



## RESILIENCE

## CONVERSATION #3: PERSEVERANCE

### ICEBREAKER: THE FRUSTRATION OLYMPICS

To get started today, we're going to do a quick activity called **"The Frustration Olympics."**

Take a moment to look at this list of everyday annoyances to the right and rank them privately from *least frustrating* to *most frustrating*. **You can do this by ranking them in number order from 1-8.** After you've finished, take a moment to discuss **how** you ranked these items and **why** they landed where they did.

	<b>extremely slow internet</b>
	<b>dishes piling up</b>
	<b>getting interrupted</b>
	<b>waiting in long lines</b>
	<b>someone not texting back</b>
	<b>technology not working</b>
	<b>unexpected schedule changes</b>
	<b>bumper-to-bumper traffic</b>

Once you've done that, reflect on this question: **Why do small challenges get such big reactions from us?**

### STUDY: THE PURPOSE OF PERSEVERANCE

As we begin this conversation, it's important to define what we mean by perseverance - especially in this phase of spiritual growth. **Perseverance is choosing to stay faithful even when your feelings fade and life gets uncomfortable.**

Perseverance can be challenging because we naturally want relief; we want the pressure to stop and the situation to get easier. But spiritual maturity shifts the focus from relief to growth. Perseverance is the bridge between those two mindsets. It's how God moves us from reacting to difficulty toward being formed through it.

To better understand the value of perseverance in the life of a disciple, we are going to slow down and sit with this passage together. Start by reading it slowly out loud together, and then read it a second time, paying attention to any words or phrases that stand out or feel difficult to accept. As you do, pay attention to your honest reaction to what James is saying.

### READ JAMES 1:2-4

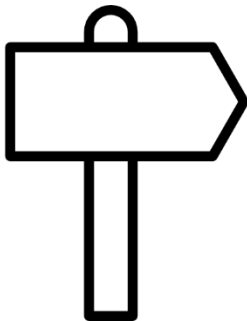
- What part of this verse feels confusing or unrealistic to you?
- What does this passage say *challenges produce*?
- What do you think it means for perseverance to "finish its work"?

- How might your first reaction to difficulty keep perseverance from doing its job?

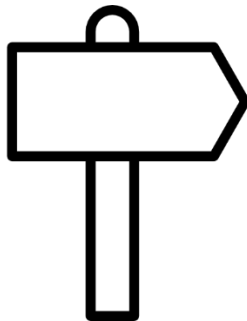
## ACTIVITY: ROAD MAP VS. ROAD RASH

When challenges show up, spiritual children often assume they've taken a wrong turn. This activity reframes hardship as part of the path God uses to shape us, not a sign we're lost. As you read the passage below, picture your life as a road - with unexpected turns and rough stretches that God is still actively using to form you.

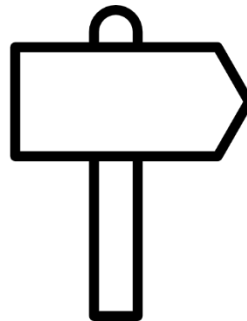
**READ ROMANS 3:3-5. – According to these verses, identify four stops on this journey.**



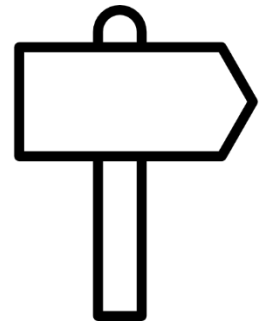
**STOP 1**



**STOP 2**



**STOP 3**



**STOP 4**

What we want you to notice today is that in this passage, Paul isn't describing random events or disconnected moments - he's describing a *directional journey*. Each part of this passage leads somewhere on purpose. It's a progression that God wants to use in that maturation process of your life.

- Where do you find yourself most often on this journey right now?
- Which part of the process feels hardest to stay in?
- When pressure shows up, what detours or exit ramps are you most tempted to take that short-circuit this process - avoidance, distraction, quitting, blaming, numbing, or rushing for relief?
- How might those responses keep perseverance from doing its work?
- If this process is part of God's growth route, what might He be inviting you to practice right now?

## CHALLENGE: GROWTH RINGS

This week, set aside a few quiet minutes to reflect on the seasons where God has grown you the most. Like a tree, growth rings are formed during harsh weather, not easy seasons. Draw a simple cross-section of a tree and label a few rings to represent different moments in your life - **a past challenge** and what perseverance produced, and **a present challenge** and what perseverance could be producing now.

