



Hard Pressed but not Crushed

Caring for Missionaries Under Pressure

Midwest Conference on Missionary Care - February 2017

“The Land Between”

“That space in our
lives where
everything normal is
interrupted.”

Jeff Manion



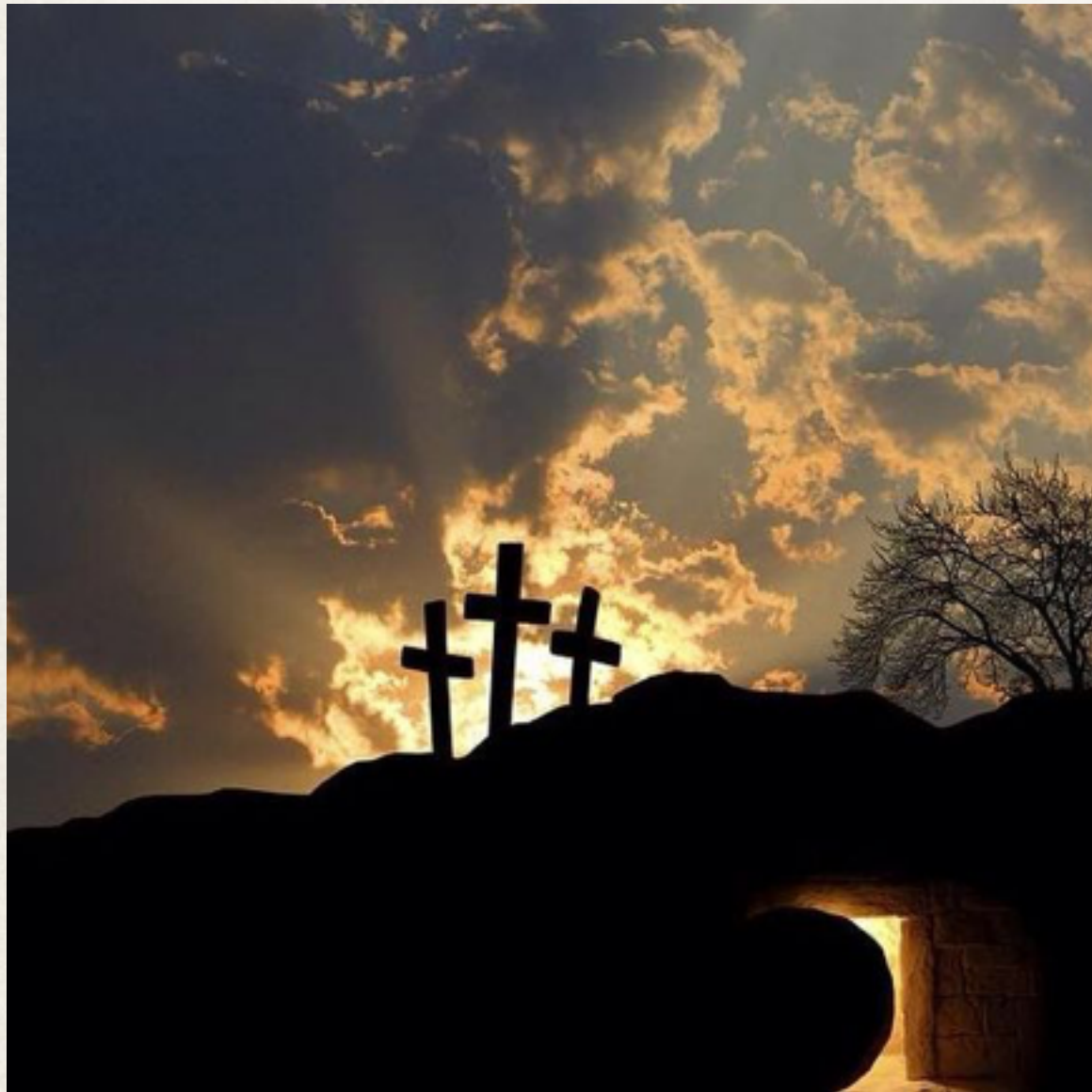
What kept Paul from discouragement in the midst of the pressures of life & ministry?

- ❖ He recognized we have a “glorious” ministry
- ❖ He knew the value of the “treasure”
- ❖ He had a faith that was “confident”
- ❖ He held onto a “future hope”

A Glorious Ministry (4:1-6)

**“The way you look at your
ministry helps to determine how
you will fulfill it.”**

Warren Wiersbe



❖ Outcomes...

- ✓ Kept him in the game (1)
- ✓ Kept him true to the Word (2-4)
- ✓ Kept him humble (5-6)

How can you as a caregiver reinforce this glorious ministry?

- ❖ Encourage your workers to know and understand their calling before they head to the field.
- ❖ Help your workers to “remember” their calling...even in the midst of suffering.
- ❖ Engage with our workers through practical support of their calling. (Prayer, Finances, Knowledge of the ministry, Awareness of their challenges)
- ❖ Own the ministry yourself...embrace the ministries of your global workers.

A Valuable Treasure (4:7-12)

- ❖ The treasure is what gives the vessel its value.
- ❖ Vessel's of Honor (clean, empty and available for service)
- ❖ We are earthly vessels that are dependent on God's power and not our own.



What can you do to care for the “earthen vessels” while exalting the treasure?

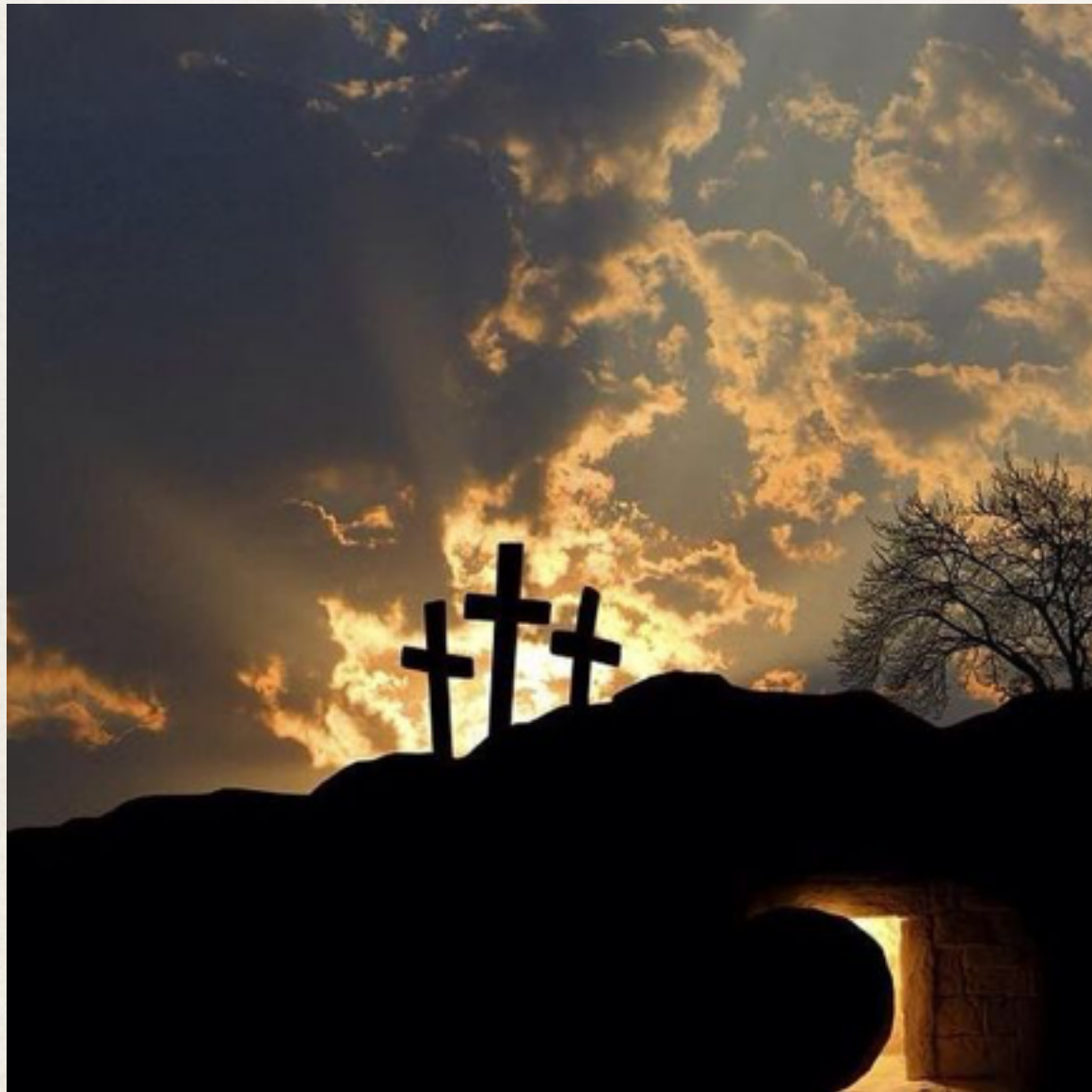
- ❖ Develop your own personal theology of suffering
- ❖ Train and equip your missionaries to develop their own theology of suffering
- ❖ In the midst of the pressures of ministry, help your workers to focus on the treasure (Christ)
- ❖ Walk the journey of trials with your workers, be available;



“If then you are wise, you will show yourself rather as a reservoir than as a canal. For a canal spreads abroad water as it receives it, but a reservoir waits until it is filled before overflowing, and thus communicates, without loss to itself, its superabundant water. In the Church at the present day, we have many canals, few reservoirs.”

—Bernard of Clairvaux

We share a confident faith (4:13-18)



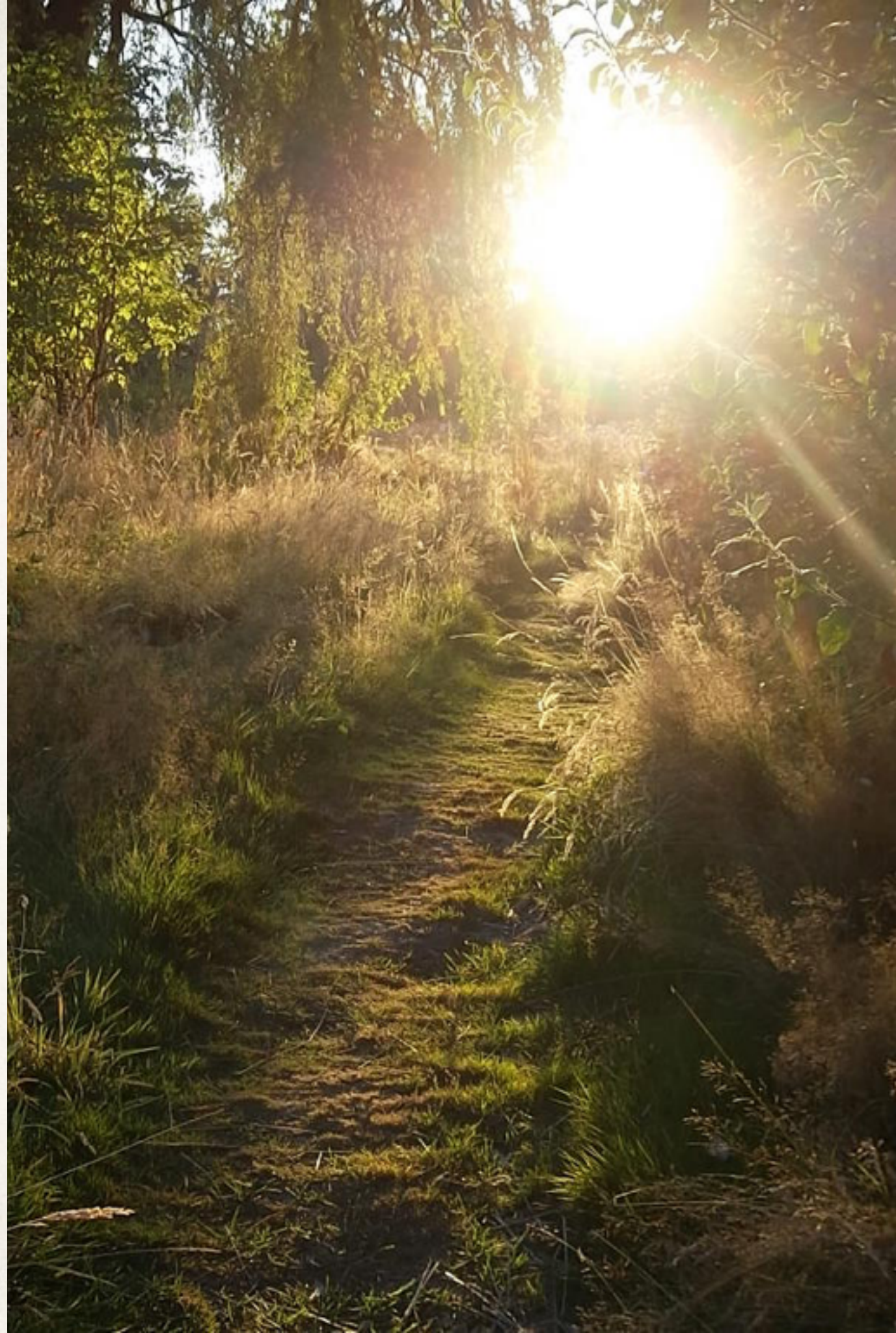
- ❖ Paul was sure of ultimate victory (14)
- ❖ Paul was sure God would be glorified (15)
- ❖ Paul was sure his trials were working for him, not against him (16-17)
- ❖ Paul was sure the invisible world was real (18)

How can you share with confidence the “spirit of faith”?

- ❖ Provide a culture of grace with those you send
- ❖ Be more focused on your “people” than on the “results” (Let them know you care not only for their ministry...but for them personally.)
- ❖ Celebrate the personal victories of their faith journey
- ❖ Get close to your sheep...

Focus on the Future Hope (5:1-8)

- ❖ Keeping a heavenly perspective is vital when facing trials of any kind...we know this because we trust God's Word
- ❖ We long for Christ return...so much so that "we groan" (When is the last time you and I "groaned" for eternity?)



How can you help your missionaries to stay focused on the future hope?

- ❖ Focus on building deeper relationships with your workers, seeking to shepherd their hearts.
- ❖ When ministry setbacks occur, help them to keep a perspective that is eternal, rather than earthly. Provide practical encouragement, like time away for rest and renewal.
- ❖ Remember that “hope” is a place or destination...but “HOPE” is also a WHO?