

The Five R's – Session 2 Part 1

Character Development: Young Children Are Like Wet Concrete

Main Text: Philippians 2:14-15

"Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world." (RSV)

This teaching is based on the uploaded lesson.

Introduction

One of the greatest needs in the Body of Christ today is **character development**. God is not only interested in what we do, but also in who we become.

The goal of the Christian life is not merely to produce fruit occasionally, but to produce **much fruit that remains**. Our character should glorify God, edify others, and demonstrate the life of Jesus Christ to the world.

Jesus said:

"When you bear much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified." (John 15:8)

Character is not optional for the believer. It is essential.

I. Remember Where God Brought You From

Before we point out the failures of others, we must remember that we too were once lost and in need of God's mercy.

Titus 3:1-3

Paul reminds believers that they were once:

- Foolish
- Disobedient
- Deceived
- Controlled by sinful desires

Colossians 3:5-9

Paul says we once walked in:

- Anger
- Malice
- Filthy language
- Lying

Ephesians 5:8

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord."

Lesson

Humility is produced when we remember where we came from.

The purpose of character development is not to make us proud of ourselves but grateful for God's transforming grace.

II. Character Deficiencies Do Not Correct Themselves

One of the great dangers in life is assuming that time alone changes people.

Time does not automatically produce maturity.

If character deficiencies are not addressed:

- They remain.
- They become habits.
- They become strongholds.
- They often stay with a person for life.

Many people grow older, but not necessarily wiser.

God's desire is that we continually grow in Christlikeness.

III. Philippians 2:14 Reveals a Major Character Test

Paul gives a simple command:

"Do all things without grumbling or questioning."

The Amplified Bible expands this:

"Do all things without grumbling and faultfinding and complaining against God and questioning and doubting among yourselves."

What is Grumbling?

To grumble means:

- To complain
- To murmur
- To criticize
- To be discontent

What is Disputing?

To dispute means:

- To argue
- To debate irritably
- To resist correction
- To create contention

The amazing truth is that a spirit of grumbling often reveals many hidden character deficiencies.

IV. Character Deficiencies Hidden Behind Complaining

Complaining often exposes deeper issues such as:

- Obedience vs. Willfulness
- Self-Control vs. Self-Indulgence
- Patience vs. Restlessness
- Faith vs. Presumption
- Love vs. Selfishness
- Humility vs. Pride
- Responsibility vs. Unreliability
- Loyalty vs. Unfaithfulness
- Gentleness vs. Harshness
- Meekness vs. Anger

The problem is usually not the complaint itself.

The complaint is often the symptom.

The real issue is character.

V. Character Must Be Developed with Jesus at The Center

A person can develop good behavior without developing true biblical character.

There is a difference.

Good behavior without Jesus can produce self-righteousness.

Romans 10:3

People can attempt to establish their own righteousness.

John 15:5

"Apart from Me you can do nothing."

Character that honors God is not self-improvement.

It is Christ living through us.

True character always points people back to Jesus.

VI. Young Children Are Like Wet Concrete

This is one of the most powerful illustrations for character development.

When concrete is wet:

- It can be shaped.
- It can be molded.
- It can be formed.

When concrete hardens:

- It becomes difficult to change.
- It becomes fixed.
- It becomes resistant to alteration.

Children are the same way.

The Concrete Principle

When children are young:

- Habits are forming.
- Attitudes are forming.
- Beliefs are forming.
- Character is forming.

Whatever is repeatedly placed into their lives becomes part of their structure.

VII. The Importance of Timing

Concrete must be shaped while it is wet.

Likewise, character must be taught while children are teachable.

Proverbs Principle

Training delayed is often training denied.

If bad habits are allowed to develop:

- They harden.
- They become difficult to remove.
- They influence adulthood.

If godly habits are taught early:

- They become strong foundations.
- They produce stability.
- They help children become immovable in Christ.

Timing matters.

VIII. The Butterfly Principle of Transformation

Romans 12:2 tells us:

"Be transformed by the renewal of your mind."

Transformation can be compared to the life cycle of a butterfly.

Stage 1: Egg – Decision

Choose to develop Christlike character.

Stage 2: Caterpillar – Selection

Select a biblical character quality to pursue.

Stage 3: Pupa – Development

Allow God to work deeply within you.

This is where growth occurs.

Stage 4: Butterfly – Maturity

The believer becomes fruitful, stable, and useful to God.

God's goal is maturity.

IX. How Do Children Become Immovable?

1 Corinthians 15:58

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The question is:

How does a child become immovable?

The answer is:

Train them while they are still wet concrete.

Character developed early becomes strength later.

Children who learn:

- Faith
- Responsibility
- Self-control
- Obedience
- Gratitude

are far more likely to remain strong when life's pressures come.

X. God's Design for Sons and Daughters

Psalms 144:12

"May our sons in their youth be like plants full grown, our daughters like corner pillars cut for the structure of a palace."

God desires:

Sons

Like strong, flourishing plants.

Daughters

Like beautifully crafted pillars supporting a palace.

This is a picture of:

- Strength
- Stability
- Beauty
- Character

God wants our children to become spiritual pillars.

XI. Every Believer Receives a New Beginning

Some may say:

"I wasn't trained as a child."

Neither were many believers.

The good news is that salvation gives us a fresh start.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."

When we are born again:

- God gives us a new beginning.
- He gives us a new nature.
- He gives us the Holy Spirit.
- He begins forming Christ in us.

Spiritually speaking, we become wet concrete again.

God begins reshaping our lives.

XII. The Goal Is Maturity

The Christian life is not about remaining a spiritual child.

1 Corinthians 14:20

"In thinking be mature."

Colossians 1:28

"That we may present every man mature in Christ."

God wants believers who are:

- Stable
- Dependable
- Fruitful
- Disciplined
- Mature

Eventually the training wheels must come off.

Every believer must learn to walk with God personally and consistently.

Conclusion

Young children are like wet concrete.

What is placed into them early will often remain throughout life.

The same principle applies spiritually.

Whether we are training children, grandchildren, new believers, or ourselves, character must be formed while the heart is soft and teachable.

The goal is not merely good behavior.

The goal is Christlike character.

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to shape us so that we become:

- Blameless and harmless
- Lights in a dark world
- Fruitful believers
- Mature disciples
- Men and women who bring honor and glory to our Heavenly Father

Key Thought:

Character developed with Jesus at the center becomes fruit that remains.

[Click here.](#) Main resource.