

MISSIO DEI

How Does Fear Influence Risk Assessment and Decision-Making? Joe Pierre M.D.

How do we make decisions? Many of us like to imagine that we're **rational** creatures, deciding what to do by weighing the anticipated risks against the benefits of our actions. But 50 years of psychology and behavioral economics research have told a much different story.

In his 2011 book, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Kahneman proposed two different modes of decisional thinking—an automatic, fast judgment based on instinct and emotion and a slower, more rational, and deliberative process—that optimally work together, but often come into **conflict**.

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Sometimes, when one mode of decision-making wins out over the other, the results can be **problematic**. For example, the impulsivity of quick, instinctive thinking can result in us “jumping the gun” and making bad decisions based on inaccurate prejudices. Thinking carefully and deliberately about the best course of action might be wise for some decisions, but not for those where swift action is needed, like jumping out of the way of a car.

“**Fear** causes us to slam on the brakes instead of steering into the skid, immobilizes us when we have greatest need for strength, causes sexual dysfunction, insomnia, ulcers, and gives us dry mouth and jitters at the very moment when there is the greatest premium on clarity and eloquence.” George Loewenstein, economist

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In 2004, “decision researcher” Paul Slovic and his colleagues likewise wrote, “**feelings of dread** [are] the major determiner of public perception and acceptance of risk for a wide range of hazards,” and more specifically noted that negative emotions like fear of things like nuclear power tend to result in greater assessments of perceived risk and lower assessments of perceived benefits. More recent research has demonstrated that fear is also associated with greater **pessimism** and feelings of **unpredictability** about the future as well as lower feelings of **self-control**.

When we are **afraid**, we make **bad** decisions

Extend that feeling of fear (dread) and we become **traumatized**

There is an old Latin term ‘**Missio Dei**’ which means the “**Mission of God**” or the “**Sending of God**”— It refers to God’s great mission to **restore** humanity to Himself (by sending Jesus) and His **call to us**, His Church to take part in the mission. It is a mission that has been at play for thousands of years and continues still today. **Reuben Skewes**

Sender

Sent

Sendee

missio Dei perspective will shape our thinking about the **form** and **function** of the **church**. Typically, congregations view “missions” as simply one **program or activity** among many other equally important functions of the church. Therefore, the missions program is seen alongside that of worship, small groups, men’s and women’s ministries, youth and children’s ministry, etc. When missions is viewed in this way, the main business of many mission committees “is to determine how to spend the mission budget rather than view the entire congregational budget as an exercise in mission.”

What is the **mission** of the church?

The argument that the word mission does not occur in the New Testament is incorrect. The Latin verb mittere corresponds to the Greek verb **apostellein**, which occurs 136 times in the New Testament (97 times in the Gospels, used both for Jesus having been “sent” by God and for the Twelve being “sent” by Jesus). **Eckhard Schnabel**

ἀποστέλλω, apostellō: to send, send out, send away
(especially used of the official sending out of the disciples),
to send forth, a messenger, agent, message, or command

You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the
Messiah. I am only here to **prepare** the way for him.' **John 3:28**

Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. Just as you
sent me into the world, I am **sending** them into the world. And I give myself as a
holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth. **John 17:17-19**

Two Truths About Being Sent

God's mission is not your mission

When Joshua was near the town of Jericho, he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with sword in hand. Joshua went up to him and demanded, "Are you **friend** or **foe**?" "**Neither one**," he replied. "I am the commander of the Lord's army." [Joshua 5:13-14](#)

Two Truths About Being Sent

We are sent as a community

They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then **they** returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging **them** to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in **each church** and, with prayer and fasting, committed **them** to the Lord, in whom **they** had put **their** trust. [Acts 14:21-23](#)

“The church doesn’t do **mission**; the church is **mission**,” Chuck Van Engen

Mission is not missions

“It is not the church which undertakes mission; it is the missio Dei which constitutes the church.” Or stated in a slightly different way, “It is not so much that God has a mission for His church in the world, but that God **has a church for His mission in the world.**” David Bosch

What is the **mission** of the church?

What is **your** place in missio dei?

Missio Dei

God

Disciples

World

Sender

Sent

Sendee

Jesus

Reconciliation

Your mission, should you **choose/decide** to accept it, ...

Then I heard the Lord asking, “Whom should I send as a **messenger** to this people? Who will go for us?”

I said, “Here I am. Send **me**.” **Isaiah 6:8**



Ray of Hope

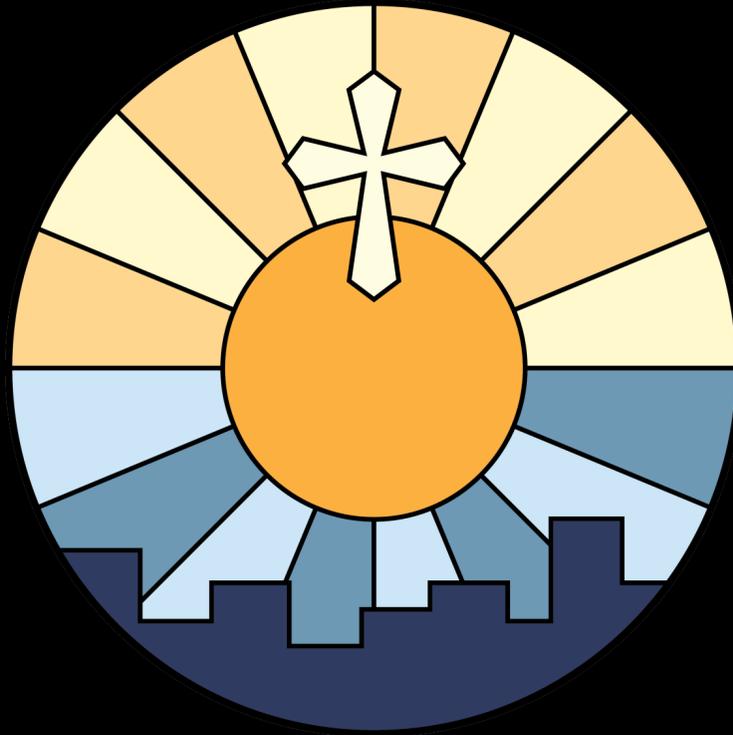
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