

Message from the Director
Albanian Bible Institute
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Change and Stability! Fifteen Years of Ministry Training in Albania

This past weekend we had the joy of celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of our school's ministry of leadership training. Throughout the years, around 90 students have joined us in our residential program. Countless others have been blessed through our teaching ministry in local churches. It was a great blessing to have so many of our students return for the celebration and to hear their testimonies of what God is doing in their lives. I loved hearing people share what their experiences at ABI meant to them and how their lives were impacted by the time spent with us. As I heard their testimonies, I was also happy for the churches who are blessed to have these folks serving them. Leaders with training bring deeper biblical knowledge, better ministry skills and more maturity to their churches. Many of our graduates are serving the same church where they served when they were students. Half of our graduates who are pastors have been serving in their present church for more than ten years. This is amazing!

The dividends from investments made during the last fifteen years give encouragement as we embark upon new strategies of Biblical training. Last week we began a new school year and a one year program of Biblical studies from Genesis to Revelation. All our classes this year are being held at night so students who work in the daytime can attend.

This change is already paying off! Last year we had only three full-time students in our residential program. **Last Monday, eleven new students joined us for night classes.** So far, no one has quit! These students leave their jobs at 4 or 4:30 in the afternoon and come to the school for two hours and forty-five minutes of classes on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights. Our students are also high school students, factory workers, call center workers, English teachers and even one army officer. All of them are involved in some ministry role in their churches, including people who serve as children and youth workers, deacons, church treasurers and worship leaders. Maybe with this biblical training that we are giving them, these lay people may hunger for more training and even feel a call to pastoral or missionary training one day in the future. The need for pastors in our country is great, as many congregations have no trained or even any untrained leader. In many churches, pastors are overworked and overstretched, some nearly to the point of breaking. If they don't get help, what will happen to them? What will happen to their churches? The Biblical teaching we are giving our students can lay the foundations for these people to rise up to the next level and to meet this critical need of more pastoral leadership.

Our change from teaching full-time students to teaching only part-time students is merely a change in methodology. Our mission of equipping Albanians for life, ministry and world impact is not changing at all. We respond to **changing circumstances** with different approaches and **an unchanging commitment** to Biblical teaching. Thank you for making it possible for us to fulfill our mission! Your gifts and prayers make our work possible. Please keep praying for all the staff and students of ABI. Pray that we will all bear fruit for the glory of God during this school year!