



"For this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving an example so that you might follow **In His Steps**" 1 Peter 2:21

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In 1972, John & Shirley began attending a dynamic church in Elyria, Ohio, Church of the Open Door under Pastor Don Ingram. This ministry would be the tool that would expose them to Missions.

After attending for a short while John was asked to join the staff of Open Door where he and Shirley served for 26 years. John was the maintenance and building director undertaking 12 major building projects that consisted of 4-1/2 acres under roof,

a church campus of 250 acres and a Christian School of 800 students. John and Shirley also served as Youth

Sponsors and helped to direct summer Short Term Team Missions trips to the Appalachian Mountains of N. Carolina and Georgia. Later they would develop and direct the College & Career Dept. from 1980-1993.

It was in 1989 that John was approached and challenged to take a trip to Ivory Coast, West Africa and participate in a Missions work project. John not only accepted, but took along with him a team of adults. God would use this trip to grip his heart for Missions. John has since led teams to Africa, Papua New Guinea, Irian Jaya, Bolivia and Brazil and some domestic projects as well.

In 1998 John & Shirley left Open Door and began attending Trinity Evangelical Free in Amherst, Ohio in 1999. It was there that John felt called into Missions full-time. He had been contacted by Friends in Action Intl. to join their staff and serve as management and Short Term Teams Director. This path of Obedience now brings us to the next step in their ministry: that of developing "Steppin-Out" Missions. Their goal is to challenge and mobilize believers within the Local Church to the call of Missions and the opportunities that lie before them. We read and observe in the New Testament of how God commissioned and used the early church to reach out to the World and that is what they want to bring back to life in the local church today. Their ministry is to assist the local church in connecting resources, talents and gifts to the vast needs of the Mission field. This will be a "Step" of obedience for not only the individual who goes but also for the church who sends. Thus continuing to expand the Gospel and strengthen the Church of Jesus Christ globally!