please leaders and classmates, be secondary to your connection with Him.
- Life is busy. BSSM is demanding and there’s a danger of losing your connection to God in the midst of all this ministry. Concentrate on maintaining your personal friendship with the Lord this year. This is why journaling, prayer, soaking, and worship are so important. It is a mistake to let go of your primary connection with Him in this season of new friends, new experiences and serving on His behalf.

“transforms lives and cultures”— Christ’s mandate to us is that we make disciples of the nations as we are “going.”

- All of us should graduate with a humble confidence that we can reproduce ourselves by “teaching them to obey everything Jesus Christ has commanded us” (Matt. 27). Like Paul says, “Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ.” When we bring the Kingdom, we are bringing the righteousness, peace and joy of the Lord wherever we go and the presence of God changes lives. During school, you are learning how to enter into discipling relationships in which you bless and are blessed. When you graduate, we encourage you to continue forming relationships in your sphere of influence whether here or back home, and to continue to disciple as well as be discipled by mothers and fathers in Christ.