

Stamatis Status – September and October, 2009

We are now in the second week of the seventh term. The courses for this term are: “2 Corinthians”; “1 & 2 Timothy and Titus”; and “Conflict Management”. It really is hard to believe that the eighth and final term for these six students is all we have left after we complete this term on November 13. Most of the students have definite plans for what they will do after they graduate from IBIA. The students are beginning to realize that this two year period has gone by too quickly. All of the courses for these last two terms are designed to emphasize the needed and practical principles that will benefit them as they begin finding their places of



service. It is always a bittersweet time. It is sweet because they are ready to get out of the classroom and begin putting what they have learned into practice. It is bitter because they will miss the IBIA environment. It is really a special opportunity to be able to commit yourself exclusively to studying God’s Word every day for two years. The

fellowship and bond among the students becomes unique.

We currently have accepted three men that have committed to begin the school in January.

They are: Ervin Leka, a 20 year old single man from Tirane; Remzi Islami, a 58 year old married man (one daughter in university) from Elbasan; and Armelin Koci, a 19 year old single man from Lushnje (this is the younger brother of one of our graduates – Altin Koci). Please pray that they will follow through on their commitment to study with us as full time students. Please also pray with us as we try to secure our finances for the next two years. There are several congregations and a few individuals we hope and pray are deciding to financially partner with us for this next year. We are grateful that the Slicer Street church of Christ in Kennett, Missouri has made the decision to partner with us. They have been involved in many areas of the work in Albania for many years.



In two weeks we will be having a prayer retreat for the current students. We will also invite the three previous graduates of IBIA. We will go away for one night and cut ourselves off from all “outside” connections. Rather than having someone come in for a seminar I believe this will better serve the spiritual needs of this group at this time.

They are excited about this retreat.

If the congregation you fellowship with is still in the process of determining a budget for next year, we would greatly appreciate your speaking on IBIA's behalf and asking them to include us in your financial plans for 2010.



I believe there are currently 13 “full time” preachers among the 16 congregations of saints in Albania. 10 of the 13 are Albanians. 6 of those 10 have been trained by schools that are part of Sunset International Bible Institute's International Division. In January we will be adding 5 more men to that pool of workers. Niri's wife, Lindita, is a very good exegete who I have no doubt will be a great teacher of women and will continue to be a great spiritual partner for her husband. I share this with you only to point out that in very real and concrete terms, God is using IBIA to accomplish what many of you had prayed for and dreamed toward for several years. If you are currently partnered with us, thank you. Your step of faith to work with us to bring something into existence that did not exist 4 years ago is commendable. For those of you considering partnering with us, we still need your help. Our dreams are not only for Albania. Our focus continues to be all the Balkan nations. Many of those nations have no fellowship of Christ's redeemed in them. We are further than we were, but we are not where we need to be. Our dreams and aspirations continue to reach beyond where we stand today. We hope and pray that will always be true of IBIA. We want to always move forward in faith. We do not ever want to be satisfied with where we are. When we become satisfied, we have started our spiritual descent.

In His field,
Steve Stamatis