

Partnerships For Training Pastors

October 2017 Update #1



Thoughts From Dave: Traveling to many parts of the globe gives one a renewed perspective on the gospel's power. This trip was no exception as I experienced three different and distinct cultural settings (pictured below) which demand a unique awareness on how to communicate the message of Christ. Or put another way, "How does the gospel speak into honor-shame and power-fear cultures?" While in Timor, Ben Grimes introduced me to a book, *The 3D Gospel*, which encourages readers to approach Scripture with Majority World eyes. Understanding the cultural framework behind each setting is essential. That's our ministry goal and we ask you to keep praying for God's glory to be the result of all we do!

This October 2017 Update #1 is designed to highlight the "bookends" of the three-week trip. Time spent in Singapore and the town of So'e are illustrative of the diverse settings in which ministry occurs. Next week, a second Update will come your way to share our developing teaching partnership with the theological faculty of Artha Wacana University in Kupang, West Timor. Thanks for your love and support! We are grateful!



The affluence of Singapore



Students from across Timor region



A So'e welcome

Reconnecting in Singapore



On the way to West Timor, I stopped in Singapore at the invitation of Peter and Nancy Jackson. These wonderful Ithaca friends have relocated to Singapore, where Peter is serving as a lead administrator and teacher in one of four academic pillars at Singapore University of Technology and Design. It was a great privilege to see how they are adapting to this new adventure and hear of the lessons God is teaching them along the way. I am grateful for their warm hospitality and encouragement in so many ways!

One night, the Jacksons and I traveled to a downtown "Hawker" complex and connected with four former Cornell University and Bethel Grove Bible Church students. These friends, pictured below, are back in their home country working in various occupations. Because I had not seen two of them since 2004, we took time to share how God is at work in our lives. Life has not always been easy for them, yet their faith is strong. It was sweet to reconnect and our time of prayer around the table was a fitting conclusion to our evening together.

During our dinner conversation, it was mentioned that their churches have a heart for sharing the gospel beyond their country. So, until the next trip through Singapore, I look forward to communicating with them, hearing about their growth in Jesus, as well as exploring potential partnership options in that part of the world.



October Prayer Requests

Pray for our Advisory Group meeting on Monday, October 16th as we prioritize ministry options and resource demands for 2018 and beyond.

Pray for Joyce as she begins a new rhythm in her daily schedule after concluding her work at Cornell University.

Pray for Joyce and me as we consider how best to serve the Lord together in future years and in our January Uganda trip.

Thank God that the Scriptures are being translated into the heart languages of people across the world.

Give thanks for our partners and friends serving the Lord around the world.

Pray for Dave, Pastor Andrew and Daudi as we prepare for the December 2-7 Training the Trainer Project in Kampala Uganda. Pray for the participants as they currently serve the Lord in their home areas.

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Our vision is to encourage and equip less-resourced Majority World pastors through biblical teaching and resources. Beginning in Uganda, we will assist national church leaders and mission partners as they nurture pastors and develop emerging leaders to the glory of God.

Leadership Training in SO'E

(Originally, an overnight training trip was planned for the Island of Rote, but we had to change our plans due to a recent scheduling conflict with Rote leaders. God had other plans and the story unfolds in the paragraphs below).

So'e is located about three hours east of Kupang in the more mountainous region of West Timor. We traveled there at the invitation of Ibu Vinny Bria, who serves as pastor for three area churches. While noticing that the terrain was exceedingly thirsty, our journey up the winding mountain roads was delivered by the skill of our driver. One of our passengers was Pastor Gabriel Bria; our dear friend and father of the church's Pastor.



Immediately upon arrival, we were ushered into a room in the Pastor's home. One by one, the elders from the three churches began to arrive. Some walked and others came by transport. The men and women, from this farming community, were dressed in their colorful traditional garb and after a welcoming ceremony we moved to the back area of the church. Built in 1959, the building was being renovated by the people of the congregation. We were there to talk about building the church through pastoral care and the image of reconstruction was pertinent for understanding pastoral ministry!

Our teaching centered on the value of using questions in pastoral ministry. Beginning with several examples of good and bad leadership, we emphasized that people are people around the world.

Relationship issues know no geographical boundaries. Offering pastoral care principles, we examined several questions God asked individuals in Genesis and a few of Jesus' questions in the Gospels. These questions are helpful in addressing relational brokenness due to sin and reflect God's desire to lead people to restoration and reconciliation. When it was time to finish our session, Pastor Gabriel summarized the morning by calling us to be about the ministry of healing relationships in the people of God.



At the end of the Session, we distributed Kupang-Malay Scriptures. Ben illustrated how the group could use Scriptural references listed in the concordance for pastoral care purposes. Once again, the gift of God's Word brought joy to the hearts of people hungry to hear from God. After prayer, we adjourned to the pastor's home for food and conversations. By mid-afternoon, it was time for all to travel back to their fields and homes.

On the way back to Kupang, a young man stopped the car. He asked for a Bible. We had given them all away, so we told him to go to Pastor Vinny and ask for a Bible. Later, we received a text from Pastor Vinny.

She said that the young man had come asking for a Bible. He had seen one of the Bibles that had been given to an elder earlier in the day. He said, "Only now when I read this Bible, can I understand." He agreed to join the Bible study group that Pastor Vinny is starting at the church. Thanks Lord for your presence in the hills of So'e.



What's next in Timor? Conversations have begun about working with the Personnel and Pastoral Care Unit of the Gereja Masehi Injili di Timor (Indonesian for The Evangelical Church of Timor and abbreviated GMTI). The GMTI churches have 44 presbyteries consisting of approximately 1,500 churches on hundreds of Indonesian Islands.



With only nine (9) denominational ministries supporting these churches, it is a constant challenge for the Synod to support pastors in light of human resource limitations. While they are doing an extraordinary job, they desire additional help in the area of pastoral care training.

Ben Grimes works in the Unit Bahasa dan Budaya (the Language and Culture Unit), which is one of the denominational ministries that addresses these issues. Pray with us for God's direction as we consider opportunities to partner with the GMTI pastors and church leaders. Thanks!

NEXT WEEK'S UPDATE WILL HIGHLIGHT TEACHING THE OLD TESTAMENT INTENSIVE AT THE UNIVERSITY.