

The Five R's – Part 6: Remain
Alertness and Character Development
"Be that one person God can depend on."
Based on The Five R's Series – Part 6

Introduction

As believers, God desires that we not only start well but finish well. Many Christians experience victory for a season, yet struggle to maintain consistent growth and fruitfulness. One of the greatest challenges in the Christian life is not getting fruit—it is keeping fruit. Jesus said He chose us to bear fruit and that our fruit should remain.

The question is:

How do we develop character that lasts?

The answer is found in the final stage of the Five R's process:

Remain.

Review of the Five R's

Before discussing Remain, let us briefly review the journey.

1. Reveal

God reveals areas of our lives that need attention.

Purpose:

- To recognize that a work needs to be done.
- To reduce unnecessary problems.
- To become more effective in helping others.

2. Repent

We acknowledge our wrong attitudes, actions, and motives before God.

3. Remove

We remove the root problem that God has revealed.

4. Replace

We replace the wrong attitude with a Christ-like character quality.

5. Remain

We continue walking in that character quality until it becomes part of our lifestyle.

Many believers do well with the first four stages but struggle with the fifth stage.

The real test is not starting a change—it is maintaining the change.

Failure Can Become Your Message

One powerful truth is:

"My failures become part of my life message when I overcome those failures by God's power."

Everyone fails.

The difference between a victorious believer and a defeated believer is what they do after failure.

Proverbs 24:16

"For a righteous man falls seven times, and rises again."

God does not expect perfection.

He expects repentance, growth, and perseverance.

When we overcome through God's power, our failures become testimonies that give hope to others.

The Importance of Character Development

Character is not what we say.

Character is what we consistently demonstrate.

Definition of Character

Character: The attributes or features that distinguish an individual.

Definition of Fruit

Fruit: The result or product of growth.

In God's Kingdom, character is fruit.

God is interested in producing fruit in His children.

We Were Created for Growth

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago."

God did not save us merely to exist.

He saved us to grow.

A chair remains the same year after year.

A believer should not.

If we are not growing, something is wrong.

We should be working better spiritually today than we were several months ago.

A Personal Example of Character Deficiency

The author shares a testimony about accidentally leaving his wife outside a grocery store because he became preoccupied with other thoughts.

The root issue revealed was:

Self-Centeredness

This led to the need for replacement with:

Availability

Availability vs. Self-Centeredness

"Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I am serving." (IBLP)

But another issue was exposed.

He knew what to do.

He simply lost sight of the goal.

Something else was missing.

The Fifth R – Remain

Jesus did not simply command us to bear fruit.
He commanded us to bear fruit that remains.

John 15:16-17

"I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

Meaning of Remain

The Greek word means:

- Abide
- Continue
- Endure
- Stay
- Stand
- Dwell
- Persist

Remaining means continuing in what God has begun in us.

It is sustained growth.

It is enduring obedience.

It is maintaining character under pressure.

What Is Fruit?

A practical definition is:

Fruit is a sweet, godly result produced by God and His Word that edifies people and glorifies the Father.

Galatians 5:22-23

The fruit of the Spirit includes:

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness
- Goodness
- Faithfulness
- Gentleness
- Self-control

These qualities are not temporary experiences.

They are intended to remain.

The Result of Remaining

John 15:8

"When you bear much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified."

The evidence of discipleship is not occasional fruit.

It is fruit that continues.

Fruit that remains glorifies God and impacts others.

Continuing in God's Word

John 8:31-32

"If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed."

Notice the word **if**.

Believing is important.

Continuing is essential.

Many people begin.

Disciples continue.

Freedom comes to those who remain in God's truth.

The Missing Character Quality: Alertness

The character quality that supports remaining is:

Alertness vs. Unawareness

Alertness:

"Being aware of that which is taking place around me so that I can have the right responses to them." (IBLP)

In the grocery store illustration, the problem was not ignorance.

The problem was lack of alertness.

The goal was forgotten because attention drifted elsewhere.

The same thing happens spiritually.

Many believers know what is right.

They simply stop paying attention.

Why Alertness Is So Important

Alertness protects every other character quality.

Without alertness:

- Love can disappear.
- Patience can vanish.
- Faith can weaken.
- Self-control can fail.
- Dependability can decline.

When we become unaware, character qualities become inactive.

Unnecessary problems then begin to surface.

Alertness keeps us focused on our spiritual goals.

The Negative Side Reveals the Missing Positive Side

Whenever we operate in negative character traits, it often reveals that we are not alert to the positive qualities of Christ.

Consider these contrasts:

Negative Trait	Christ-like Character
Dishonesty	Truthfulness
Rejection	Forgiveness
Stinginess	Generosity
Self-Pity	Joyfulness
Self-Indulgence	Self-Control

Negative Trait	Christ-like Character
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Inconsistency	Dependability
Anxiety	True Security
Selfishness	Love
Apathy	Enthusiasm
Covetousness	Contentment
Tardiness	Punctuality
Pride	Humility
Double-mindedness	Decisiveness
Unfaithfulness	Loyalty
Harshness	Gentleness

When the negative appears, do not simply fight the negative.
Develop the positive.

Why Character Development Matters

Many unnecessary problems are not caused by lack of knowledge.

They are caused by lack of character development.

Character deficiencies create:

- Confusion
- Clutter
- Frustration
- Broken relationships
- Ineffectiveness in ministry

Character development produces:

- Stability
 - Trustworthiness
 - Effectiveness
 - Spiritual maturity
 - Lasting fruit
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Application Questions

1. What character quality is God currently revealing in my life?
2. Have I truly repented of the root issue?
3. What wrong attitude needs to be removed?
4. What Christ-like quality should replace it?
5. What must I do to remain in that quality?
6. Am I alert to what is happening around me spiritually?
7. Is my fruit remaining, or am I constantly starting over?

Conclusion

The final goal of the Five R's is not merely change.

It is lasting change.

Jesus desires fruit that remains.

The key to remaining is alertness.

When we stay alert, we stay aware.

When we stay aware, we continue in God's Word.

When we continue in God's Word, Christ-like character develops.

And when Christ-like character develops, our fruit remains, people are edified, and the Father is glorified.

Key Thought

"Remain in God's Word, remain alert, and allow the character of Jesus Christ to remain active in your life so that your fruit will remain."

[Click here.](#) Main resource.