



# HTC SMALL GROUP

## *Discussion Questions*

**Sermon Title:** A Peace That Transcends All Understanding

**Sermon Date:** July 10, 2016

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:4-7

**Speaker:** Pastor Matt Peca

1. Take a moment as a group to ask the following question as it relates to potential fears/anxieties. (Be sure to interact with as to why you feel this way). How many of you would say that you are sometimes fearful or have anxiety about: Flying? Heights? Confined spaces? Being the center of attention? Public speaking? Appearances? Death? Failure? Health? Money? Relationships? Careers?
2. In psychology, we learn that everyone handles anxiety differently. How do you usually cope with anxiety? Where do you usually feel anxiety in your body? Is it/has it been an issue in your life before?
3. There are so many things that can easily bring on anxiety, yet Paul tells us, "Do not be anxious!" Those are some pretty big words! Read (Phil 4:4-7). Consider the life of Paul for a moment. What were some *circumstances* in his life that brought on potential anxiety?
4. As Paul addresses anxiety, what adjective does he begin with in (v.4)? What are we to rejoice in? How can one rejoice in the Lord in the midst of circumstance? (Note: this is more than just positive thinking). This is an invaluable lesson for the Christ follower - *our hearts and minds do not have to reflect our circumstances*.
5. Anxiety or worry comes from the Greek word *merim-nah-o*. It is a combination of two Greek words, *merizo*, which means "to divide, to separate" and *nous*, meaning "the mind." Anxiety then becomes one who suffers from a *divided mind*. What are some things that have lately been consuming and dividing your mind? Take a moment and interact with Phil 4:6-7 and Prov 3:5. How do they compare with each other? Does any specific part of these passages minister to you right now.
6. How is the world's peace it has to offer different from the peace of God?
7. Give some examples of a human *natural reflex*; then give some examples of a human *conditioned reflex*? When anxiety comes, some may either resort to eat, spend money, smoke, drink, escape, talk about it incessantly with others - these are conditioned reflexes. Phil 4:6 reminds us that as anxiety reveals its ugly face, we must so condition our first reflex to go to Jesus! (See 1 Peter 5:7).
8. Look up the following verses on prayer: (Phil 4:6; Col 4:2; Luke 18:1; 1 Tim 2:8; James 5:13-16). If anxiety *divides the mind* and narrows our focus, *how does prayer then help expand our perspective and widen our focus*?

9. Jesus taught His disciples to pray in (Matt 6:9-13). Do you see how the Lord's prayer divides into 2 parts? Discuss. How does (Part 1) of the Lord's prayer help widen perspective in the midst of anxiety. [Note: often times we skip (Part 1) and go directly to (Part 2) - our petitions].

### **Closing thoughts**

Anxiety likes to steal our gaze from the Lord. It likes to consume our thoughts from what matters most. It likes to rob our bodies of strength or sleep. It likes to *merimnaho* - divide our minds on matters. So we find ourselves often times leaning into them. But take heart, God calls His children to *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and **lean** not on your own understanding; but in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight"* (Prov 3:5-6).