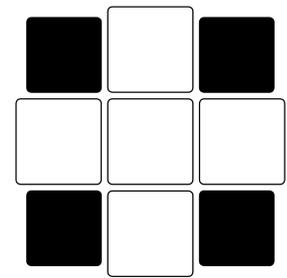


# Handling Affliction

Scripture: **Psalm 119:71**

Sunday, June 26, 2016



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## Overview

Affliction can be difficult to understand—especially in the moment. It can seem a polar opposite from goodness, and even considering God's sovereignty and God's plan for our life, it can be hard to fit into place. Pastor Pat suggests in his sermon that we look at things a bit differently—embracing affliction so that we do not miss God's good purposes.

## Corroborating Texts

Psalm 119:75; Romans 5:3–5; James 1:2–4; Hebrews 12:7–11; Proverbs 3:11–12; Proverbs 24:10; Hebrews 4:14–16; Romans 8:26

## Discussion Questions

1. Affliction is not avoidable. We see in scripture and in life that it's not a matter of *if*, but *when* affliction comes. Why is it important that we keep this mindset? How, as a community of believers, do we keep this in mind in light of one another?
2. The Psalmist says that "it is good for me that I was afflicted," and James says to "Count it all joy." If affliction, by definition, is associated with pain, distress, grief, and misery, how can it be good and counted as joy? Discuss how affliction and discipline are related.
3. What purposes does affliction have? Pastor Pat listed six ways that affliction teaches us by experience. We need to learn: **greater dependence** on God, **greater clarity** of His plan, **the right way** (God's way), **the "why"** behind the rule, and sometimes **new and necessary skills**. Which of these might you have the most difficulty learning on your own? Can you see a time of affliction that helped you learn what was needed?
4. How do we look to the cross in times of affliction? See our reassurance in Hebrews 4:14–16. Remind the group that we need to remember that our greatest need is not avoiding or escaping affliction, but the rescue from our sin.
5. How are we called to handle affliction within community? Pastor Pat mentioned that we are all needy as well as all needed. We are all involved helping handle one another's adversities, but sometimes it can be difficult to be open about affliction in a community setting. Discuss this as a group and pray that the group will be involved in one another's lives in this way.