

The Balkan Regional Conference 2018

The Balkan Regional Conference 2018 took place in Tirana, Albania on the weekend of 2-4 November. The venue was the TeStela Resort where all the accommodations, meetings and corporate meals were held, giving the saints an excellent atmosphere for blending and fellowship. There were 163 saints from 15 countries represented. Out of this number, 83 were from six Balkan countries. The saints began arriving during the week prior to the conference and thoroughly enjoyed entering into the small, but vital church life in Tirana by joining them in appointments, home meetings and preparations for the conference. On Friday evening, the saints who had arrived participated in a meeting that was full of singing, prayer and mutual refreshment.

The conference itself began on Saturday morning. The general subject was *Man in God's Eternal Plan* and consisted of four messages which one of the speaking brothers described as, "a solid foundation for the Balkans to build upon." Two messages were presented on Saturday morning followed by lunch and a break for fellowship and small group readings of ministry excerpts contained in the outline packet. The day culminated in the evening with a meeting and dinner that provided an opportunity for each of the Balkan countries to present whatever the Lord gave them to share regarding the situation in their respective countries. The feeling was that this meeting was really a Balkan family gathering and left everyone with a snapshot of the Lord's move in the Balkans. One visiting sister afterwards said of this meeting that it was, "a precious time."

The conference resumed on Lord's day morning with the remaining messages and the Lord's table meeting. For some it was their first time of breaking the bread with the saints and it was a glorious display of our rich enjoyment of the Lord and worship of the Father, especially as we sang hymn #124 in the many languages present, culminating in a very released praise to the Father in hymn #7. Following lunch, the saints were treated to an excursion to the center of Tirana and an evening with some of the local saints in their homes. This was truly one of the highlights of the entire conference.

Some items for prayer:

- That the Lord would continue to build upon the solid foundation that was laid at the conference through His speaking for His move in the Balkans. Particularly that a precious lampstand would be raised up in Tirana, Albania as a result of the rich infusion of life from this time.
- That the employee of the resort who worked closely with the brothers coordinating for the conference and received the Lord would be added in a normal and genuine way to the church life.
- That the saints in the Balkans would continue to take the way of doing everything through the cross, by the Spirit, and ministering life for the building up of the Body of Christ.

"Among us we should have the blending of all the individual members of the Body of Christ, the blending of all the churches in certain districts, the blending of all the co-workers, and the blending of all the elders. Blending means that we should always stop to fellowship with others. Then we will receive many benefits. If we isolate and seclude ourselves, we will lose much spiritual profit. Learn to fellowship. Learn to be blended...This is the most helpful thing in the keeping of the oneness of the universal Body of Christ. Today it is very convenient for us to blend with one another because of this modern age with its modern conveniences.

When we blend together, we have the cross and the Spirit. Without the cross and the Spirit, all that we have is the flesh with division. In ourselves it is not easy to be crucified and to do all things by the Spirit. This is why we must learn to be blended. Blending requires us to be crossed out. Blending requires us to be by the Spirit to dispense Christ and to do everything for the sake of His Body." *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1994-1997, vol. 4, "The Divine and Mystical Realm," pp. 159-162