



They are asking us to pray with them that God would provide other work opportunities.

2. Travel is not as easy in other parts of the world as it is in ours. West Timor is only 2,200 miles from my home in Brisbane, or roughly the distance from New York to Las Vegas. A flight from New York to Las Vegas takes 5.5 hours, and there are many of them every day. But since there are no direct flights from Brisbane to West Timor, the trip there required an overnight stay, and the trip home lasted 18 hours.

3. The people of Indonesia love to sing and dance. Their singing is always joyous. One day, after all our sessions were completed, the students and faculty had a session of singing and dancing to communicate their appreciation for the week's instruction.

## Mission Trips Show Us a World Very Different From Our Own

**Where:** West Timor, Indonesia

**What:** A four-day intensive course in the doctrine of God (theology) and doctrine of man (anthropology) for pastors, elders, ministry students, high school teachers and high school students.

**When:** Late April-early May

**Who:** John Butler, PCA missionary in Australia

International mission work presents opportunities to see a world unlike our own. That is especially true in West Timor in Indonesia. I experienced several examples on a recent trip there.

1. One of the prayer requests for our brothers and sisters revolves around a concern we simply don't have in the west: Many residents of Timor and the surrounding islands tend to be short of stature, so much so that they do not meet the minimum-height standards for employment in the cruise ship industry. That industry employs thousands of people from the region. But those jobs are closed to many Timorians.



## Teaching Genesis in a Week

**Where:** Kiev Regional Bible School

**What:** A weeklong course on Genesis

**When:** May

**Who:** Jerry Van Groningen, CRC pastor, Michigan

“Will you teach Genesis to us in Ukraine?” The question needled me. Explaining the book of Genesis in a week would be challenging, to say the least, es-

pecially when we're talking about a literal seven-day week. I could easily spend a week, literal or not, on just the first three chapters or the flood or the stories of Abraham or Jacob or Joseph.

While most of the 14 students were somewhat familiar with the accounts of creation, the fall and the flood and knew something of the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, they didn't always see the connections between these events—how the fall had implications for Cain and Abel or how the tower of Babel impacted Abraham or why, in the last chapters of Genesis, there are so many stories about Joseph when he's not the main character of the rest of the book.

The students showed real interest as I began by sharing the redemptive theme of the Bible and then traced this through Genesis, showing how our covenantal God is in control and always faithful to His promises.

The students demonstrated love for the Lord and a desire to know the Scriptures better. They were eager to boldly testify about their love for Jesus. This was evident in the meditations that were offered in devotions before class, in the pointed questions and the animated discussions during class, and in the questions that were asked after class. There were even some students who went home after class so excited that they shared with their spouse what they had learned.

The greatest compliment I received in my week in Kiev was when one student told me, "I am now reading Genesis differently." Imagine what that student would say if we had more than a literal week on that marvelous book.

## Opportunities to Pray for ITEM

1. Praise God for ITEM's May board meeting and for the important decisions that were made.
2. Praise God for the teaching by John Butler in Indonesia, Tyler Wagenmaker in Ukraine, and David Smith in Bolivia, all in May.
3. Praise God for the teaching by Mark Vander Hart that will occur in June in Latvia on the Old Testament and for the other preaching and teaching he will do while he is there.
4. Pray for the five men who have agreed to be regional development assistants to improve contacts with potential and current ITEM investors.



## Great Translators, Gracious Hosts Make Teaching Easier

*Where: Cochabamba, Bolivia*

*What: A weeklong class on Biblical Theology*

*When: Late April-early May*

*Who: David Smith, ARP pastor, Greensboro, NC*

My son and I were met at the airport by Gerson Samuel Cruz, his wife, Rebekah, and their infant daughter, Angelina. They proved to be wonderful hosts and showered us with care. And they were helpful even beyond that. Gerson serves as pastor at the church where I preached, and Rebekah was my translator for the sermons, and she did a great job.

In fact, Rebekah's excellence (along with two men who filled in occasionally) in translating, combined with the earnestness of the students, allowed me to cover all my planned material and then more on top of that. I was able to expound on some specific pastoral applications of the material and respond to very good questions from the students.

The number of young men involved in the church and in attendance at the class was an encouraging sign of the church's spiritual health.

## How to contribute

In the U.S. send contributions to ITEM, PO Box 31456, St Louis, MO 63131 or [www.ITEM.org](http://www.ITEM.org).

Email: [lwhesterberg@gmail.com](mailto:lwhesterberg@gmail.com).

Contributions to ITEM in Canada may be sent to ITEM, c/o Action International Ministries, 3015 A, 21<sup>st</sup> Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2E 7T1.

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