

I. Anxiety and Gospel

A. APA Definition of Anxiety

1. n. an emotion characterized by apprehension and somatic symptoms of tension in which an individual anticipates impending danger, catastrophe, or misfortune. The body often mobilizes itself to meet the perceived threat: Muscles become tense, breathing is faster, and the heart beats more rapidly.
2. Anxiety may be distinguished from fear both conceptually and physiologically, although the two terms are often used interchangeably.
 - a. Anxiety is considered a future-oriented, long-acting response broadly focused on a diffuse threat,
 - b. whereas fear is an appropriate, present-oriented, and short-lived response to a clearly identifiable and specific threat.

B. Cultural Anxiety Then and Now

1. Cultural Anxiety for Mark
 - a. Authoritarian, unpredictable government
 - b. Economic and personal uncertainty
 - c. Moral and ethical vacuum
2. Cultural Anxiety for Us
 - a. Government dictating rights and freedoms
 - b. Economic and personal uncertainty
 - (1) How long will this last
 - (2) When can I get back to work
 - (3) What's going to happen to us
 - c. Moral and ethical vacuum: abortion clinics and liquor stores considered essential, but churches were not

C. The Message of Jesus to an Anxious Culture

1. Proposition:
 - a. Summary statement
 - (1) Of Jesus entire life ministry
 - (2) Of Mark's gospel
 - (3) "The most important summary statement in the gospel of Mark."
 - (a) All Jesus said and did reinforces the substance of this single proclamation of the gospel:
 - (b) **The most significant moment in time thus far has arrived when God will fulfil His promises of salvation and establish His personal rule in and over His beloved, chosen people.**
 - (c) Jesus does not preach a self-derived message but preaches instead, as you would expect of the Christ, the Son of God, a message from and about God and

His saving grace.

- b. **Jesus directed people's affections away from the current anxiety-producing, death and disappointment-centered culture to the sovereign, soul-saving God, life-changing, culture-defying God!**
- 2. The Gospel of God
 - a. The Time Has Come
 - b. The Kingdom of God is at hand
 - c. Repent and believe the Gospel

II. The Gospel of God, as preached by Jesus

A. The time has come

- 1. Time: *Kairos* not *chronos*
 - a. A historic moment that defines everything that comes after it.
 - b. The birth of a first child defines everything that comes after it
 - (1) Parent, guide, discipler, rebuker, provider, protector
 - (2) Your life moving forward becomes defined by the historic, the *kairos* moment of your first child's birth
- 2. Jesus proclaims that His arrival is the *kairos* moment the world has waited for, that moment when the long-awaited kingdom of God would be manifest on earth.
 - a. Hope had come
 - b. Salvation had come
 - c. Peace had come

B. The Kingdom of God is at hand

- 1. "At hand" = able to be touched.
- 2. Kingdom of God
 - a. What Jesus' audience expected: geopolitical entity
 - b. What Jesus taught
 - (1) **John 18:36 (ESV) Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."**
 - (2) **John 3:3 (ESV) Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."**
 - c. refers to the kingly rule of God, the reign, the dominion, the sovereignty of God in the hearts of His chosen and called people.
 - d. The kingdom of God exists wherever men accept God's reign over them, through faith in Jesus, the God-chosen, God-provided, God-empowered, God-appointed, God-anointed Savior, the Christ who would deliver God's people from the peril of death threatened by sin.

C. Repent and believe the gospel

- 1. The key to entering the kingdom of God is repentance and faith in the

gospel of God which is the story of God's saving grace bestowed through Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

2. What is repentance?

a. A radical redirection of the mind, the heart, the will, the spirit, and the life practice toward God and His sovereign will for us in Christ.

b. A judgment of unfitness

(1) To repent is to judge yourself unfit to stand in the presence of the Holy God

(2) Examples

(a) **Isaiah 6:5 (ESV)** *And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"*

(b) **Job 42:5-6 (ESV)** ⁵*I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you;* ⁶*therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes."*

(c) **Romans 7:18 (ESV)** *For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.*

(3) Unfitness by Comparison

(a) Unfitness is not determined by comparing ourselves with other unfit sinners

(b) Unfitness is realized when we compare ourselves with Christ and the holiness of God

i) **Romans 3:23 (ESV)** *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

ii) The comparison is not made between people for we are all sinners

iii) The comparison is made between sinners and the glory of God

(4) Repentance acknowledges that compared to God and compared to Christ, we are unfit for to stand in the presence of His glory!

(a) Jesus is the ultimate present picture of the kingdom of God; the human soul and affections entirely subject without flaw to the will and word of God.

(b) **Unless you share that sinless condition, you stand unfit before God and in need of repentance.**

c. Repentance must include both a moral, ethical transformation of the heart AND a practical, experiential transformation of the daily life practice.

(1) **Romans 6:4 (ESV)** *We were buried therefore with him by*

baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

(2) **Repentance means that the man who was in love with sin comes to hate sin because of its exceeding sinfulness.**

d. Matthew 6:33 and Repentance

(1) **Matthew 6:33 (ESV) *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.***

(2) The basis of repentance, to give one's heart and soul and mind and life to obtaining the rule of God over every aspect of your life, rather than let self and sin rule.

(3) Genuine repentance includes a radical redirection of our affections off ourselves and on to God.

3. The need for the call to repentance today

a. Many people today claim to believe in God, to believe Jesus to be the Savior, but their lives give little evidence of real repentance.

(1) Observations alone suggests they are more in love with themselves and their own lusts than in love with God and His Son, Jesus.

(a) Their choices are self-serving.

(b) Their words are self-exalting.

(c) Their daily anxieties are self-centered.

(2) They love God little and they love their neighbor even less.

(3) They often call themselves Christian, but there is no evidence they love Christ more than they love the world, more than they love themselves, more than they love their sins.

b. And it is a terrible truth: because there has been no real, genuine judgment of their own unfitness, no radical redirection of the affections of their heart, no true repentance, one day they will hear Jesus say, "I never knew you; depart from me you workers of lawlessness," as they are cast forever into outer darkness where there is eternal wailing and gnashing of teeth in the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

III. The call of Jesus in His day is the call of Jesus in our day

A. The time has come

1. This could be your *kairos* moment

2. Today is the day of salvation, now is the appointed time.

B. The kingdom of God is at hand

1. Jesus has come in the flesh

2. Jesus died and rose again

3. Jesus is coming again

a. Though we do not know the exact day or hour

b. We recognize the signs that the time is short

C. Repent and believe the gospel