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## Embracing a Peace that Passes All Understanding

*A Commentary by Jason Curry*



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Contrary to popular belief, anxiety can help to produce positive results in our lives. The anxiety or concern associated with loosing a race can help you and I to run faster in order to reach the finish line. The anxiety associated with failing a written exam on Wednesday, often prompts students to study harder and longer on Monday and Tuesday. The anxiety associated with meeting new people may encourage people to look their very best, to travel to new and exciting places or to experience a quality of life that had been previously unknown to us. Anxiety in moderation can motivate us to perform our best work and to utilize the potential that God has given us. However, there are times within our lives when our anxieties, which are our worries, fears, cares and concerns, become a bit overwhelming for us. For example, these overwhelming anxieties may stem from the need to pay bills without

having adequate, financial resources. Our anxieties may be rooted in a problematic relationships with our significant others that we can seem to adequately resolve. Our anxieties about embracing a hopeful future may be rooted in issues that stem from our childhood (e.g., an absent parent or a low sense of self-esteem that we've tried for years to overcome). To say the least, if our anxieties are left unchecked, they will control us, become an idol to us and/or seek to discourage us from pursuing a more profound relationship with God.

In Philippians 4:6-7: Paul writes: "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Excessive, unproductive, debilitating, paralyzing and overwhelming anxiety can be

addressed throughout our relationship with God. I embrace the accomplishments of those who believe in the medical model for treating anxiety (e.g., medication), but I also celebrate the presence and power of God to help us prioritize and manage the anxieties that come our way. Anxieties are daily reminders of the world in which we live, but it is important to remember that God's perspective is not just temporal (for the here and now) it is also eternal. God loves us, and had a purpose, plan and destiny for us even before the foundation of this very world. Since anxieties will never cease to confront us, they must be forever viewed in proper relationship with God. Faith and doubt cannot occupy the same space. Our peace which passes all understanding is and will always be found in our willingness to keep God first in our lives. We thank God for this peace.