



THE DECADE OF
disciple
making 2020
2030

Initiative of the WEA

GOD'S MARCHING ORDERS IN THE COVID-19 CRISIS

David Kornfield, 2020



God is sovereignly at work through COVID19. He wants to bring deep revival and renewal to the church and to the world. In this kairos¹ time, God is opening a critical opportunity for change that wasn't there before. This acrostic² expresses the depth and power of God's kairos:

Kairos - God's critical time to:

Agape love: our families, our disciples (John 13:34-35)

Innovate: new paradigms, new strategies

Renew: our vision of Jesus, his mission and his church.

Order: align our lives with what God is doing

Surpass: upgrade, rise up, excel (Jer 12:5)

Consider memorizing the first word of each line. They can be a compass in the storm. Then you could go on to memorize the six lines.

In the context of this kairos, **our marching orders are to strengthen our relationships in six spheres** – with: 1) God, 2) ourselves, 3) our families, 4) those we disciple or care for, 5) our church and 6) our world. While these six spheres are nothing new, *how* we do this must very much be new or renewed in the light of our present crisis.

¹Kairos is the ancient Greek word for a critical or opportune time, in contrast with chronos which refers to chronological time. This God-time is a unique, limited opportunity for profound changes.

²The original version of this acrostic came from Luciene Schalm, leader of REVER (Restoration Ministries) in Brazil.

In Relationship to God



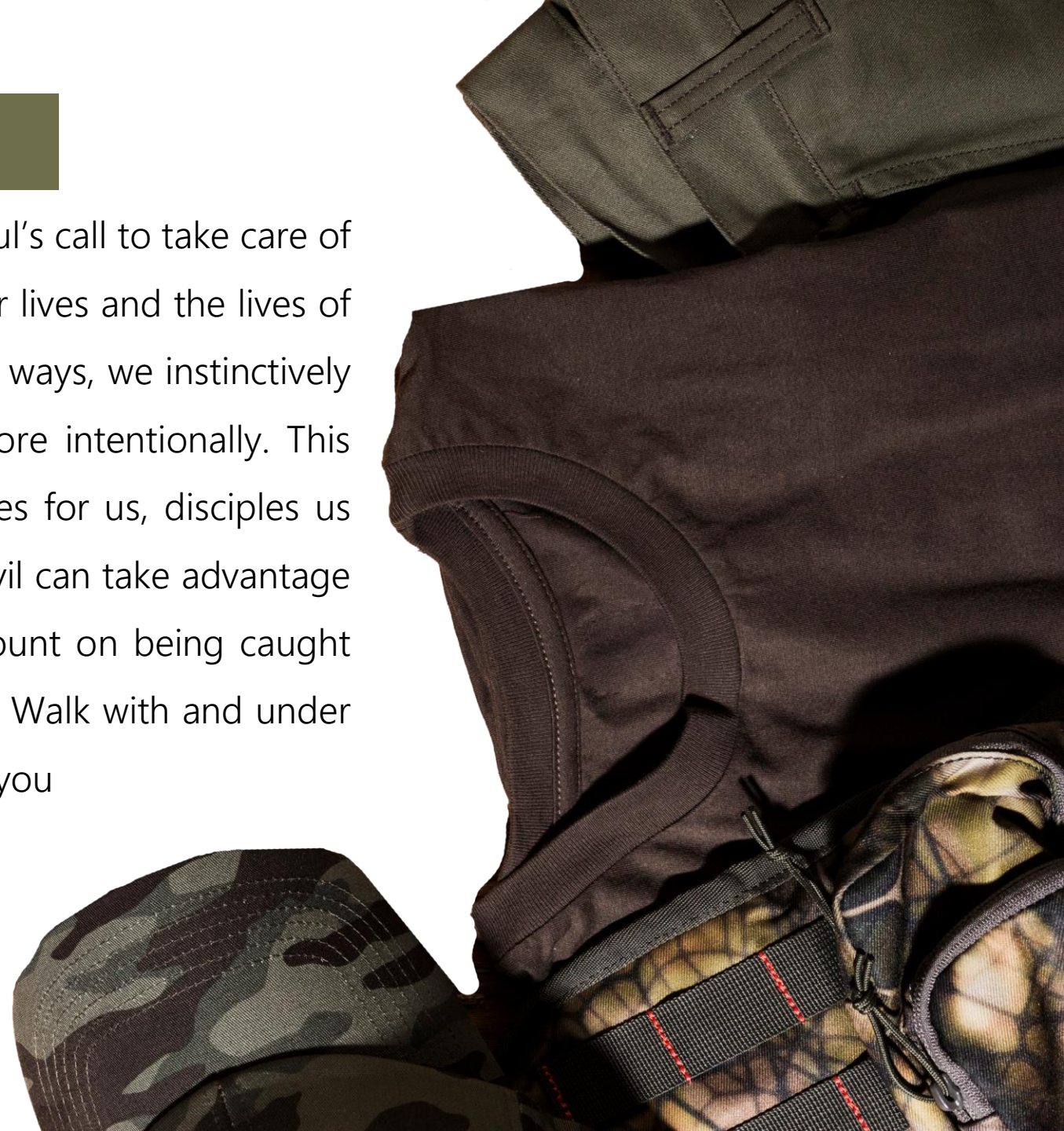
“Without discernment, we will miss small opportunities and big ones ”

In relationship to God, we must daily ask God to reveal what He is doing (John 5:19-20), so that we can join him in his work. Without discernment, we will miss small opportunities and big ones. This depends on enlarging our vision of God and his purposes. Amid the crisis of his time, Isaiah was overwhelmed by God’s majesty and holiness (Isaiah 5:30 followed by his vision in Is 6:1-8). Similarly, John, in Revelation chapter one, saw God’s power, glory, and authority over the church. In both cases, the new vision of God allowed them to hear God speaking in a new way.

A.W. Tozer wrote back in 1961 “This loss of the concept of majesty (of God) has come just when the forces of religion are making dramatic gains and they are more prosperous than at any time within the past several hundred years. But the alarming thing is that our gains are mostly external and our losses wholly internal; and since it is the quality of our religion that is affected by internal conditions, it may be that our supposed gains are but losses spread over a wider field.”

In Relationship to Ourselves

In relationship to ourselves, we must take seriously Paul's call to take care of ourselves and of what we believe and teach. Both our lives and the lives of those around us depend on that (1Tim 4:16). In many ways, we instinctively care for ourselves. Now we need to do so even more intentionally. This includes being well connected to someone who cares for us, disciples us and helps protect us. The world, the flesh and the devil can take advantage of the tremendous stress of COVID19. We should count on being caught off guard and having bad moments, days or periods. Walk with and under godly healthy leadership. List people by name whom you will call when you hit the wall. Don't get caught alone (Ecc 4:7-12).





In Relationship to Our Families

In relationship to our families, this is a unique moment. We have the opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime. Forced to be home more than we've ever been, now is the time to walk forward in unique ways. Families need new resources, one of which is the site <https://family.fit/> has a variety of tools for fitness, faith and fun. Available in sixteen languages, each week of social distancing a new week of activities is added. Discover participative ways for everyone to engage physically, spiritually and emotionally.

At the same time, this present crisis brings stress to our families that reveal fault lines that have been hidden below the surface. If conflicts are surfacing in ways beyond your ability to benefit, learn and change in healthy ways, go after help.

In Relationship to Our Disciples or Those For Whom We Care



In relationship to our disciples or those for whom we care, this is God's time for us to love wholeheartedly (John 13:34-35), to connect more deeply. Through COVID-19, God is pruning us. We have had to cut back or cut out significant parts of our lives. We may grieve these losses, but in order to thrive, we must embrace new paradigms.

We must expand our understanding of Jesus' twofold mission: his redemptive work summarized in the Gospel, and his reproductive work of making disciples. At the end of his life, Jesus declared each of these missions completed (John 17:4; 19:30). We need a dynamic upgrade in our own vision and practice of this double directive.

Commenting further on the second here, if each of us cares for and/or disciples just a few others, perhaps two or three people,³ who help others do the same, we will create an amazing network of discipling or multiplying relationships. COVID-19 is scary because it reproduces itself everywhere. God's people have an opportunity to do the same thing, to infect others not with disease but with God's healing, transforming love. Ask God to clarify just a few people outside of your family to disciple or care for. You may have a larger secondary circle but focus on a few. Jesus had his Seventy and his Twelve, but he also invested intentionally in his Three.

³ Some people may feel insecure about how to disciple, not having intentionally done it before. Cf. www.pastoringpastors.org, upper right tab about articles, tools and resources, then click on 1. Disciple-making / 3. Resources for Disciple-Making (DM), then find: 1. First steps in disciple-making; 2. Further steps in disciple-making; 3. COVID19 and Disciple-Making. Binding the Strongman



In Relationship to Our Church

In relationship to our church, COVID-19 requires us to rethink church outside of buildings and beyond Sunday morning. We need to apply 2Chr 7:14 to ourselves and ask God what parts of the Revelations letters in chapters two and three might apply to us today.

Small groups or cell groups have never been more important. Zoom provides not only a virtual room, but breakout rooms for smaller groups. We need to be well connected in terms of physical and financial needs, firstly in our small groups and expanding to the larger church as need be. Acts 2:42-27 and particularly vv. 44-45 about no one having any needs must come alive in a new way. Acts 6:1-7 clarifies the value of leadership that cares for physical needs alongside leadership that focuses on spiritual needs.

In Relationship to Our World

In relationship to our world, COVID-19 more than ever makes us aware of how interdependent we are globally. God's vision has always been for the nations. Isaiah's vision (chapter six) culminated in God opening his ears to hear the question, "Whom can I send?" As COVID-19 shifts our values, patterns, perspectives and lifestyles, we have an open door to bless, pray, and serve, responding to those who are fearful, needy, suffering and struggling. The Bad News is everywhere. Let's light up this darkness with the healing and hope of Good News.



Questions For Reflection

(individually and in a small group)

Which of these six Marching Orders most catches your attention?

Which does your church most need to grapple with right now?

Adapting as will best help you, how can you make these marching orders actually work in your life?



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