

The Five Rs – Part 7: Remain More Developing Character with Jesus in It

Key Thought: True character is not merely good behavior. True character is the life of Jesus being formed in us and remaining in us.

Introduction

Throughout this series we have been studying the Five R's that help us develop sweet, lasting fruit in our lives:

1. **Reveal**
2. **Repent**
3. **Remove**
4. **Replace**
5. **Remain**

The goal is not simply to become better people. The goal is to become fruitful believers whose character brings glory to God and blesses others.

Jesus said:

"I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won't spoil." (John 15:16)
God desires fruit that remains—not temporary enthusiasm, but lasting character.

Foundation Scriptures for Remaining

Before we go further, there are several foundational truths that protect us from spiritual failure.

1. Be Doers of the Word

James 1:22

"Be doers of the Word and not hearers only."

Knowledge without application produces deception.

Many people know the truth but fail to apply it. The difference between victory and defeat is often found in obedience.

2. Keep Faith Alive

James 2:17

"Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead."

Faith must be accompanied by action.

3. Mix Faith with God's Word

Hebrews 4:2

The Word only profits us when it is mixed with faith.

We can hear sermons, read books, and quote scriptures, but unless we believe and act upon them, they produce little benefit.

4. Build on the Rock

Matthew 7:24-27

Jesus gave one of the most important principles in Scripture:

"Whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them..."

The wise man heard and obeyed.

The foolish man heard and ignored.

Both heard the same message, but only one built a life that survived the storm.

The Goal: Fruit That Remains

Jesus never called us merely to exist.

He called us to produce fruit.

What kind of fruit?

- Fruit that glorifies God
- Fruit that blesses people
- Fruit that remains sweet and continuous
- Fruit that does not spoil

Character is one of the greatest fruits a believer can produce.

The Four Requirements for Remaining

If our fruit is going to remain, four things are necessary:

1. Stay Alert

Spiritual alertness keeps us from drifting.

2. Pray

Prayer keeps us connected to God.

This includes praying in our understanding and praying in the Spirit.

3. Study God's Word

A believer who stops learning eventually stops growing.

4. Apply God's Word

Truth only changes us when it is practiced.

Jesus warned:

Mark 14:38

"Stay alert, be in prayer, so you don't enter the danger zone."

Notice the progression:

Alertness → Prayer → Study → Application

When these are neglected, we enter spiritual danger without realizing it.

Wisdom From Above

God's wisdom teaches us to maintain a biblical standard of character.

Proverbs 19:20

"Hear counsel, receive instruction, and accept correction, that you may be wise in the time to come."

Wisdom says:

- Stay alert
- Pray
- Study
- Apply

These habits protect our fruit and help it remain.

Character Must Have Jesus in It

This is one of the most important truths in this lesson.

Today many people teach character development using examples from nature:

- The alertness of a bison
- The determination of a wolverine
- The loyalty of a honeybee
- The decisiveness of a badger

There is nothing wrong with learning lessons from God's creation.

However, creation should point us to Jesus—not replace Him.

The Danger

Character without Jesus becomes self-righteousness.

People begin believing:

- "I can do this myself."
- "I don't need God."
- "I am already a good person."

That thinking is dangerous.

Romans 10:3

People attempt to establish their own righteousness instead of receiving God's righteousness.

Good behavior can never replace salvation.

The New Creation Comes First

Before true godly character can develop, a person must experience new birth.

John 3:3

"Unless a person is born again..."

2 Corinthians 5:17

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

Romans 5:17

Righteousness is a gift from God, not something we earn.

The Christian life is not about improving the old person.

It is about becoming a new person in Christ.

Apart From Jesus We Can Do Nothing

Jesus made this crystal clear.

John 15:5

"I am the Vine; you are the branches... apart from Me you can do nothing."

Notice the relationship:

- No vine = no branches
- No Jesus = no life
- No Jesus = no lasting fruit

Fruit comes from connection.

Character comes from connection.

Victory comes from connection.

Everything depends upon remaining connected to Jesus.

What Happens When Jesus Is Missing?

Without Jesus:

- People remain lost
- Salvation is absent
- Hope is absent
- The Kingdom is absent
- Lasting fruit is absent

Eventually fruit spoils because it is disconnected from the source of life.

But with Jesus:

- We are found
- We are delivered
- We have hope
- We belong to the Kingdom
- Our fruit remains

Satan's Strategy

The enemy fights against this connection.

Why?

Because when people become connected to Jesus, they begin producing fruit that glorifies God.

John 15:8

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

The enemy wants people to believe:

- They do not need Jesus.
- Everything is fine without Him.
- Good behavior is enough.

But fruit without Christ can never produce eternal life.

Our Response: Apply the Five R's

The answer remains the same.

Reveal

Reveal the need for Jesus.

Repent

Turn away from rejecting Him.

Remove

Remove false reasoning and wrong thinking.

Replace

Replace lies with God's Word.

Remain

Continue in Christ so fruit stays sweet and lasting.

A Word About Heroes and Role Models

Children and adults often admire heroes:

- Superman
- Batman
- Spider-Man
- Captain America
- Wonder Woman
- And many others

While these characters may illustrate certain virtues, they must never replace Jesus as the center of our lives.

The danger comes when people place their confidence in fictional heroes while neglecting the real Savior.

Jesus alone can:

- Save
- Deliver
- Transform
- Produce lasting fruit

No superhero can do that.

Conclusion: Remain in the Real Thing

If we desire our fruit to remain, we must maintain our connection to Jesus.

Remember these four essentials:

1. Stay Alert
2. Pray
3. Study God's Word
4. Apply God's Word

The Five R's are not merely steps for solving problems.

They are a pathway to developing the character of Jesus Christ in our lives.

When we remain connected to Him:

- Our fruit remains.
- Our character grows.
- People are edified.
- God is glorified.

Final Challenge

Ask yourself:

- Am I remaining connected to Jesus daily?
- Am I alert spiritually?
- Am I praying consistently?
- Am I studying God's Word?
- Am I applying what I learn?

Because fruit that remains is not produced by effort alone—it is produced by abiding in Christ, the true Vine.

[Click here.](#) Main resource.