

John E. Beckerink / Kingdom tour guide

1950's and 1960's

Born in 1950 in Corry Pa., I was raised on a dairy farm in rural western NY state (Chautauqua county) at a time when life was simpler, sensible, serene and safe. My parents were hard working, honest and God lovers who took our family to church Sunday morning, evening and to Wednesday night prayer meetings. My Dad was a quiet man who lived his Christian faith but did not talk much about it. However, I cherish the times he read his wine colored hardcover RSV Bible to our family at the dinner table. I never heard him swear and he respected Sundays and only did the necessary chores related to feeding and milking the cows. He never did field work such as baling hay on Sunday, even if rain was expected on Monday. My mother influenced me through some Christian books she had around the house. My 16th birthday gift from her was World Aflame by Billy Graham and we always watched the Billy Graham crusades on TV.

I had a keener interest in spiritual things than did my brother and two sisters. Even by the age of 10, I sensed that God had a call on my life to be in the ministry, but doubted I could lead a church or especially be a missionary; as all the missionaries I heard about in poor tribes had to have practical skills, which I did not. Our church denomination was the RCA (Reformed Church in America), which was originally called the Dutch Reformed Church. It is the oldest Protestant denomination in America with a continuous history, 1628. Its beliefs and practices are similar to the Presbyterian church with a strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, predestination and the importance of Seminary training at a high scholastic level. I was greatly impacted by a couple of our Pastors. One was quite fundamental and stressed scripture memory and giving out Christian literature. During high school I sometimes left tracts in the desks. In academics I was near the top of my class, but my scholastic excellence would change somewhat at age 16. when my brother and I had to run our dairy farm, as my father had heart surgery, which was needed due to his childhood rheumatic fever which had damaged his aortic heart valve. My Junior year in high school was the most intense academically with studies in Latin, English, History, Chemistry, Typing and Trigonometry. Since my study time was limited I chose to slack off on Trigonometry, which had too much homework for me to finish. When I was called on in class I was never prepared and always felt a sense of shame and failure, thus it was the only class I ever failed. Seeds of a bad attitude began to take root in my heart because of this.

After my Senior year I headed to Hope College with the idea of going to Seminary after that. However, by my Sophomore year I drifted away from God, lost my future vision and developed a bad image of myself. My grades suffered too as I went through a few months of depression and did not go to church for a year and a half. Not a good thing for someone who plans to be a minister! However, I finally did go to an evening church service on December 31, 1971 and recommit my life to God as I sat quietly in the back row. I was not ready for the intense study of Seminary, so I entered the work force. The next decade was a time of wandering through various jobs as I was trying to find what I really needed to be doing. By the

late 1970's my faith was rekindled by the Holy Spirit through some Catholic charismatic meetings on Saturday nights at Villa Maria College in Erie, Pa.

In my Sociology studies major, I had discovered a book by Studs Terkel called 'Working'. It detailed the thoughts of ordinary people in various types of jobs and how they feel about what they do all day long. At this time I jokingly told some friends that I was going to try all sorts of jobs so that by the time I was 65 I would know what I wanted to do for the rest of my life!

1970's Work Experiences (Pt = part-time job)

- **Shipping clerk** - Luth Electric Holland, Michigan
 - **Metal shop worker** - Hart and Cooley Mfg. Holland, Michigan
 - **Undercover Investigator** - Pinkerton's, Grand Rapids, Michigan
 - **Community Worker** - Westfield Community Center, Westfield, N.Y.
 - **Office Services** - Welch Foods Corporate Offices, Westfield, N.Y.
 - **Room Service/Airport Chauffeur** (Pt) - Peek'n Peak Ski Resort Hotel, Clymer, N.Y.
 - **Church Sexton** Clymer Hill Reformed Church (Pt) Clymer, N.Y.
 - **Vet Lab Caretaker** (2000 dogs) Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, Colorado
- (During my time at Welch Foods, the thought kept going through my mind.....

'If your life was a book, would it make interesting reading?'

1980's into the 2000's

- **Summer Youth Program Leader** - clearing hiking trails - Chautauqua area, N.Y.
- **Ministry Training** - Institute of Ministry (250 hr./10 weeks) learning to walk and operate through the Holy Spirit - Christian Retreat. Bradenton, Florida
- **First mission trip:** Jamaica evangelism included speaking at army camp
- **Pastoral Training School** (1 year) Christian Retreat
- **Street ministry**, led teams, taught evangelism at Fig Tree - Bradenton, FL.
- **Jail ministry and Literature booth** at Red Barn Flea market on weekends
- **Evangelism Leader** - Operation Mobilization (OM) Led 3 teams in evangelism, summer '83, London, England. Co-leader of evangelism team at the largest Roman Catholic University in Europe in Leuven, Belgium, fall '83-spring '84
Led OM evangelism teams at churches in Belgium, summer 1984
- **Dairy Farm** - 1985, worked for over a year while waiting for visa - Clymer, N.Y.
- **Evangelism/ Discipleship Leader** - Southall Baptist Church in largely Indian populated suburb known as 'Little India' in London, England 1986 - 1990, 1992 +
- **Evangelism Open Air Crusades in Kenya + Teaching pastors** - February 1990
- **Church planting one year course**, Ichthus Christian Fellowship, London, U.K.
- **Evangelism /Teaching on Healing** in Germany on short mission trip with Ichthus
- **Teaching / Healing** - 3 straight weeks in Czech Republic at 3 newly formed churches which were birthed from an Australian evangelist with a healing ministry. This was the most exciting ministry I ever experienced. Super hungry new believers; signs, wonders, healings. A Holy Spirit outpouring!
- **Bible School Teacher** in London, spring 1992. I had to write my own course material! Pastoral theology, Pentateuch, Old Testament Survey, Kingdom Principles

- **Teaching** - Summer of '93 Based in central Siberia, Russia. I went to rural places to teach believers and reach out to the lost.
- **Bible School Teacher** - Spring '94 - teaching again at the Bible School in London where I had to write my own material such as: Church growth, Revival, Prayer and Intercession. I was also asked to write some correspondence courses such as : The Beatitudes, Praise and Worship, The Authority of the Believer and The Faith Walk. I found this challenging, but also very exciting, as it not only brought personal transformation but also would be a foretaste of the legacy ministry of writing God was to set up for me in the future.
- **Paint Contractor** - July 1994 As a teen, I did the house painting on our farm so when I returned from the mission field I thought I could do that again for awhile. While in England I had applied for a church planting assignment in Canada but When I arrived back home to USA, the position was canceled. My work as a paint contractor has continued to this year! (2025)
- **Interim Preacher** @ Assembly of God church for 10 months in 1995
- **Church Elder and writer** in early 2000's
- **Bible School Teacher** @new Bible School in rural India. We trained 25 -30 students for 3 months (Dec.1997-February 1998) on Kingdom Principles, Love Walk, Revival etc. A few students rode bicycles up to 7 miles to attend! We also evangelized and taught in out of the way villages. In 2011 I returned to India to teach for 3 weeks. Pastor Sharath informed me that most of my former students had gone on to plant new churches! I met a few of them with their smiling faces and growing families. Oh, the joy of making disciples of Jesus!
- **Prayer Movement** In 2014 I got involved with an exciting prayer group at a small country church where I was raised. This was life-changing for the small group involved, including myself. It launched my writing ministry and brought several new lasting friendships with on fire believers 40+ years younger than me. At the time, I began to reflect on the past decades and realized that God had answered the question that had come to my mind in the 1970's.

'If your life was a book, would it make interesting reading?'

Although I had been involved with the process, it was our faithful God who had initiated, inspired and empowered each step along the way. **The Christian life** was never meant to be boring nor easy, but it was meant to be **an adventure of walking with God**. I am grateful for what God has done to me and through me. Here are few things I have learned or at least have tried to practice in life and the ministry.

My P.O.E.M. Philosophy of Effective Ministry

- **Live simply so that others can simply live** - Jesus lived modestly
'Freely you have received, freely give.' - Matthew 10:8 God has called us to serve others, feed his sheep, not fleece them. Never mix money and miracles.
- **Be humble** - Don't promote yourself, promote God's Word and He will promote you. 'Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; someone else, and not your own lips.' - Proverbs 27:2 NIV
- **Keep priority of Jesus and His Kingdom in your life and teaching** - Acts 28:31

RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS includes 3 R's of the kingdom: **Reflect** the image of Jesus, Luke 6:40. Rom.8:29 **Reign** in life, Rom.5:17, 1 John 5:4-5 **Reproduce**, make disciples, Matt.28:19 / **Jesus keys for success: Isaiah 11:2-3**

- **Be a learner** - I have learned truths from various streams of Christianity. 'Test everything, hold onto the good' 1 Thess.5:21. I am a spiritual eclectic/mongrel.
- **Stay balanced** It is better not to go to extremes in your life or teaching. 1 Timothy 4:16. Cults, spiritual abusers and charlatans make this mistake.
- **More of Jesus....less of me.** This was the attitude of John the Baptist and the desire of this John B. :)

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