

Introducing...

Festim Gashi

Student – Biola University Class of 2008, *Political Science Major, Minor in Bible*
Home – Leshan, Kosova
Team Member – RCC's Project Kosova 2006



NOTE – Here is an introduction in Festim's own words. You will be touched by his story. Festim will join this year's team of Teachers at the English Camp outside Tirana, Albania this July. Some sixty university students from Kosova's only University in Pristina will participate, along with a team of staffers from the Albanian branch of Campus Crusade for Christ. English is a second language for Festim. As you can see - he's mastering English, conversationally and in writing. Read it, think over the implications and then pass it along. – Ken Kemp

June, 2006

Greetings!

My name is Festim Gashi and I am 24 years old.

I was born, raised, and attended elementary school in a little town called Leshan, which is located in the southern part of Kosova. I completed my high school with an Electronics degree in 2000. I come from a family of 7 children (four brothers and two sisters) with me being the second oldest. Now I am a second year student at Biola University in La Mirada, California. I am getting my education and training at Biola University hoping that one day God would use me to serve Him and my people in Kosova. I just want to share with you a peace of my life and my experiences I had before and after I became a Christian.



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I have experienced really hard moments prior to becoming a Christian. About seven years ago in 1999 my country, Kosova, was

immersed in a bloody conflict that caused a lot of innocent victims to suffer. During that time I lost my home and some friends. I also ended up living as a refugee in another country (Albania) and by the ruins of my burnt home for over eight months. This situation brought me into a state of hopelessness, desperation, and inner turmoil. Therefore, I started to seek for something that would help me get out of this terrible situation and find the meaning of life. While I was in the refugee camp I met some missionaries from a Christian organization called Youth With a Mission. They gave me some brochures with scripture from the Bible.

Later, I met a man from the United States named Doug who came to Kosovo after the war and visited me. He invited me to study the Bible with him. I started to study the Bible and understand it bit by bit. After one year of studying the Bible I realized that it had had a good impact on my life. I realized that the Bible is the truth, the Word of God. It became the time to make the most important decision in my life—to accept Jesus in my life and be baptized. Not that it was an easy decision. Coming from a family with traditional Muslim background made it difficult for me. Moreover, knowing that I might be the first and only Christian in my small town made the



decision to follow Jesus very serious for me. Furthermore, the fear that I might lose friends made it worse. As I was struggling with these dilemmas one night I decided to pray. I started praying and while I was praying a strange voice whispered to me saying: “Festim you should belong to My Kingdom.”

The next day I took the Bible and read Romans 10:9-10, and I said to myself, “Forget the objection and rejection, Festim, listen to God, your creator.” I remembered from the Bible the things that God does: He cares for me, He loves me (John 3:16), my Lord gave His only son for my sake. Jesus died for my sins and wants to be my Savior. I asked Doug to baptize me in a lake in front a beautiful waterfall (on September 13, 2001). It was one of the best experiences in my life—I accepted Jesus into my world and into my heart.

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Less than a year later, I went to Sweden to do a Discipleship Training School (DTS) with Youth With a Mission (YWAM). My Christian friends from YWAM that I met at the refugee camp in 1999 were running the DTS. So, I felt that God was leading me to Sweden; therefore, I went there and stayed for about two years. During the DTS I went to Ghana for the school outreach. I really enjoyed my time in Ghana and I was happy to share the Good

News, play with kids, helping the community by doing practical work. After Sweden, God opened a door for me to come to Biola University where I am majoring in Political Science and with a minor in Bible.



I am really excited about this summer because I am hoping to go to Albania on a mission trip with a group of people from the Richfield Community Church from July 8th- August 2nd. On this trip we will be holding an English Camp in Albania. This will be an incredible opportunity for me to share the Gospel with my young fellow Kosovars and Albanians.

But, this trip is costly for an international student like me; so, it is difficult for me to meet all the financial needs for this trip. I hope and pray that God will provide for the Kosova Team Members and me to make this trip happen.

Festim Gashi

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