CONFLICT IN TEAMWORK

A Manual for Ministers on How to Prevent and Resolve
Conflicts that Arise in the Interpersonal Relationships
of Superiors and Subordinates Involved in Team Ministries

By

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INTRODUCTION

It is too often true that effective ministries are interrupted because those spearheading the work cannot get along with each other. Interpersonal conflict among Christian workers diverts energy and time from worthy objectives and presents to the Body of Christ and the world a poor example of the transforming power of the Gospel.

Christ commanded His disciples (then and now) to love one another. It follows that the Lord provides the grace and enablement necessary to obey such a command. If the interpersonal relations among Christian workers are less than they should be, it must be that there is neglect in observing the biblical instructions directed toward such relations. Also, there must be a lack of care in implementing principles already known.

Much has been written from a secular point of view on the subject of interpersonal relations, group dynamics, and personnel management. A fair amount of this material was read in preparation for this study. It should be pointed out, however, that in addressing the problem of conflict among Christian workers, it was the conviction of this author that the Bible itself should be the starting point and the source for solutions to interpersonal conflict. Since the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, and since God has provided, in the pages of Scripture, all that is needed "so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work"; (2 Tim.

3:17) then the answers to the problem of conflict must be found there.

In approaching the subject, it is necessary to first discuss what is meant by teamwork in the ministry and the marked increase in interest in team ministries. The main purpose of this study is to focus on the problem of conflict in teamwork. Various authors who have studied this phenomena along with a survey conducted in connection with this project, provide ample evidence that the problem is real and needs to be addressed.

In the next section there is an attempt to analyze the nature and causes of conflict. Special emphasis has been placed on the spiritual state of the team members as the main factor in the occurrence of destructive conflict. The section on prevention has much the same emphasis.

In viewing the resolution of conflict, an attempt was made to formulate a practical step by step method that could be easily applied to a team situation.

More than fifteen interviews with people with deep experience in teamwork were conducted in preparation for the project. A number of these form a casebook which provides a basis for discussing the principles relating to conflict in teamwork.

It is the prayer and hope of the author that this discussion will contribute to greater harmony for those believers who have the privilege of working together in a team ministry.

All biblical quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise specified.

I.   THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE SUBJECT

What Do We Mean by Teamwork or Team Ministry?

"A team is a number of persons associated together in a
relationship involving profound personal commitment one to the
other, as well as commitment to specific measurable goals which
all share in common."[1]

Teamwork is defined as, "Work done by a number of associates,
all subordinating personal prominence to the efficiency of the whole."[2]
A team ministry would be one in which two or more ministers blend their
gifts and efforts in a cooperative way to accomplish certain spiritual
objectives.

In the organizational structure of a team there must be one
person who is designated the team leader. In a multiple church staff
that is functioning as a team, the leader would usually be called the
senior pastor. In a missionary team the leader is often called a
field director.

The others on the team, though they may enjoy parity so far
as their office with the senior pastor or field director, are never-

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[1]E. F. Murphy, Overseas Crusades, 1975, quoted in "The
Teamwork Seminar Notebook," by G. Murray and E. Davies of the Bible
Christian Union.

[2]Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, Second Edition, (Spring-
field, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1953), p. 871.

theless in subordinate positions. The structure of a team usually includes this feature of having one chief and so many Indians. It will be seen that the quality of the relationship between the leader and his associates is a primary factor in team efficiency and harmony.

The Growing Interest in Team Ministries

There is growing interest in teamwork in the Christian ministry today. This is especially true in evangelical circles where churches are growing in both size and number. In an article in Christianity Today, March 1978, Charles Mylander said: "Every church, no matter how small, needs a multiple staff." He was referring to both volunteer and paid staff. He went on to give a formula for adding to the church's paid staff. "A helpful ratio for calculating the need is one plus one for 200: one minister plus one secretary (or other support person working at least thirty hours per week) for each two hundred people in attendance."[3]

Many churches are following such a formula or something near to it and are finding that additional staff promotes the growth and effectiveness of the church's ministry. This movement is altering the nature of the pastoral ministry and preparation for such ministry. Herman Sweet comments on this point:

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[3]Charles Mylander, "Your Church Needs a Multiple Staff," Christianity Today, March 24, 1978, pp. 792-793.

> Already the image of the ministry and of the pastoral role is being changed by the presence of a large number of multiple staffs. . . Seminary preparation is being affected by the prospects that a large number of graduates will first enter multiple staff employment.[4]

This was written by Sweet more than fifteen years ago. It appears that he viewed subordinate positions in multiple staffs as stepping-stones to becoming the senior pastor. In these past fifteen years, there have been interesting patterns of church organization emerging, especially in certain churches in California, where subordinate positions are not viewed as stepping stones but terminal positions. In these churches a man's gifts determine his position, and if he is lacking the gift of administration he does not seek to be the chief administrator.[5] The most intriguing features of these churches are their growth, vitality, and the effectiveness of the total ministry.

This increase in interest in teamwork is not confined to churches in the United States. A number of mission agencies have been giving a great deal of attention to developing strategies for evangelism and church planting based upon a team approach. The Bible Christian Union has been holding teamwork seminars in this country and in Europe these past few years. The name change of

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[4]Herman Sweet, Jr., The Multiple Staff in the Local Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963).

[5]See Bob Smith's Manual for Church Organization, When All Else Fails . . . Read the Directions, (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1974).

the former West Indies Mission to "World Team" is significant of their deep interest in a team approach. Also, in a recent conversation with Alfred Larsen, General Director of the Unevangelized Fields Mission, he mentioned the mission's deep interest in the concepts of teamwork.

The reasons for this growing interest include the following factors.

(1) <u>It is becoming more apparent that one man cannot do it all.</u> One pastor who was aware of the great expectations that his congregation had of him made up a questionnaire which he asked his people to thoughtfully complete and give back to him. He compiled the information and here are the results of that survey with a few comments interspersed by this writer.

Questionnaire for the Congregation

1. How many days per week do you think the pastor should work? <u>5-7 days</u>; average answer <u>6 days</u>. How many hours per day? <u>8-24 hours</u>; average answer <u>10 hours</u>.

According to this congregation, the normal work week of a pastor should be sixty hours per week. This is probably average for many professional people. However, the rest of the questionnaire reveals that this would not be enough time to accomplish all that is expected.

2. How many calls should he make per week? <u>3-30 calls</u>; average answer <u>10 calls</u> per week. How much time should be allotted to the average call? <u>7 minutes to 1½ hours</u>; average answer <u>30 minutes</u>.

Calling time would then be five hours a week on the average. Five hours is not realistic for ten calls however. It would be more accurate to add thirty minutes travel time for each call, bringing

the total to ten hours.

3. How much time should be spent in counseling each week? 1 hour to 15 hours; average answer 10 hours.

This figure would seem to be in line. It is interesting that a full load for a full time counselor would range from fifteen to twenty hours per week. Those who counsel effectively know that an hour of actual counseling often requires preparation and follow-up which adds work and time to the counseling load.

4. How much time should be spent daily in intercessory prayer for the flock? 10 minutes to 4 hours; average answer 1 hour = weekly expectation of 7 hours.

In Acts 6:3 the Apostles are quoted as saying, "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word." Here the Apostle recognizes the need for time and energy set aside for the work of prayer. It is clear that this should be an important part of the pastor's work. Too often it is neglected because of the pressure of other responsibilities.

5. How much time should be spent with the young people each week? (including Sunday services) 1 hour to 2 days; average answer 2 hours per week.

6. Which of the following should the pastor attend regularly? Please check. (The figure entered on the answer blank indicates the number of respondents who felt the pastor should attend that activity.)

40	Sunday School	22	"Mr. & Mrs. Fellowship"
37	Sunday School Association	26	Choir
29	Trustees	49	Session meetings
11	Sunday evening youth services		

It is difficult to estimate how much time these activities would add to a pastor's schedule. It would not be unrealistic to add five hours to a pastor's weekly schedule if committee meetings, missions meetings, Christian Education committee, etc. were included; five hours.

7. How much time should the pastor spend preparing the messages?

    Sunday morning message   1½ hours to 20 hours; average answer 4 hours

    Sunday evening message   1 hour to 20 hours; average answer 3 hours

    Wednesday Bible study   1 hour to 10 hours; average answer 2 hours

    Total 9 hours

Here the figures (average) are unrealistic for good expository preaching. The paucity of good preaching in evangelical churches can be attributed, at least in part, to the busyness of the pastor. A well prepared expository sermon will need ten to fifteen hours of study and work to prepare. If the congregation is to be properly fed, the man responsible for feeding them will need at least twenty five hours of preparation time to accomplish this. (Again compare Acts 6:3.)

8. Should the pastor be active in fundamental minister activities and associations in the area?   48 Yes   3 No

The expectation is high that the pastor will be involved in such activities. Again, it is difficult to estimate the time involved. With the thought that such a group might meet once a month, the estimate would be that such an activity would take about one half hour per week.

9. Should the pastor be involved in community activities that relate to the ministry?   50 Yes   3 No

Again, there is high expectation of performance in this area. Time estimate is one hour.

10. How much time should be devoted per week to administrative
work (organizing, planning, etc.) 1 hour to 50 hours;
average answer 2 hours.

Two hours would be unrealistic for most evangelical

churches where the pastor is looked to as the chief administrator.

11. How much time per day should the pastor spend in Bible study apart
from sermon preparation? (For his spiritual growth, general Bible
knowledge, etc.) ½ hour to 10 hours; average answer 1 hour = 7
hours per week.

It would be interesting to ask the same group of people how

much time they themselves should spend daily in Bible study. There

is no question that asks how much time the pastor should spend with

his family, but the expectations would be very high for the pastor's

performance as a successful husband and father.

The total hours expected comes to 63½ hours per week. This

figure includes an unrealistically low figure for study and prepara-

tion of sermons.

To produce quality preaching at least fourteen hours would

need to be added making the figure 77½ hours. The total does not

include the time spent in services (morning worship, evening wor-

ship, Wednesday night prayer meeting, etc.). It would be necessary

to add another five hours for this, bringing the total to 82½ hours.

This is not an uncommon hourly figure for some pastors. In

one case where a very able pastor actually kept track of his hours,

some weeks exceeded 100 hours of work. This was during the time the

church was in a building program, and, of course, the pastor was

expected to stay on top of everything related to that project.

Some years ago, a minister by the name of Rev. Max Morris,

protested against this trend and printed his protest in the Miami Herald

(February 17, 1962). He wrote in part:

> My resignation is a protest. A protest against the "mold"
> into which the contemporary minister is expected to "fit."
> A protest against a concept of the ministry which forces
> the pastor to be an executive, an administrator, an organi-
> zational genius, a public relations expert, a confessor to
> hundreds of people who have "stumped their toes" and "nicked
> their fingers," and need a sympathetic shoulder on which
> they can cry--more seriously, a one-man "complaint department"
> for disgruntled people who are at war within and are con-
> stantly causing wars without.
>
> ...A protest against a schedule which leaves no time for
> prayer, contemplation and scholarship. A protest against a
> system which makes out of the minister everything except
> what God expects him to be, a spiritual leader and preacher
> of the Word.

Max Morris' protest has been heard in some corners and there

has been a movement toward a more biblical view of the ministry.[6]

There are some men who can handle the responsibility and in

some cases, build super churches. These are few and there is some

question about the continuing strength of these churches after the

superstar leaves. The more serious effect of their example is the

burden they lay on young men who believe they are called to preach

the Gospel. Many examples could be given of young men who attempt

to act like their superstar heros and fall flat on their faces. Often

the church is left in shambles and disillusionment hangs like a fog

over the wreckage. Howard A. Snyder puts it well when he writes:

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[6]People such as Ray Stedman and Bob Smith from Peninsula
Bible Church in California, David Mains, Howard Snyder and others,
have been not only writing but working out new structures based
on the biblical model. See the bibliography for titles by these
men.

Thank God for the superstars! They are of all men most fortunate. But the church of Jesus Christ cannot run on superstars, and God never intended that it should. There just are not that many, actually or potentially, and there never will be. God does not promise the church an affluence of superstars. But he does promise to provide all necessary leadership through the gifts of the Spirit. (Eph. 4:1-16) If a denomination must depend on pastoral superstars for growth, there is something drastically wrong with its structure and, more fundamentally, with its understanding of the church.[7]

This interest in renewing the structure of the church and especially the ministry has led to increased interest in teamwork in the ministry.

(2) The greater demands on leadership for quality in ministry. The evangelical community is better informed today than in years past. Christian literature by the tons, Christian radio broadcasting, films and T.V. have contributed to this trend. (The quality of some of the information available is open to question. Sorting through this enormous amount of material adds to the minister's burden.)

a. People want and should have better preaching.

A twenty minute topical message made up of a few Scripture verses linked by some stories will not do. There is a greater demand than ever for solid expository Bible teaching. It is the kind of preaching that requires the right gifts and training as well as sufficient time and energy. It is, most importantly, the kind of preaching that God demands and will provide for His people

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[7]Howard A. Snyder, The Problem of Wine Skins (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975), p. 84.

if they are obedient. One test of obedience is whether God's people are willing to allow a man called to preach, to preach. To be sure, an expositor will have some other duties, but if a congregation wants a man to produce meaty sermons, he will need to spend the greater percentage of his work week in sermon preparation.

b. Counseling is moving back into the church where it belongs. In the past, pastors referred difficult counseling problems to professional psychologists and psychiatrists. There is a change under way. Dr. Jay E. Adams and others have not only challenged men of God to take this responsibility back, but have shown the way to do it from the Word of God. Many pastors are receiving training in counseling through seminaries, and through organizations such as the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation in Laverock, Pa. With this increase in ability to handle problems, the pastors work load will also increase. People will be coming to him rather than searching the yellow pages for a psychiatrist. This is a healthy trend, but it means the pastor will have less time to spend with other things and therefore, will need more help.

c. The quality of Christian education must be upgraded. The secularization of American society puts even greater demands on the church to properly educate God's people. There has never been a time when there was so much in the way of material and equipment available to the local church for education. It takes more than materials to do the job; it takes leadership that will plan, organize, train, and motivate people to do the job. If the pastor is expected to be an able expositor and a competent counselor,

should he also be expected to be an expert educator?

d. <u>The increasing need for better organization and coordination of activities.</u> Evangelical churches are growing in numbers and also in the diversity of programs offered to people. With a many faceted weekly program, good administration is not a luxury but a real necessity. In a poorly administrated church, conflicts in scheduling, use of facilities, use of funds, etc. are a constant hindrance. Administration is a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:28). Should a man who has gifts in the areas of preaching and counseling be faulted if he has no gift for administration? Is the fault the pastors or a system which demands that one man have all the gifts?

e. <u>The great needs of young people and other special groups in the church increases the burden on leadership.</u> While the church should not be divided into special interest groups, it is neverthe-less true that certain groups will need special attention. Children, teenagers, singles, senior citizens, etc. must be understood and ministered to according to their peculiar needs. In a large church these groups may be large enough so as to require a pastor especially assigned to them as their spiritual leader.

There are other demands that could be cited, but these reasons are sufficient to show that a team of men working together is an appropriate answer to these growing needs.

3) <u>Most important of all, there is a wider recognition today of the New Testament pattern of ministry.</u>

a. <u>This pattern calls for a plural ministry in the local church.</u> There are eighteen references in the New Testament to the

elders of the church. In only four of these places is the term

$\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\sigma\varsigma$ in the singular used. In those places, the

references involve either an individual referring to himself as

an "elder" (John in 2 John 1, 3 John 1; also Peter uses $\sigma\upsilon\nu\pi\rho\epsilon\sigma\beta\upsilon\tau\epsilon\rho\sigma\varsigma$

to refer to himself in 1 Peter 5:1), or instruction as to how

to treat individual elders (1 Tim. 5:1,19). Following the

pattern of the synagogue, each church had a bench of elders.

1 Tim. 5:17 makes clear that, in the early church, there

was a division of responsibility among the elders. "The elders who

direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor,

especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." This

clearly implies that some did not spend their time primarily in

preaching and teaching. These are often referred to as "ruling

elders"[8] and the other as "teaching elders."

It is also clear that "double honor" refers to some form of

material compensation (see vs. 18). While there is some doubt con-

cerning the number of paid staff members there were in the early

church, there is scriptural basis here for the practice of paying

ministers.

The important fact is that this, and many other passages,

speak of a number of men in the leadership of the church rather

than a single presiding officer. In Acts 13:1 there is reference

made to a number of prophets and teachers in the Church of Antioch.

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[8]For a full description of the office of ruling elder, see
The Ruling Elder by Samuel Miller, (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board
of Publishers, 1832).

The word προφῆται probably refers to men "who are able to expound the Word"[9] and not to future tellers such as Agabus. Five men are named whose work was evidently "preaching and teaching." There is no evidence in regard to the number of congregations they served or how the work was divided between the various men. It is clear that these five formed a multiple teaching staff under a single governing unit. It also appears that they were all gathered in one place when the Holy Spirit directed them to ordain Barnabas and Saul for missionary service.

On this occasion, those sent out formed a three-man team made up of men with differences in age, experience, and spiritual gifts. Throughout his ministry, the Apostle Paul was surrounded with associates who worked and suffered with him in extending Christ's Kingdom (see chart on p. 19).

It is not difficult to find examples of plural ministries in the New Testament. The searcher would be hard pressed to find even one example of a man who was responsible to lead a church or evangelize a city single-handedly.

b. The New Testament pattern is based upon a proper understanding and use of spiritual gifts. There are six passages where spiritual gifts are listed:

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[9]. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles, (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1944), p. 492.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10	1 Corinthians 12:28
Word of wisdom	Apostleship
Word of knowledge	Prophecy
Faith	Teaching
Healing	Miracles
Miracles	Healing
Prophecy	Helping
Distinguishing of spirits	Administration
Tongues	Tongues
Interpretation of tongues	

1 Corinthians 12:29-31	Romans 12:6-8
Apostleship	Prophecy
Prophecy	Serving
Teaching	Teaching
Miracles	Exhortation
Healing	Giving
Tongues	Leading
Interpretation of tongues	Showing mercy

Ephesians 4:11	1 Peter 4:11
Apostleship	Speaking
Prophecy	Serving
Evangelism	
Pastor-teacher	

It is the opinion of the writer that certain of these gifts are not in operation in today's church. The gift of apostleship became a matter of past church history after the death of the Apostle John. Certain sign gifts, such as tongues and miracles, had use for the time of the church's infancy but are not extant today. In some cases, it is difficult to know the exact nature of all the gifts described in these lists.[10] However, the lists certainly show the diversity of ministries that were exercised in the early church through the power of the Holy Spirit. Since the Spirit's ministry is multifaceted, it involves a number of different people who are used to meet the varied needs of the body.

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[10]An interesting and helpful summary of arguments concerning spiritual gifts is found in the book Spiritual Gifts and the Church, by Donald Bridge and David Phypers, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973).

From what Paul says in 1 Cor. 12:7 & 11, all believers receive spiritual gifts that are to be exercised for the common good. While there are multigifted individuals, no one man possesses all the gifts (1 Cor. 12:29-30). It should be expected that a multiple staff or team ministry would reflect a diversity of gifts in the various members of the group.

There are many vivid examples of churches built around one man that reflect, in their emphasis, the limitations of that one man. There are churches headed by men who are gifted evangelists, and the whole program of the church is evangelistic in thrust. The adult Sunday School hour doesn't differ a wit from an evangelistic campaign. Christians are trained in personal work and follow-up, but there is virtually no teaching ministry being exercised otherwise. The man at the helm is also expected to be an administrator, a merciful hospital visitor, a fund raiser, and carry out several other roles. Along with the neglect of providing meaty teaching for the believers in the congregation, these areas also suffer because of the leader's limitations.

The fault is not entirely in the man who is in leadership. It is rather a result of an unbiblical view of the ministry. If the same church had men gifted in expository Bible teaching, works of compassion and mercy, and administration, working alongside the gifted evangelist, much more could be accomplished and the needs of the congregation could be better served.

c. This pattern involves every believer in a ministry of some kind. In Eph. 4:11-12, Paul says that the purpose of the various officers of the church is to "prepare God's people for works

of service, so the body of Christ may be built up." A multiple staff in a local church is similar to the coaching staff of a football team. The senior pastor is like the head coach, responsible to direct and motivate his staff to train and oversee the activities of the larger group, the congregation. Working with the head coach of a football team is a backfield coach, a line coach, a defensive coordinator, and others. These men have clearly defined responsibilities. They are not simply young men using their subordinate positions as a stepping stone to becoming head coach; they are experts in their own right. They are seasoned specialists whose efforts are part of a total effort to get the football team ready for action. Subordinates on a multiple staff should fit this description. Too often they do not. In so many cases, an assistant pastor or youth pastor is simply "getting experience" in preparation for becoming a senior pastor. Because of this, many who occupy subordinate positions are young, unseasoned, and restless.

    d. <u>The team approach is also evident in the New Testament in the work of evangelism and church planting</u>. The Lord Himself called twelve men to Himself and trained them to be His apostles. The Apostle Paul followed this pattern in his missionary work in that he almost always had companions with him wherein he labored. The chart on the following page illustrates this fact.

Time or Place	Team	Reference
Jerusalem, Antioch, Cypress	Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark	Acts 12:25-13:5
Philippi	Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke	Acts 16:10-40
at Corinth	Paul, Aquila, Priscilla, Silas, Timothy, Titus, and Justus	Acts 18:5-17
at Ephesus	Paul, Timothy, Erastus, Gaius, Aristarchus	Acts 19:1-22, 29
Macedonia, Troas	Paul, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus, Luke	Acts 20:4-38
Trip to Rome	Paul, Luke, Aristarchus	Acts 27:2ff

There has been an unbalanced emphasis on the great individual ministries described in the Bible and not enough emphasis on the teamwork that is so evident in the pages of Scripture. This may be one of the reasons why interpersonal relations and teamwork principles have been neglected subjects in evangelical colleges and seminaries.

The Problem of Conflicts in Team Ministries

Since the interest in team ministry is a relatively recent phenomena, it is not surprising that there are a limited number of studies available on the problem of conflict in ministerial team relationships. The most extensive studies have been done by those interested in Christian education. Several researchers in this field noticed that the tenure of Ministers of Education was often quite short.

Howard Bixby surveyed 211 Ministers of Education. His paper entitled, "A Study of Job Satisfiers and Job Dissatisfiers of Ministers of Education" was written in connection with his doctoral work at Western Michigan University. He found that the number one job satisfier was, "the confidence and cooperation of the senior pastor." The chief dissatisfier was, "ministry goals or philosophy conflict with the senior pastor."[11]

The number two and three dissatisfiers are also significant in regard to staff conflict.

2. Poor staff communication -- few planning sessions, superficial personal relationships.

3. A senior pastor who is threatened by the person or ministry of the Minister of Education.[12]

Dr. Bixby remarked:

> While suspected for some time, a realization that ministers on a multiple staff often have problems is somewhat disconcerting. Paul's words concerning ministerial relationships in 1 Cor. 3:5-8 puts the problem in perspective. He stated: 'I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase.' Poor staff relationships often develop because of pride. The minister of the early church exercised many and varied gifts together to plant the church. The carnality for which Paul scores the church of Corinth involved emphasizing one minister above another. Centuries later the Reformation brought a dramatic emphasis upon studying and applying the Scripture to Theology. At the same time, ecclesiology and biblical church administration were then and are now generally neglected. Con-

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[11]Howard L. Bixby, "A Study of Job Satisfiers and Job Dissatisfiers of Ministers of Education" (Western Michigan University, 1972), p. 138.

[12]Ibid., p. 139

sequently, the church today finds itself exalting one
ministerial position above another.[13]

Edward Lee Hayes studied the problem of role conflict as
related to the position of Minister of Education. He found con-
siderable evidence of such conflict. For example, he observed,
"individual directors who were in conflict with pastors tended
to be better educated than the pastors with whom they served."[14]

A study by Kenneth Mitchell focused on the relationships
between senior pastors and associate or assistant pastors. Mitchell
interviewed 80 senior pastors and 36 assistant pastors.

In answer to the question, "Would you say that your overall
relationship with the other minister(s) was basically good or
basically poor?", 61% of the senior pastors said, "basically good",
but only 25% of the other ministers replied that the relationship
was "basically good."

When these same people were asked to list the reasons why
the relationship was not very good the following replies were the
most frequently given. First, the replies of the senior pastors:

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[13] Howard L. Bixby, "A Look at the Sources of Encourage-
ment and Discouragement for the Minister of Christian Education,"
Journal of Psychology and Theology 2 (Winter 1974): 45

[14] Edward Lee Hayes, "Role Conflict: A Study of Selected
Protestant Directors of Christian Education and Pastors" (disser-
tation, University of Denver, 1966).

> 'Assistant cannot talk to me.
> Assistant does not know his place.
> Assistant will not take responsibility.
> Assistant cannot accept correction.'

The others replied:

> 'Pastor cannot understand my concerns.
> We do not communicate.
> Pastor is authoritarian.
> Pastor is a prima donna.'[15]

Marvin Judy is recognized as a leading authority on multiple staff ministries. Though he has not written extensively on the problem of staff conflict, he does mention interpersonal problems from time to time in his writings. For example, he comments on the problem of a senior pastor threatened by the success of an associate:

> It has been observed that some very fine senior ministers
> have brought to the staff, persons who are very capable in
> fields such as counseling or Christian Education, and as
> these persons fulfilled their roles responsibly and found
> a ready response in the congregation, the pastor felt that
> a part of his prerogative was being usurped.[16]

A survey was conducted by this author in connection with this project. The survey form (a sample can be found in the appendix) was sent to eighty people. The participants were randomly selected. The only requirement for their selection was that they be involved in an evangelical team ministry of some sort. Some of the participants were missionaries, some educators teaching in Christian institutions, one a staff member of a para-church youth

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[15]Cited by Bixby, op. cit., p. 21

[16]Marvin T. Judy, The Multiple Staff Ministry, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), p. 101.

organization. The majority were members of multiple staffs in large evangelical churches. These churches were selected from five different denominations and some independent churches were also included. The names of the respondents and their affiliations is not revealed because of the nature of the information requested.

Of the eighty people surveyed, fifty-one returned the completed form. This represents a return of 63.75%. One of the returns was not included in the computer program. The results given are based on fifty returns.

There were forty-nine men and one woman who responded to the survey. The average age was 39.18 years. All are married. The educational background of the participants was given as follows:

     9   B.A., B.S.

     5   M.A.

   25   M. Div.

     9   Th.M., S.T.M.

     2   Ph.D.

The average length of time these people have been in Christian work was fourteen years. The average team size was 5.125. Twenty-one of the respondents are team leaders, twenty-nine are team subordinates. (All would be considered Christian leaders. This information has to do with the structure of the team itself.

In answer to the question: "How often do you meet together?" the following answers were indicated.

     1   not at all   1   several times a year

     6   bi-weekly   29   weekly

<u> 4 </u> daily   <u> 3 </u> monthly

<u> 6 </u> more than once a week

The third question on the survey form asked: "How would you describe the level of communication between members of your team?" The results indicated a healthy picture.

<u> 21 </u> answered "excellent"

<u> 19 </u> answered "good"

<u> 7 </u> answered "adequate"

<u> 3 </u> answered "inadequate"

<u> 0 </u> answered "poor"

It is interesting to compare the comments given in answer to some of the other questions with these responses.

Question five was directed toward the quality of the relationship between the members of the team. The question and the answers to that question are given below.

How would you describe your relationship to the other members of the team? Please give a ranking to the following quotations, with one representing the closest description of your situation and seven being the least descriptive.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6	12	15	7	0	3	1	"My associates are my closest friends."
13	16	11	2	1	0	0	"This is a good professional arrangement."
24	11	6	1	0	3	0	"Ours is an honest, open, satisfying relationship."
2	0	5	19	5	8	3	"Things are a bit tense and uncomfortable at times but functional."
0	1	2	3	11	6	13	"We seem to be working against rather than with each other."
1	1	4	8	12	10	0	"There are certain members that do not seem to fit with the rest of us."
0	1	1	0	2	33	0	"The situation is becoming unbearable."

The results given for question five require some explanation. The seven statements are arranged so that the best relationship would be represented by the first statement, "My associates are my closest friends," and the worst relationship is represented by the seventh statement, "The situation is becoming unbearable." There is some question in relation to statements two and three as to which represents the stronger relationship. Probably three would be representative of a more harmonious arrangement.

It is clear that the majority of respondents judged their team relationship as being very healthy. The statement "Ours is an honest, open, satisfying relationship," received the greatest number of "number one" votes. It is significant that nineteen people rated "Things are a bit tense..." as their number four choice. The reasons for this are indicated by the verbal answers under question seven.

The answers to questions six and seven were verbal and are given later. Question eight involved numerical ranking of the causes of conflict. That question and the results are given below.

How would you rank the following causes of conflict in order of their importance, using a scale of 1 to 15? (1=most frequent cause; 15=least frequent cause)

The results can be read in the following manner. Each of the fifteen categories is listed below. Under each category the list of numbers corresponds to the number of respondents who chose each rank from one to fifteen.

Thus, under the first category, "lack of communication," sixteen respondents made this their first choice, six made it their

second choice, twelve their third choice, and so on.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

lack of communication
| 16 | 6 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

misunderstood communication
| 10 | 14 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

lack of openness and honesty
| 3 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 5 |

financial pressure
| 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 20 |

dissatisfaction with work
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 |

spiritual immaturity
| 4 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |

style of leadership
| 4 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 |

fear of failure
| 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 7 |

personality clashes
| 2 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 |

lack of preparation for position
| 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 |

not keeping within the limits of one's responsibilities
| 1 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 5 |

not fulfilling one's responsibilities
| 1 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 |

envy of another's gifts, position, or success
| 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 |

lack of recognition of one's work
| 1 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |

lack of opportunity to exercise gifts
| 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 12 |

The only concentration of results for question eight is in the area of communication problems. "Lack of communication" received thirty-four votes for the first three rankings. "Misunderstood communication" received twenty-nine votes for the first three rankings. The category that would be the next in line for number of votes for the first three rankings would be "personality clashes" which received twelve votes. It is interesting to see the categories that received the highest total votes for the first seven rankings.

    Lack of communication. 42

    Misunderstood communication. 39

    Style of leadership. 27

    Personality clashes. 26

    Lack of openness and honesty 26

Following are the questions that required a verbal answer and a sampling of the replies given. The number next to the question corresponds to the number of the question in the survey.

6. Have you ever experienced open conflict in your team relationship? If yes, please explain the nature of the conflict. Yes 23   No 27

Examples of answers from team leaders:

If by conflict you mean disagreement over a philosophy or means of ministry--yes.

Disagreement on opinions, honest and open debate over subjects that are being discussed. We provide freedom for that.

Usually involves practical decisions about how or when rather than questions of principle. Differences are generally resolved quickly.

Failure to agree on how given tasks were to be carried out. Disagreement on philosophy of discipline.

Conflict over how to conduct a specific youth ministry resolved after fully talking it out. Conflict over wife's apparent lack of enthusiasm for their ministry.

Philosophy and music.

Member not doing what he was supposed to do.

Disagreement on priorities and methods.

With a former Director of Christian Education.

A feeling that I--as leader--was not interested in what one of our ministers was doing.

Because of a lack of communication we sometimes work at odds with one another.

Conflict in philosophy of bus ministry.

Examples of team subordinates:

Personality clashes, schedule overlapping, poorly defined responsibilities, lack of complete communications.

Complete misunderstanding about lines of authority with regard to a task assigned to an associate pastor (myself).

One member of the team being continually critical in comments, undermining the leader's goals.

One team member feeling that other team members do not give his programs due consideration--conflicts on scheduling programs.

Related to misunderstanding of job boundaries.

Misunderstanding of philosophy of ministry.

One time there was division with regard to the pastor marrying two divorced people. He sought our counsel. No hard feelings but there were two sides.

Others misinterpreting what I said or people taking things too seriously when they were meant to be only teasing.

In regard to time schedule and defining job descriptions open discussion has resolved the differences.

On one occasion, several years ago, the one in authority was teaching unscriptural principles.

The official team leader experienced pressure from team members to change the focus of decision making from himself alone to himself and the team members together. He resisted this pressure but finally yielded.

PAGE 29 IS MISSING

7. Have you ever experienced a situation in your team relationship when, though there was no outward conflict, there was tension because of unexpressed irritation? If yes, please explain. Yes___39___

No___11___

Examples of answers from team leaders:

Our youth pastor's wife felt there was unequality with the number of hours the husbands were away from their families. (It quickly surfaced and was taken care of.)

Usually this happens where we lack the time to deal in depth with those unexpressed irritations.

Usually over small things.

Some members are more frugal in the use of money than others. Its more a minor conflict.

Sometimes disagreements because of some basic convictions on policies have caused tension, but we have recognized this and submitted it to the Lord.

Probably due to the lack of a job description.

Over differences of opinion.

Only for a brief time until misunderstanding was cleared up.

Assistants resent having to submit when they disagree.

A lack of interest in what was going on in one of the areas of ministry.

When he did not do something I wanted done or delayed doing something. Also vast differences in educational backgrounds resulted in lack of common interests.

Examples of answers from team subordinates:

Personality and conceptual differences (theological, etc.).

Difficult for associate to express frustrations and confusions to senior pastor--not open or responsive.

When another team member was unfairly critical of me.

Due to a policy decision by the Deacon Board concerning staff working hours--opinions differed on the staff but free expression of feeling in staff meeting and personal conference with senior pastor brought reconciliation after one or two weeks.

Has happened several times.

Tension arises when there is a change in any team member
because the new member is prone to feel useless or childlike
at first, not knowing the ropes and the other members have
little to say about who the new member will be, and thus feel
threatened.

My irritation was not because of the senior minister but because
of my unclear job description that I was working with. . . I
freely talk these irritations over with the senior pastor as soon
as such potential conflicts arise.

One team member's wife is not very cooperative. We witness some
tensions between her demands on her husband and the demands of
the work. Also, she tends to not help with domestic chores when
the staff goes on a retreat. However, she is improving in this
as she sees the model of the other staff wives. We have faults,
too; we love each other and are patient with each other as the
Lord is with us.

Some spirit of competition for the attention and approval of the
senior pastor.

Over criticism from some in the congregation concerning the youth
ministry.

In connection with the charismatic movement there has been some
tension felt.

9. In your view, what is the most important quality needed for team

leadership?

Examples of answers from team leaders:

Love, i.e. Christ's servant attitude to meet the needs of the
team members as well as a corporate identity.

Unselfishness. A servant's heart, genuine humility, an authentic
teachable spirit.

Sensitivity to the needs and expectations of the other members
of the team.

Openness, willing to listen, appreciation of other's gifts and
wisdom.

Humble wisdom, appreciation for the personhood and gifts of others.

Humility.

Clearly defined goals, purposes, sense of direction supported by a 'Praise the Lord' attitude.

Personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

Common goals and purpose.

Loyalty and commitment.

Openness and honesty.

Confidence in each other built on trust.

Love and understanding.

Communication.

Integrity, openness--vital walk with the Lord.

Loyalty.

Understanding openness to diversity.

Committed to the other men.

Willingness to serve rather than be served.

Examples of answers from subordinates:

Unconditional devotion to one another's success and growth-- spiritual union.

Knowledge of goal for team and wisdom to select the proper means of attainment; ability to get team to work together harmoniously.

One who leads and doesn't push, i.e. put the work on everyone else.

Understanding, consideration and communication.

Honest open discussion and relationship--regard for one another and one another's position--satisfied with your position and not wanting another job.

Open and honest two way communication combined with a good under- standing of human nature.

Gaining the respect of the group and motivating each member in his own sphere of activity.

The ability to get team members to work together toward envisioned goals, through the example of considerateness provided by the team leader.

True concern for well being (care and discipline) of his/her people.

Communication and trust.

Communication skill.

Sensitivity fine tuned by the Holy Spirit.

The most important quality is probably patience.

Willingness to be primarily a servant.

Administrative ability, ability to take control and take charge.

Determination to pay any price to achieve teamwork. The senior pastor must be open yet lead the way to this and know how to communicate.

Active loving concern in helping subordinates carry out ministerial duties--requires involvement, support, discipleship, personal involvement.

Spiritual maturity.

The leader must be willing to share decision making, the associate and staff must be willing to live with being number two.

Servant spirit, humility.

Clear open communication.

Clear conception of biblical goals, objectives and priorities will determine time use, staff relationships and direction of ministry team. . .

Genuine love for other team members.

The ability to enable others to realize their potential and channel it effectively.

The ability to give thanks to God for the other members gifts and desire to see the other members gifts used to bring the greatest profit to the church and the greatest glory to God.

Unconditional love for each other.

Communication and mutual confidence in one another/commitment to support one another.

A genuine interest in members of the team--seeking them out individually to discover their needs and minister to them.

Tactful dealing with difficult situations. Keeping a positive motivational attitude.

Biblical concept of love in practice--openness, honesty, consideration, good communications, carefully shared work loads, joy, prayer, humility, patience.

10. What is the most important quality needed in one who is functioning in a non-leadership position within the team structure?

Examples of answers from team leaders:

Faithful, available, teachable.

Feeling that he is a part of the plan and that his part is significant.

Dependability.

Absence of a desire to dominate.

Humble wisdom.

Submission.

Keen sense of responsibility for his/her part of the total task.

Love for the brethren.

Prayer support, input and interest.

Openness without demand.

Cooperation.

Trust and openness that produces loyalty.

Love and understanding.

Flexibility, openness.

Dependability.

Loyalty and submission.

Supportive of leader.

Loyalty and commitment.

Flexibility.

Examples of answers from team subordinates:

Humility and submission to authority--compatibility.

Desire to enhance ministry and leadership of the senior pastor.

Support and faithfulness to the effort, going as far as possible to carry out responsibilities.

Attitude of cooperation towards common goals.

Servant spirit and teachable spirit.

Spirit of cooperation and openness.

Flexibility in personal ministry; to maintain unity and avoid rigidity in one's relationship with other staff members.

Gracious honesty.

Ability to work effectively with others, including superiors, peers, and subordinates.

To think 'team' and be supportive.

Subjection without murmuring or disputing.

Good self-image and the ability to find fulfillment in his area of ministry. Must be submissive.

Free exchange of ideas and their effect on the program.

Humility--being able to take orders and carry them out in a true spirit of Christian service.

Sincere dedication to task involved, aiding leadership without usurping their perrogatives.

Ability to follow orders.

Accept your position and respect the chain of command.

Submissiveness.

Submission--seeing the need for team work.

Faithfulness to the task and submission to those in authority.

Recognize his own area of responsibility and fulfill it without impatience in regard to other areas which are not his.

Willingness to function responsibly (cooperatively and considerately) within the team, considered both as a group and as individuals.

Knowing authority structure, having confidence in it, willing to obey it with the option of being able to discuss differences and being able to accept final ruling.

Communication; clear job description.

Cooperative.

Understanding and acceptance of the purpose for the office of each leader.

Humility--not a false humility ('Mr. Milquetoast') but a desire to serve under the direction of another.

We have no non-leadership position.

11. How does your team resolve conflicts when they arise?

Examples of answers from team leaders:

Talk about them.

We address them openly and directly. We deal with them fully as (time allows) until they are solved.

By direct discussion between the two people involved.

Pray and talk it through to a mutually agreeable solution. Often we table matters for a week to think and pray about them.

Keep talking, take time to arrive at understanding; follow with positive prayer about what just happened.

We get them out in the open, discuss each others views, and pray about the situation.

Discussion and prayer.

Talk over differences, propose alternatives, and choose one.

Pray and talk them out.

Person-to-person.

Talk it out; pray together.

The team talks about it.

Discuss and pray about them, if unresolved share problem with church council.

Talk it out - Matt. 18.

Communication, prayer following scriptural guidelines.

Discussion.

Listen to diverse views, work towards a consensus.

Try to talk them through.

Direct confrontation of the problem with one another.

Examples of answers from subordinates:

Open discussion and prayer.

Associate pastor meets with the individuals involved.

Generally we request the conflicting parties to state clearly why they are opposing one another. Generally one or the other can be shown his error.

Discussion in total staff and/or privately between staff members.

Through group discussions at bi-weekly meetings and private conferences.

Everyone seems to seek to show patience and try to avoid a confrontation.

Usually by private informal conferences; occasionally by team discussion.

If those involved cannot resolve the problem another person confronts them before making it a team matter.

Discussion and clarification.

Most times conflicts are discussed, thought out, and prayed about-- until the conflict is resolved.

We talk about them; make motions, and stick by the decision of the majority.

Discussion-retreats; 'sweep them under the carpet'; do not mention them.

Try to discuss a little bit. Not good at this.

Usually a fast talk, but often conflicts just avoided by ingnoring them by submission to the leaders.

By vote and smaller group meetings.

Talk it out, decide together what to do and live with the decision.

Open honest discussion in spirit of love, prayer, reconciliation.

We share the problem openly--respond to the needs.

Personal confrontation between those involved with honest and open expression; compromise where necessary and possible; acceptance and love for each other and prayer for each other (specifically).

We usually sit down and talk them out.

Open sharing and honest discussion, with the leader seeing that at least a tentative mode for correction is reached which is sensitive to everyone's needs.

We openly share and counsel with one another and pray for one another.

Any personality conflicts or conflicts between team members are resolved immediately.

Have not experienced this yet. We are a pretty new team.

Talk it out.

Talk it out--often the pastor with person involved, the whole staff if necessary.

We talk to the ones involved.

Open communication--admitting fault, dealing with the error.

Depends on the level, as team is part of a hierarchy, on own level by discussion, compromise, vote.

12. What preventive measures have you built into your relationship as a team to prevent conflicts from occurring?

Examples of answers given by team leaders:

1. Weekly staff meetings.
2. Seeking to maintain communication with the pastor (senior) regarding programs and work.

Openness.

Understanding the chain of command.

Establish openness--so that even when ideas are not accepted, they are heard and considered.

More frequent meetings--retreats, etc.

Weekly meeting--answerability to the Board.

We meet to talk and pray two hours a week. Twice a month we meet to learn about something together (1 teaches); 3 times a year we take our wives on a retreat and have a time of formal and informal interaction together.

Honesty. An open relationship that expresses gratitude for one another. Willingness to confront, to hear criticism, and to know that the other person has ones best interest at heart when he shares it.

Openness and candor in discussion.

Lots of informal fellowship and prayer together. We have a weekly elders discipleship for elders and wives.

Prior agreement on goals of group and roles of individuals. Elect men of humble wisdom.

Prayer and cooperative planning.

Regular meetings and job descriptions with annual review of the latter.

Review each weeks work, talk over problems, give suggestions as to how or what should be done.

Weekly meetings and idea sharing.

Attempt to talk with regard to problems immediately--also weekly staff meetings.

Dealing with the matter immediately.

Examples of answers given by team subordinates:

We try to be open

Weekly staff meetings, bi-monthly staff days, yearly staff retreats with wives.

None that are apparent.

Weekly meetings.

Men are distributed individually to different areas to serve and do not come into close contact very often (about once a week).

Openness to confrontation and insights of others. I guess weekly meetings for discussion and prayer. Well established goals and objectives developed in a statement of purpose for our department.

Regular meetings for prayer, study lunch, business, periodic social activities together, open door policy with one another.

Encourage openness and honesty.

A pastor who is concerned with good relationships and who works at it.

Constant prayer and attention to our responsibilities.

A pulling mule won't kick!

Constant communication and check system.

1. Care in choice of team members; 2. willingness of leadership to discuss problems personally; 3. seeking to put Christ and His work ahead of difficulties.

Trying to be open and honest with each other at all times. Meeting to discuss problems etc. once a week.

Not to be critical--pray for each other, acceptance of each other.

A very clear definition of the nature of the rule of the elders, a very strong emphasis on the qualities of character each officer should possess, a very real awareness of discipline if one persists in creating trouble.

Frequent meetings of the staff--many social functions as staff families; high regard for other staff members shown by the senior pastor.

Regular bi-weekly meetings at which time discussion may be held on any topic a team member may wish.

1. Express my opinions to the proper authority.
2. Leave the problem there.
3. Go on in an attempt to fulfill my responsibilities.

We have attempted to provide opportunities for informal airing of problems before they escalate into serious conflict; and we have tried to maintain communication lines in order to be able to provide answers to questions.

None.

Try to inform one another of what we are doing.

None.

A three man pastoral relations committee to convey differences between pastor and board and congregation and work out problems.

Getting together with our families on an informal basis. We work on not letting our conversation be professional only.

Structured in the schedule for our weekly meeting is a time to share any problem. Quarterly planning sessions to insure that each member's calendar for the next quarter fits in with the work. Bi-monthly staff fellowship suppers, the wives included.

Perhaps being open to go one on one when we see a need--the senior pastor is always open for one on one with any staff member.

Weekly staff meetings. We clear calendars with each other, discuss coming events, plan together and then share personal and intimate prayer requests with each other followed by prayer time. Lunch together including secretaries. Bi-weekly Bible study, 2-3 staff couples retreats yearly. . .(usually a 24 hour overnight, expenses paid by a church businessman).

Being together frequently, taking turns sharing regularly, occasional retreats.

We let each one develop and affirm his own style, resolving any conflicts as we proceed.

Open communications continually. There is nothing that we cannot discuss and share personally. We also play racquet ball together about once a month or so.

If anyone speaks to us about another member of the staff, we tell them to go to the staff member and share it and we will do so too. That way, openness and honesty is cultivated. Prayer for each other is the key.

This material, along with the surveys and studies done by others, shows that the problem of interteam conflict is extensive enough to require attention.

II. THE NATURE AND CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Introduction

The word "conflict" is derived from the Latin "conflictus" which means literally, "to strike together." It is further defined as the "competitive or opposing action of incompatibles: antagonistic state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons)." A second meaning is a "mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands."[1]

The terms "conflict" and "teamwork" appear to be antithetical. For example, when Don Sutton of the Los Angeles Dodgers, engaged in a "slug fest" with his teammate, Steve Garvey, it was big news in the sports world. Great interest was generated because having teammates in conflict was so unlike the usual baseball donnybrook wherein two opponents swing away at each other.

One would think that a ministerial team would be made up of those united in heart and mind to do battle with the forces of evil and not with each other. The purpose of this discussion is to examine the nature and causes of conflict so that harmful division can be avoided.

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[1] Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, (Springfield, Mass.: G & C Merriam Co., 1973), p. 237.

Constructive Conflict

All conflict is not destructive and divisive; in fact, a
certain amount of conflict is necessary to any creative process
where progress is desired. Anthony H. Richmond comments, "Only
in a completely static society can conflict be completely elimi-
nated."[2]

Certainly the objective is not to maintain a static atmos-
phere within a working team. It should be a dynamic atmosphere
created by the coming together of creative, energetic, spirit-filled
individuals. Prov. 27:17 says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man
sharpens another." Charles Bridges observes, "So the collision of
different minds whets each the edge of the other."[3] It is helpful
here to remember the words of wisdom from Eccles. 10:10, "If the
axe is dull, and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed..."
So when minds are dulled by the lack of interaction, it could be
said that it takes a greater effort to accomplish anything of posi-
tive value.

If there is an atmosphere wherein opposing ideas and opinions
can be aired without sanctions, the results can be very positive.
This "think tank" approach can lead to new productive ventures that
would have been lost if freedom of expression was not permitted. This

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[2]Roger Bellows, Creative Leadership (Englewood Cliffs:
Prentice-Hall, 1959), p. 155.

[3]Charles Bridges, An Exposition of the Book of Proverbs
Marshalton, Delaware: Foundation for Religious Education, 1847),
pp. 513, 514.

kind of constructive conflict needs to be encouraged. Below are several suggestions for determining whether the conflict is truly constructive.

1. Are the opposing view points honest attempts to solve problems or achieve goals for the glory of God? Or are these opposing views reflective of personal ambition on the part of one or the other or both of the proponents? When personal ambition is a factor, the conflict is almost surely to be destructive.

2. Is there willingness to hear and discuss all sides of the issue? This requires the parties involved to try to look at the matter objectively and thoroughly.

3. Is there a willingness to compromise when such compromise is in the interests of progress in doing the will of God?

4. In the case of a stalemate, is there willingness to submit to the decision of the body, or when deadlocked, to the decision of the leader of the group? Many ministerial teams insist on a unanimous vote on a controversial issue before it is adopted as policy. This is good practice, but it usually requires that some submit to the majority in rendering their vote.

5. Is there the attitude that when the final decision is made that opposition will end and the plan adopted be fully supported?

This would include obedience to Eph. 4:26, "In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry." Creative people can get worked up over an issue and feel very strongly about their ideas. It is possible to do this without destroying others. The way to accomplish this is to direct the energy toward the problem and refrain from attacking persons.

For example, a person might say, "I feel very strongly that beginning a building program at this time would be unadvisable!" However, it would be destructive to say, "It's stupid to spend all that money on a building when the money could be used for a better purpose." Or an even worse example would be, "You're stupid to think that we need a new building!" (To say "it's stupid" is a more subtle way of attacking a person, but it is such an attack.)

To allow for the free and open exchange of views and opinions is somewhat risky in that feelings can be stirred. It is much less risky, however, than having an atmosphere where no one but the leader is free to express themselves. The person who is allowed to express himself and who is voted down, is happier than the person who is never invited to share his ideas at all. Also, the likelihood of arriving at some good new idea is enhanced greatly when everyone is free to participate.

Destructive Conflict

Conflicts Related to Communication

The ability to communicate is a wonderful gift from a most gracious creator. The ability to communicate effectively takes discipline and understanding as well as an abundant supply of grace.

This is true because interpersonal communication may be used for good or evil purposes. Words can be used to encourage, soothe, edify, instruct, enlighten and to show love. They also can be used to discourage, irritate, destroy, deceive, and to convey hatred. The quality of interpersonal relations within a ministerial team will

depend largely on the nature of the communication between the team members. Communication is then at the very heart of the problem of interteam conflict.

Communication - A Matter of the Heart

A number of Scriptures show the relationship between the heart and the mouth. In Matt. 12:22-37 is the record of Jesus' confrontation with the Pharisees regarding the source of His power. Jesus demonstrated His power by healing a demon possessed man who was blind and mute. His opponents could not deny the reality of the miracle so they countered by saying that His power was from the Devil and not from God. After easily destroying their sophomoric argument, Jesus taught them and us a most valuable lesson on communication. Verses 33 and 34 read:

> Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

The following chart further illustrates the connection between the heart and the mouth in the Psalms.

COMMUNICATION

"...out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks"

bad fruit	good fruit
Psalm 10:7 - "His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity." see vs. 4 - The wicked is spoken of - "God is not in all his thoughts."	Psalm 17:3 - "Thou has proved mine heart...I purpose that my mouth will not transgress."

bad fruit	good fruit
Psalm 17:10 - (vs. 9-the wicked) "...with their mouth they speak proudly."	Psalm 19:14 - "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."
Psalm 36:1-3 - "wicked..no fear of God before his eyes." vs. 3 - "The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit; he hath ceased to be wise, and to do good."	Psalm 34:1 - "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth."
Psalm 50:19 - "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit." vs. 16 - God is speaking to the wicked.	Psalm 37:30-31 - "The mouth of th righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of justice. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.
Psalm 59:12 - "For the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, let them even be taken in their pride; and for cursing and lying which they speak."	Psalm 39:1-3 - "I said, I will take heed to my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle... vs. 3 - "My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned; then spoke I with my tongue."
Psalm 62:4 - "...they delight in lies; they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly."	Psalm 49:3 - "My mouth shall spea of wisdom, and the meditation my heart shall be of understa
Psalm 63:11 - "The mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped."	Psalm 51:15 - "O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." (connected with heart in vs.
Psalm 144:8 - "Whose mouth speaketh vanity..."	Psalm 63:5 - "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.
	Psalm 71:8 - "Let my mouth be filled with thy praise and wi thy honor all the day." vs. 15 - "My mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day..."
	Psalm 89:1b - "...with my mouth I make known thy faithfulness all generations."

bad fruit	good fruit
	Psalm 109:30 - "I will greatly praise the Lord with my mouth." Psalm 119:43 - "...take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth..." Psalm 141:3 - "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." vs. 4 - "Incline not my heart to any evil thing..." Psalm 145:21 - "My mouth shall speak the praises of the Lord; and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever."

Heart and mouth are coupled again in Prov. 4:23, 24:

Watch over your heart with all diligence for from it flow
the springs of life. Put away from you a deceitful mouth,
and put devious lips far from you."

Here again, the cause of bad communication is the condition

of one's heart. For the sake of clarification, the term "heart"

should be defined. In the New Testament, the term "stands for man's

ego." It is simply the person ("the hidden person of the heart";

1 Pet. 3:4).[4] There is not much distance between the terms heart

(καρδία) and mind (νοῦς) in the New Testament. Theo

Sorg comments on this point:

A striking feature of the New Testament is the essential close-
ness of kardia to the concept nous, mind. Nous can also have
the meaning of person, a man's ego. Heart and mind (noemata
lit. thoughts) can be used in parallel (2 Cor. 3:14f.) or

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[4]Colin Brown, ed., The New International Dictionary of
New Testament Theology, vol. 2, (Exeter, Paternoster Press: 1976),
p. 182.

synonymously (Phil. 4:7). In such cases, the element of knowledge is more heavily emphasized with nous than with kardia, where the stress lies more on the emotions and the will. . . Thus it is the person, the thinking, feeling, willing ego of man, with particular regard to his responsibility to God, that the New Testament denotes by the use of kardia.[5]

Heart conditions that
effect communication

The fleshly heart. A vivid description of the fleshly heart is found in Galatians. In chapter five, verses 19-21, Paul lists the works of the flesh. It appears that this is not a random list, but has a definite design. In contrast to the beautifully symmetrical list in verses 22-23, the list in verses 19-21 is ugly. The arrangement seems to be to group together sins common to the Galatian situation. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, which fact is indicated by the phrase, "and the like" in verse 21.

The largest group in the list is the third which is comprised of eight items. The total list is arranged thusly: 3 - 2 - 8 - 2. Though difficult to prove, it appears that Paul's intention was to show the course of interpersonal conflict from initial hostility to permanent division and continuing envy. The list could be illustrated as follows:

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[5]Ibid. p. 182

1. hatred, hostile feelings

2. discord, wrangling, strife, contention

3. jealousy

4. fits of rage-temper tantrums

5. selfish ambition-jockeying for position

6. dissensions factions

7. Well, try and get it !

Hey! that's our pulpit !

ihs

envy

Since this list is so important to this discussion, it would be well to take each term and see its relation to the problem of conflict within ministerial teams.

The list begins with ἐχθραι , which is usually translated "hatred." The form is plural and could be translated "hostilities"

or "enmities." R. Alan Cole paraphrases the term "hostile feelings."[6]

This is the opposite of "love," which heads the list in verse 22. H. Bietenhard comments on the two basic heart attitudes:

When our relationships with others rise above absolute indifference, they are conditioned by basic attitudes which may be positive or negative in character. The New Testament describes an inward attitude which is directed positively toward the well-being of another as love or friendship, and the esteem which derives from such an attitude as honour. The opposite concepts are enmity and hatred.[7]

A negative attitude toward others is natural to the flesh. To the self-centered person, other people are to be used, not loved. Hostility increases greatly whenever the self is threatened. Loss of prestige, loss of advantage, a blocking of ambition, or any undermining of personal security is an occasion for the sinful heart to burn with hatred toward the source of irritation. Teamwork offers many opportunities for the flesh to do what comes naturally.

Sin unchecked always progresses toward its goal of bringing death. James 1:15 reads, "...after desire has conceived, it gives birth to death." As hostility grows it causes strife ($\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$). This is the first outward manifestation of the inward hostile attitude.

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[6]R. A. Cole, "The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians," The Tyndale New Testament Commentary, (London: Tyndale Press, 1965), p. 161. The eight item list reads, according to Cole, "hostile feelings, contentiousness, jealousy, temper tantrums, canvassing for position, dissensions, factions, envy."

[7]H. Bietenhard, "Enemy, Enmity, Hate," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Colin Brown, ed., (Exeter, England: Exeter Paternoster Press, 1975), p. 553.

It is an interesting feature of this list that it contains three sets of synonyms. The second ($\check{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$) and fifth ($\epsilon\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$ words in the list are often translated by the same English word "strife." $\check{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$ is used nine times in the New Testament translated four times as "strife" otherwise "debate" (2), "variance" (1), "contentions" (2); $\epsilon\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$ is used seven times, translated five times "strife" and the other two times as "contention". The other two sets of synonyms include the third $\zeta\check{\eta}\lambda os$ and eighth word $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu os$ both meaning jealousy or envy, and the sixth and seventh words which speak of division.

The fact that Paul uses words close in their meaning gives further evidence that he intends that a design in the arrangement of the words be recognized. The synonyms found later in the list are fuller in their meaning showing a progression in the growth of hostility. $\check{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$ conveys the idea of quarreling. For example, in 1 Cor. 1:11, Paul addresses himself to the problem of hostile relations in the congregation at Corinth: "My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you."

In 2 Cor. 12:20 $\check{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$ is found again in a list with $\epsilon\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$ "...I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder." Here the first word in the list is $\check{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$ and the fourth is $\epsilon\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$. (The King James Version of the Bible translates the two "debates" and "strifes" respectively.) This again illustrates that the Apostle Paul must have been emphasizing the difference in meaning between these two words.

$\dot{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota$ comes from $\dot{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\upsilon\omega$ which means to spin wool,
or work in wool. It came to be used for "electioneering for
office, courting popular applause by trickery and low arts. In
usage, its meaning varies widely, but it has the general thrust
of "base self-seeking."[8]

It may be reading too much into Paul's use of it here to
see it as a reference to the activity of an offended party who is
"canvassing for position"[9] among the members of the Galatian con-
gregations. Thus it would refer to the spreading of the strife
from the individual parties involved to the formation of a group
of sympathizers around each of the opponents.

This is certainly the course that conflict takes in many
cases. In the list found in Galatians chapter five, $\dot{\epsilon}\rho\iota s$ and
$\dot{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\iota\alpha\iota$ are separated by two other terms. These terms ex-
plain the reason for the spread of the strife from quarreling to
the attempt to form supporting parties. ($\zeta\eta\lambda os$ and $\theta\upsilon\mu o\iota$)

$\zeta\eta\lambda os$ the third word in the list is often translated simply
"zeal" (John 2:17; Rom. 10:2; 2 Cor. 7:11; 9:2; Phil. 3:6; Col. 4:13).
When focused upon others and what they possess, it may still have a
good sense as well as a bad sense. In the good sense $\zeta\eta\lambda os$ is
the desire to emulate, to acquire what belongs to or is characteris-
tic of another by legitimate means. In the negative sense it means

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[8] Gerhard Kittel, ed., Theological Dictionary of the New
Testament, vol. 2, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing
Co., 1964), p. 661.

[9] Cole, Epistle of Paul to Galatians, p. 163.

jealousy, the desire to have what belongs to another or to protect the advantage one has over another by any means, fair or foul.

Of the seven times it is used, in five it is in combination with $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota S$ or $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$ (Rom. 13:13 $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota S$; 1 Cor. 3:3 $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota S$; 2 Cor. 12:20 both $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota S$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$ also Gal. 5:20; James 3:16 $\acute{\epsilon}\rho\iota\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha\iota$). This seems to indicate that there is a cause and effect relationship between the two words. It appears that the cause and effect relation can be either jealousy causes strife or strife causes jealousy. The two are intertwined like two poisonous serpents. In human experience the two grow as they feed upon one another. Quarreling causes jealousy as each party guards their advantages and seeks to take away the advantage of their opponent. This in turn causes greater strife between the two.

$\theta\upsilon\mu\acute{o}\iota$ signifies the emotional outbursts that are characteristic of deepening hostility. This fourth term in the list is variously translated as rage, passion, wrath, or anger. Dr. Jay Adams points out that anger can be externalized in a "blow up" which includes shouting, screaming, throwing things, etc., or it may be internalized causing the subject to "clam up."[10]

Among Christian workers, clamming up is probably more common than blowing up. Respectibility must be maintained along with the rage. The results of internalizing anger are destructive and often include communication breakdown and less obviously, depression.

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[10] Jay E. Adams, The Christian Counselor's Manual, (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1973), p. 350.

The rage gives birth to further strife conveyed by the word ἐριθείαι. The picture of an embittered person spreading the cancer to others is described in the warning in Heb. 12:15, "See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many," (underlining mine). Here the angered person can be seen campaigning for votes in his quest for comfort and revenge.

It has happened too often (once would be too often) that an assistant pastor or youth director have caused a split in a congregation by such activity. Though done in the supposed interest of saving the church from an incompetent leader, the impetus often comes from a bitter spirit.

The result of such an effort is διχοστασίαι (division or dissension) in the congregation. If it has not spread to the larger body it causes a division between those involved. The term is used only three times in the New Testament. All three times it is used by Paul (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 3:3; Gal. 5:20). It appears that the difference between διχοστασίαι and the next word in the list, αἱρέσεις , is a matter of degree. διχοστασίαι speaks of people lining up in opposition to each other but still part of the same body. αἱρέσεις denotes the progress of the squabble to the formation of permanent parties.

αἱρέσεις is most often translated "heresy." It signifies the formation of a separate school or party which stands in opposition to the norm. It is used to designate the major parties in Judaism in Acts 5:17 (Sadducees) and 15:5 (Pharisees). In Gal. 5:20 it speaks of those opposing parties resulting from hostility. It is sobering

to see that such fracturing is inevitable when sin has its way in the human heart. Those who are interested in working in harmony for the glory of God should take every eruption of hostility seriously lest sin run its course and cause such division.

The list does not end with the parties divided; it ends with "envy." This seems strange as though Paul is piling word upon word for no good reason. A second look at the meaning of φθόνος shows that this is not the case. W. E. Vine comments on φθόνος "envy, as the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others; this evil sense always attaches to the word..."[11]

William Hendrikson explains the difference between ζῆλος and φθόνος :

> Whenever these two, jealousy and envy, are distinguishable as here, the former can be defined as the fear of losing what one has, while the later is the displeasure aroused by seeing someone else have something. One of the most soul-destroying vices is envy, an evil which, as the probable etymology of the Greek word implies, causes one to waste away (Prov. 14:30).[12]

D. H. Field, following Aristotle, makes a similar comparison adding to the understanding of the differences between the two words.

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[11]W. E. Vine, An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, (London: Oliphants Ltd., 1940), vol. 2, p. 37.

[12]W. Hendrikson, Galatians, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1968), p. 220.

Aristotle, for example, defines ζῆλος as the desire
to have what another man possesses, without necessarily
bearing a grudge against him because he has it, while
'phthonos' is concerned more to deprive the other man
of the desired thing than to gain it.[13]

With these distinctions in mind, it is easier to see the
design of Paul's list. Division, even of a permanent nature, does
not end the hostile relations between the parties. Even after they
are divided they look with envy at one another wishing the worst for
the other and scheming to deprive the other of every advantage. So
one could compare the picture of the divorced couple fighting over
property and children long after the marriage has ended. It is also
not uncommon to see the groups resulting from a church split continuing
to hold grudges, and plotting destructive moves against each other.

Is there ever danger of such a thing happening between those
who work together in a team ministry? Sadly, the answer is yes. It
has happened that even those who may be referred to as "men of God"
sometimes spend their energies seeking to destroy the ministry of a
former colleague because of envy.

It is at this point that honest self-evaluation must be made.
People, particularly those in places of leadership, are prone to
having blind spots in their self-analysis. The avoidance of con-
flict is dependent on allowing the Spirit of God to search out
attitudes or motives that are unworthy of those who represent Jesus
Christ.

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[13]D. H. Field, "Envy," The New International Dictionary
of New Testament Theology, vol. 1, (Exeter: Paternoster Press,
1975), p. 557.

The clear implication in this eight-term list is that if hostility is not recognized and resolved at its onset, it will produce the full range of ugly results.

The resentful heart. The word "bitter" is a sense word. It has to do with how a thing tastes or feels. Something with a penetrating odor or disagreeable taste is said to be bitter. Bitterness is like poison in a person's digestive system. It hurts, it threatens and it can kill. The Old Testament speaks of bitter grief, e.g. Ruth 1:13; 1 Sam. 1:10; 15:32. The death of one loved is bitterness to the soul. (Perhaps the idea of anger is implicit in the term since anger is an important element in grief.) In Matt. 26:75 Peter wept "bitterly," i.e. in grief at his betrayal of his Lord. His behavior had poisoned his life and his convulsive weeping was significant of the inner pain he experienced. The New Testament word πικρία means originally something sharp and penetrating. It speaks often of something that penetrates the senses and causes discomfort. "In the sphere of the soul" writes Wilhelm Bern Michaelis, it has to do with "the experience of what is unpleasant, unexpected, or undesired."[14]

In some cases the poison in the inner being is unbelief, e.g. Deut. 29:18, "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood." This

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[14]Gerhard Kittel, ed., The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), p. 122.

is probably the text that the writer of Hebrews had in mind when he wrote, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and by it many be defiled..."

In other cases, the poison is animosity. A resentment which usually grows out of a breakdown in interpersonal relations. Another term which is used to describe this kind of bitterness is the word "grudge." The poison works in the host to distort reality and create a picture of the person disliked which has little or no basis in fact. It stirs up passions and plans directed toward the hurt of the other. It eats away incessantly until it dominates the thoughts and actions of the embittered person. Such bitterness is serious business and is a common factor in interpersonal conflict.

Genesis chapter four records the conflict involving Cain and Abel. This account of the first murder in human history is terse, but reveals the ugliness of bitter hatred and its results. It is also a clear example of interpersonal breakdown which cannot be blamed on environmental conditioning or genetically related instability. Though Cain and Abel lived in a sinful world, they were only a generation away from a sinless utopia. Also, even though Adam and Eve had sinned against God, they had not forgotten God. It is probable that they instructed their children in the principles and practices necessary to a right relationship with the God who made them.

It is impossible to understand how such a heinous crime could occur in the first household apart from understanding the nature of

sin. James, the brother of the Lord, describes the motions of sin in chapter one, verse fourteen of his epistle, "...each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death."

The words "his own evil desire" are of primary importance here. These words reveal the fact that the source of sin is within man. (cf. Mark 7:20-23) It was not the environment or heredity which drove Cain toward an unavoidable act. The image of God within Cain had been so twisted by sin that he served only his own desires and not God.

The reference to desire needs a closer look. Thomas Manton once wrote, "The soul of man is chiefly and mainly made up of desires". . .and, "the bent of the soul, the most vigorous, command-ing, swaying faculty of the soul is desire..."[15] Because of sin, man sets his sights on objectives that are contrary to God's will. He wants what God says he should not have and he wants such things only for himself. So both the objective and the motivation for achieving it are inappropriate.

Cain was the first baby born into this world. Eve was grati-fied with her accomplishment and perhaps thought the new baby repre-sented the answer to God's promise (Gen. 3:15). Cain was given all

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[15] Thomas Manton, An Exposition of the Epistle of James, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Associated Publishers and Authors, Inc., no date), p. 93.

the privileges of the first born, a fact which possibly distorted
his sense of his own importance. Helmut Thielicke describes Cain's
ego trip in How the World Began:

> ...from the beginning, Cain grew up with the suggestion that
> first rights in everything were his due. The will to power
> and the egotistical self-assertion which were in his blood
> and ours too--for we are all the children of Cain--appear to
> him to be perfectly legitimate. For him, Abel is by no
> means his neighbor, who has his own rights in life. For him,
> Abel is neither a partner nor even a brother, but simply
> exists to be used. 'I, Cain, am the star, the privileged
> one; but Abel is simply an extra on the stage. Abel is of
> interest to me only in so far and as long as he serves my
> career, as long as I can make a profit out of him. Apart
> from this--that is, as a man--he is non-existent, he is a
> negligible quantity.'[16]

Cain played his advantage over Abel for all it was worth. The desires
that burned within him were directed toward retaining his advantages
and furthering his own satisfaction. When his offering was rejected,
it was a shattering experience for proud Cain. The Scripture says
that Cain's "anger grew hot and his face fell" (vs. 5, Berkley
Version).

While it appears obvious why Cain became angry it may be
useful to analyze the process involved further.

As has been mentioned, "desires" are an important factor
in the human heart. Anger is related to desire in that anger very
often is triggered by blocked or frustrated desire, e.g.

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[16]Helmut Thielicke, How the World Began, (Philadelphia:
Fortress Press, 1961), p. 191.

--desired objective
to buy an ice cream
cone
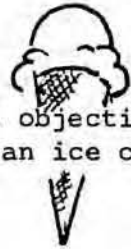
anger----------block------------desire unfulfilled
ice cream cones
are $.55 and I
only have a quarter

The heat (intensity) of the anger is usually in direct proportion

to the strength of the desire. There are other influencial factors

including the degree of self-control the person has, their tempera-

ment, etc.

Cain desired to retain supremacy including supremacy over

Abel and wanted God to applaud his efforts. (He came to God to

receive applause for himself rather than to offer praise to God.)

When his efforts to gain this approval were frustrated, he became

very angry. The illustration on the following page attempts to

portray the process Cain went through.

---------------------------------desired objective-
                                 to be approved by
                                 God on his own
                                 merit

                 God's rejection
                 of offering -
        ----------block   --------objective not
                 (real block -   obtained
                 Cain's wrong
                 attitude and
                 wrong action)

        ----------imagined block---------therefore I can't
                 God's unfair-   have my way
                 Abel's upstaging
                 me

Because of this distorted thinking, Cain blamed God and also
blamed Abel for his loss. The nature of his reaction is described
in Prov. 19:3, "A man's own folly ruins his life yet his heart
rages against the Lord." In order to gain approval, Cain needed to
humble himself before God and acknowledge his sinfulness and God as
the source of all good (including his own worth). Cain was unwilling
to do this. He shifted the blame to God and to his brother and
burned in bitter hatred toward them both. This resulted in the rejec-
tion of God's gracious offer (if you do what is right you'll be
approved) and the murder of Abel.

Cain's anger and blame-shifting soured his mind and contri-
buted to his sinful response. He became a bitter man and vented his
hatred on his innocent younger brother. It appears that he remained
unrepentent and bitter throughout his life and passed some of the

venom on to his progeny. When he said, "My punishment is worse than I can stand," he was not expressing a penitent attitude but one of self-pity. He continued to think God unfair and justified himself.

Cain hardly seems a likely candidate for a place on a ministerial team. Yet every minister of Christ is capable of the kind of attitudes and behavior that Cain exhibited. When John writes to believers and says, "Do not be like Cain,"[17] he is talking of the avoidance of a real possibility. We can and sometimes do become embittered toward our closest associates. We may not club them to death in a field someday, but murder may be in our hearts. ("Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer." 1 John 3:15.)

Bitterness most often is a possibility when a person loses something he wants very much to retain. Grief can turn to bitter anger if the loss of a loved one is not accepted and their demise blamed on God or some human being. Some people react in bitterness to financial loss or the loss of health. At times it comes as a sinful reaction to a lost opportunity. In one such case, money saved for a person's college education had to be used to defray the expenses of a serious illness in the family. The boy who was to go to college had to go to work to help in the economic crisis. He became bitter and stayed that way through much of his life.

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[17] 1 John 3:12

Bitterness may also be a sinful response to what is felt to be injustice. There is loss involved and it is thought that the loss is suffered because of unfairness on someone's part (usually God is the one charged with injustice). Because of the conclusion, "I'm getting a raw deal," there is often an outpouring of self-pity which along with the anger leads to depression.

Envy and bitterness are often bound together in the heart of one who is responding sinfully to a given situation. The person not only says, "Why can't I have or be what so and so has or is?" but they become bitter because their desire is not fulfilled.

In team relationships bitterness is a real threat to unity and harmony. For leaders the threat may be the greatest in those relationships where a subordinate is thought to be undermining his position, thus threatening his advantage. It must be remembered that bitterness is a sinful response and is never necessary. In trying to analyze situations where bitterness is the response of a leader, we are not saying that this is what must be, but because of sin, what sometimes does occur.

First, let us look at a leader who has the wrong desires for being a leader.

------------------------------desired objective--
I want people to like, respect, and look up to me. I want to be in the spot light, center stage, most of the time.

It isn't wrong to want people to like you and respect
and follow you unless this desire becomes primary. A legitimate
primary desire would be to want to exercise one's gifts in response
to the call of Christ for the glory and furtherance of His Kingdom.

The person who has as his primary desire to have people
like, respect, or follow him is a very insecure individual. Every-
one is insecure to some extent, but if a person needs constant
stroking with positive affirmations of his importance and worth,
the situation is out of hand. The response of such a person to
others receiving attention is childish. It is similar to the
reaction of a three year old when mother brings a new baby home and
cuddles and kisses it. The three year old may later get under the
bassinet and try to give the baby a ride to the floor. The baby is
siphoning off some of the attention and that must be stopped!

Leaders may get uncomfortable in a similar way when team
members receive attention and commendation for their work.

---------------interference---------objective-- I
want the spot-
light on me.
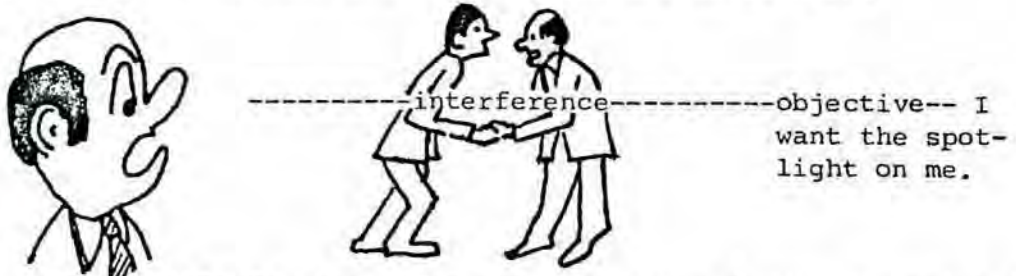
If the interference continues and more and more attention is
directed toward the associate, the leader may become bitter, resent-
ing the very presence of the offending party on the team. The
bitterness causes a breakdown in communication and the relationship
between the leader and the team member becomes cold and tense.

There are other causes of resentment on the part of leaders

toward subordinates. Another important cause is prejudice. Pre-

judice is defined as:

> An antipathy (or dislike) based upon a faulty and inflex-
> ible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It
> may be directed toward a group as a whole, or toward an
> individual because he is a member of that group. The net
> effect of prejudice, thus defined is to place the object
> of prejudice at some disadvantage not merited by his own
> misconduct.[18]

The inflexible generalization may have its roots in a bad

experience with someone representative of a certain group or class

or people. Henceforth, everyone in that category is treated with

the same disdain as was the perpetrator of the bad experience.

In one interview a pastor mentioned some of the difficul-

ties he had with certain idealistic staff members. In reference

to Directors of Christian Education and Music Ministers, he said:

> They came out of school, and every classroom was to
> have so many cubic feet of air space, and every black-
> board was to be a certain size, etc. They had been
> taught what the ideal was. Well, in the local church
> you do not always have ideals. The same thing is true
> of Ministers of Music. They come out of school and
> immediately expect the people to understand the intri-
> cacies of Bach.

These generalizations may not be inflexible in this pastor's

case, but the potential for prejudice can be seen.

There are some who tend to make sweeping generalizations

about any man who works in a subordinate position. One prominent

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[18]Gordon Alport, The Nature of Prejudice, (Garden City,
New York: Doubleday, 1954), p. 10, quoted by Gary Collins in
Living in Peace, p. 52.

minister speaking at the Philadelphia Sunday School Association Convention some years ago said in his address: "If all the assistant pastors in the world were laid end to end around the equator, we would all be better off." There was laughter in the large audience, but the remark was more pathetic than funny.

It is no less true that the position of senior pastor is stereotyped by some. Motives and actions may be attributed to a man in leadership out of prejudice. Team members may make judgments that are highly inaccurate because of such distorted thinking.

Whatever the cause, bitterness or resentment in the heart of any member of a group toward his fellows is bound to cause trouble sooner or later.

The envious heart. The terms translated "jealous" or "envy" have already been looked at under "the fleshly heart." Here the problem of envy will be treated more fully.

The fact that envy is so often in the company of strife and division in the Scriptures gives evidence of its importance as a divider of men. Though often hidden from view, envy is probably at the bottom of many conflicts involving people working together in some form of ministry. For this reason it would be well to become more familiar with what Scripture teaches about envy.

The Apostle Paul shows that envy is part of the reprobate mind in Romans chapter one. John Murray defines the reprobate mind as "one abandoned or rejected of God and therefore not fit for any

activity worthy of approbation or esteem."[19] In Rom. 1:28 Paul speaks of such a mind as he brings his vivid portrayal of men under God's wrath to a conclusion, "...since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done."

The Apostle then uses twenty-one terms to describe the unfitting behavior of men apart from God. The first four terms used seem to be general in nature: "wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity." Following these the word $\phi\theta\acute{o}\nu o\nu$ (envy) heads a list of anti-social sins. It is possible that Paul intended that envy be seen as the cause of the other four: "murder, strife, deceit, and malice."

So the mind that will not retain worthy thoughts of God is filled with ugly thoughts of how to do others in. The same irrational thinking that sees God as a threat to autonomy and freedom sees others as a lesser but similar threat. The redeemed who have been brought home to God should have no room for that which characterizes the enemies of God.

In Titus 3:1-3 Paul encourages Titus to instruct the Cretans in the Christian grace of meekness. Perhaps to help Titus to be more patient with the faltering Cretans, Paul reminds Titus of his former life. In verse three he says, "At one time we too were

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[19]John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, vol. 1, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1959), p. 49.

foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy (φθόνῳ), being hated and hating one another." He then goes on to describe God's gracious salvation and exhorts Titus to "stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good." Paul makes it quite clear that envy has no place in the life of the believer. This is that which was once characteristic of interpersonal relations, but is no more to be so.

Paul makes the point in 1 Tim. 6:3-10 that there is to be a clearly seen contrast between the teacher of the Gospel and false teachers. False teachers are here described as anti-social and contentious. Paul describes these teachers as being "conceited (τετύφωται --proud, literally beclouded in smoke) and understanding nothing." That is, they think highly of themselves, their intelligence and wide knowledge, etc., but in reality they know nothing. Such people have "an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments that result in envy, quarrelling, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind..." (vv. 4, 5a)

This is such a vivid description of interpersonal conflict that it requires some analysis:

1) <u>cause</u> - human pride

2) <u>which leads to</u> - an unhealthy interest in controversies. In pride the teacher wished to match wits with all comers to show the superiority of his knowledge. Controversy is a kind of intellectual

boxing wherein others are looked upon as opponents to be destroyed.

3) <u>result</u> - (φθόνος) "the displeasure aroused by seeing someone else have something." Probably here it refers to any advantage an opponent might have. It is clear to see why Paul aroused such envy in those who were false brethren or false teachers. They doubtless boiled with hatred because of his superior God-given wisdom and the success of his efforts.

4) <u>which further leads to</u> - strife (ἔρις), quarrelling. Donald Guthrie comments: "All the evil results mentioned are mental activities, with some discernable progression, for dissension is bound to follow <u>envy</u>. In fact, on every occasion except one where ἔρις , the Greek word here rendered <u>strife</u>, is used in the New Testament, it is conjoined with a word for <u>envy</u> (three times with φθόνος as here and elsewhere with ζῆλος .) It is significant that Paul alone uses ἔρις and included it in all his lists of the works of unrighteousness. Railing, i.e., slander, and <u>evil surmising</u> are inevitable concomitants, while <u>perverse disputings</u>, i.e., mutual irritations, are inseparable from 'men depraved in mind' (Moffat): for when reason is morally blinded, all correctives to unworthy behavior are banished, and the mind becomes <u>destitute</u> (RV 'bereft') of the truth."[20]

The phrase, "...constant friction between men..." is used here of these false teachers who are "of corrupt mind," (v. 5,NIV).

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[20]Donald Guthrie, <u>The Pastoral Epistles</u>, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 111, 112.

It is a sad fact that the same phrase could sometimes be used to describe the relations between those who are supposed to be spirit-filled men, who teach the pure Word of God. How instructive it is that this matter of rubbing each other the wrong way is never treated lightly in Scripture. It is a serious matter evidencing the motions of sin in the lives of those involved.

This passage in 1 Timothy 6 goes on to reveal the chief motivation of these false teachers. They were clearly interested in engaging in a ministry for what they could gain from it materially, (v. 5). In verses 9 and 10, Paul comments on such motivation:

> People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

The relationship between love of money and envy is obvious. The destruction of opponents is a necessary prerequisite to increasing one's take. Anyone who stands in the way of financial betterment becomes a special target for malicious effort.

Chapter three of James is of special value to this discussion because the writer is appealing to those who would be teachers of God's people (James 3:1). In verse 13 it appears that he is again giving special attention to those aspiring to be teachers when he says, "Who is wise and understanding among you?" The word translated "understanding" could refer to "expert or professional knowledge"[21] such as would be the possession of trained teachers. It

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[21]R. V. Tasker, The General Epistle of James, Tyndale Commentary on the New Testament, (London: Tyndale Press, 1957), p. 79.

is likely that James is addressing those who thought themselves

qualified to teach, not necessarily those who were functioning

in the office. Whoever they were they were approaching the task

of teaching with the wrong spirit and thus with an earthly rather

than heavenly wisdom.

R. W. Dale expresses his disdain for the display of such

wisdom in the church and underlines this warning:

> This is a dreary and depressing passage. It reminds us that
> the joy and strength of the churches of apostolic times were
> impaired by the very spirit and temper which have desolated
> the religious life of so many churches in later generations.
> Even in those early days, there were men who had a measureless
> self-conceit, a bitter jealousy of those whom their brethren
> regarded with affection and trust, an arrogant confidence in
> their own opinion and their own judgment; men in whom there was
> very little of the spirit of Christ, but who were quite cer-
> tain that they, and they alone, had the mind of Christ; men
> who were resolved, whatever might come of it, to force upon the
> Church their own beliefs, either with regard to doctrine or
> practice; who made parties in the Church to carry out their
> purposes, held secret meetings, flattered those who stood by
> them as being faithful to the conscience of Christ, and disparaged
> the fidelity of all who differed from them. Even then such men
> broke up the peace of churches, and in the confusion which they
> created many wicked things were said, and many wicked things
> were done. These men had power, real power of a kind, but it
> was not a wisdom that came 'from above.' They showed the same
> kind of faculty that is possessed by men whose ambition is
> wholly earthly and unspiritual; they practiced the same arts.
> Their power was a real power; but it was 'earthly, sensual,
> devilish.' The passage stands on the pages of the Epistle as
> an awful warning to the Church of every generation.[22]

Dale's comments still ring true even though he wrote in the

nineteenth century. As applied to ministries involving more than one

'teacher,' the warning is especially significant. Where a number of

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[22]R. W. Dale, The Epistle of James, (London: Hodder &
Stoughton, 1895), pp. 108, 109.

people ordained to church office are working together, the potential
for envy and selfish ambition is increased. Such people usually
have deep conviction on minor points of doctrine as well as the
major verities. There is bound to be some disagreement from time
to time on either a point of doctrine or practice. If earthly
wisdom prevails then "disorder and every evil practice" will not
only tear the team to shreds but will inevitably affect the church
as well. Since this is the result that the Devil would certainly
desire, it is not surprising that such wisdom is termed, "devilish"
by James.

"It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry,"
(Phil. 1:15a) exclaims the imprisoned Apostle. It hardly seems
possible that these words (φθόνον καὶ ἔριν) that are used
to describe the lost, the unwise, and the materialistic are here
used to describe proclaimers of the true Gospel. There is no evidence
that their message was faulty. Paul speaks of them as those who
"preach Christ" and he rejoices in the fact that their message is
being heard. (vv. 15, 17, 18) The problem centered in their attitude
and their motivation. As Jac Muller comments:

> The point in question here is that of a personal antithesis
> or antipathy, an attitude which was pro-Christ but anti-Paul.
> It is possible that to a great measure it was a 'question of
> prestige' that brought a section of the Christians at Rome in
> opposition to Paul.[23]

How true it is that those who command the admiration of the
Christian public are often the targets for malicious words and deeds

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[23]Jac J. Muller, The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians,
The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand
Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955), p. 53.

calculated to cause them discomfort and to reduce their follow-
ing.

In a team effort it is usually the case that certain mem-
bers receive more public recognition and admiration than do others.
In some cases certain team members may receive more acclaim than
the team leader or other veteran members. This situation has a
high potential for "envy and strife" unless the passed-over members
can handle the matter with grace and understanding.

There is fierce competition in the evangelical world today
for minds, bodies, and money. Big crowds, big budgets, big proper-
ties seem to be the measure of spiritual success. In the pursuit
of such success it is not uncommon that tactics are employed to
bloody a rival and take his spoils. The most common method is to
convince others through propaganda that the rival is unworthy of
support for one reason or the other. At times this is done in the
interest of "standing for the truth." There is, of course, a
legitimate exposure of evil and a need to warn the sheep of real
wolves but all that is done under this banner is not legitimate.

A rivalry between two well known Christian leaders in
recent days has led to extremes on the part of some of their supporters.
At a large meeting of ministers, a spokesman for one of the leaders
railed against his opponent in an address calculated to win the
loyalty of those present. At one point, he took a publication edited
by the rival and threw it to the platform and jumped up and down on
top of it. He closed his message with an invitation. All those who
would pledge their loyalty to the man he represented were to come

forward and stand at the front of the church. Such a scene can hardly be imagined, but it was reported by an eye witness to have occurred as described. It is illustrative of how jealousy and rivalry can cause people to loose their senses.

This same kind of rivalry occurs within ministerial teams though not often so dramatically portrayed. It is more usual for the envy to cause those involved to simmer in silence until the pot boils over.

The anxious (threatened) heart. When a minister is faced with a situation that evokes the fear of being rejected, disapproved or judged inadequate for the task, he feels threatened and anxious. Such anxiety puts a strain on his relations with others with whom he is working. This is especially so if his associates are the source of the threat directly or indirectly.

For example, a senior minister in a growing church may agree with his board that it is time to call an associate pastor. The new man may have strengths in areas where the senior pastor is weak or may be gifted in the same area that the senior pastor perceives is his greatest strength. The new man is well received by the congregation. The senior pastor feels uneasy and watches like a hawk for any hint of disloyalty to his leadership. He begins to fear that he is losing ground and that the new man is gradually replacing him in the hearts of his people. His thoughts may become irrational. "This new man is trying to take over!" (Sometimes this is true.) Or he may conclude, "It won't be very long until they will be getting rid of me."

As with any fear, the senior pastor may either fight the threat or flee from it. In some cases, he may do both. Though he tries to hide it, there is a growing hostility towards his associate and he may say and do things that evidence this hostility. His relationship with the associate becomes distant and curt. Without making his actions too visible, he is running away from involvement with his competitor. This is a very sad picture, but all too common.

For the associate the threat takes a different shape. He is usually trying hard to be useful and have a ministry among the people. At every turn he is frustrated by the senior pastor's moves to limit his activity. If he is allowed to make decisions at all, these are often reversed. If he begins to develop a ministry that looks promising, he may be asked to move on to some other area or the senior may begin to work in the same area where he is seeing success and take over that area. In other cases, the senior pastor may even down play that area and minimize the associate's efforts. There are many possible combinations.

The effect on the associate (or team subordinate) is that he becomes frustrated, resentful, and begins to think of a way out of the situation. His expectations have been crushed and he cannot see how a ministry is possible in such a situation. This is one reason why the tenure of multiple staff subordinates is often short-lived.

In 1 Samuel 18, the record of King Saul's jealousy and fear of David is given. The emotional progression goes from anger (v. 8)

to envy (v. 9) to fear (v. 12, "Saul was afraid of David"; v. 15, "When Saul saw how successful he was, he was afraid of him"; v. 29, "Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.")

Saul had already been rejected by God (chapter 15) so fear of rejection was grounded in fact. He knew he was disapproved and also knew that he would be replaced. David was not an imagined threat to him; he was to be the new king. Saul still had opportunity to repent and bow out graciously. Instead, he yielded himself to sin and allowed himself to become an instrument of Satan. His heart was so wicked that he would have condemned his own daughter Michal, to a life of sorrow in seeing his rival put away.

It would be difficult to press all the points of this account as an illustration of what sometimes happens in relations between Christian leaders and their subordinates. It does serve as a fitting example of a leader who is threatened by a competent subordinate. While few senior pastors throw javelins at their associates, some go through emotional patterns not unlike those seen in Saul.

First Samuel 18:6 describes the welcome the women of Israel gave to the returning army. They had put together a victory song, a line of which said: "Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands." The song reflects the insensitivity often seen in people. For example, congregations can be very fickle and remarks may be made that cut at a man's spirit. A senior minister may over-hear one of his parishioners say after the new associate preaches,

"It's been a long time since we heard preaching like that!" The remark stabs at the pastor's heart laying open tender flesh.

Saul became angry and thought within himself, "They have credited David with tens of thousands...but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" Again, while all that applies to Saul may not apply to the team leader who is faced with an occasion for jealousy, yet there is a parallel. The success and praise of the subordinate may be interpreted as a prelude to disaster for the leader. "If that's the way people regard him, the next step is to elevate him to my position and get rid of me."

While such a thought may come to mind, it need not be entertained; it can be rejected. In Phil. 1:18 Paul could say in regard to the ambitious men who were agitating in order to harm him, "But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice." So in a noble display of self-forgetfulness, Paul was able to keep his feet and not slide into anger and self-vindication.

In 1 Samuel 18 Jonathan stands as a sterling example of self-forgetfulness. He, after all, was the heir to Saul's throne. David was a threat to him as well as to his father. His attitude toward David was magnanimous. He recognizes in David a man on whom God has laid His hand in a special way and he rejoices in David's success. Unfortunately, his father was incapable of such an attitude.

In verse 9 there is evidence that Saul's jealousy became habitual, "...from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David."

William McKane describes Saul's attitude as an "ingrained mistrust," of David with the "expectation of treasonous behavior."[24] Such an attitude certainly had an effect on their communications with one another. In verse 13 is the record that Saul "sent David away from him." Previously, Saul desired to have David near at hand and their relationship was probably close. Now communication was cut off as David was transferred to command Saul's troops.

When Saul did talk with David, his conversation was deceitful. He might have appeared friendly, but there was murder in his heart. Sinful attitudes distort reality. Like the varied mirrors in a fun house, the motions of sin in a willing heart twist the truth into ugly and bazaar images. Saul's thoughts made a monster out of David. David probably thought himself marvellously privileged even to be in the King's court. There is no evidence that he had ambitions for the throne, (even though it was his by God's design.) In spite of this, Saul viewed him as one who must be put to death if his kingdom would survive.

Jealousy and fear of the kind experienced by Saul are sinful, and dangerous. If allowed to work they will stop at nothing to achieve their goal, which is the demise of the rival. (Either death in fact or death so far as being an effective entity in the same sphere of operation.)

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[24]William McKane, I & II Samuel (London: SCM Press, 1963), p.

Many subordinates involved in team ministries in our survey and others respond that their greatest obstacle was the attitude of the senior pastor toward them. More often than not the senior's negative attitude grows out of the perception of the subordinate as a threat. The senior may not be a Saul with all of his spiritual problems, but jealousy and fear have invaded and gained a foothold nevertheless. The invasion may have begun by uneasy thoughts about the subordinates ability or popularity. It may have grown to where the senior said to himself, "I had better keep an eye on that character." And it may have run the gamut to culminate in the unhappy conclusion that, this church or field is not big enough for the both of us -- somebody has to go!

Someone may protest that there is such a thing as an associate pastor, youth director, or associate missionary who is ambitious for prominence and will plot to overthrow the leader. Sadly, this is true. Sometimes it is done because the top man is thought to be incompetent (he may be) and to move him out is the only way to save the ship. Such covert activity is always wrong, and it is never necessary to stoop to such activity to preserve the church of which Christ is the Head. If the sovereign of the church wants to move an incompetent man out of leadership, he doesn't need plotters and schemers to help him. It is instructive that David could have put Saul out of commission several times, but he did not because of his regard for Saul's office and God's sovereignity.

If a senior pastor finds that he does have an overly ambitious subordinate. what should he do? If he has evidence of insubordinate

activity, he should confront the man and talk it out. If a man knows he is in the place God wants him to be and is doing his job to the best of his ability, he need not fear a gifted associate. Open communication could bring the hearts of those involved together and encourage a mutuality that has been absent. Those involved could work out ways to pool their gifts and complement one another rather than rival one another.

Sometimes confrontation and in-depth discussion may lead to a Paul and Barnabas parting of the ways. If this can be done with mutual understanding, the persons or the work need not be harmed.

When a person is threatened, their fear issues in a fight/flight reaction. They attack or run. Saul hurled his spear at David in an attempt to pin him to the wall. In another place, fearful men advised David, "Flee as a bird to your mountain," (Ps. 11). Both of these reactions can be seen in interteam relations. Hostile relations or the bolting of someone from the team are frequent reactions to threat. These are not only the internal conditions that contribute to poor communication, but these are major problem areas in interpersonal relations. Attempts at improving the relations between God's servants without giving serious attention to these problems will miss the point. To clean up bad relationships, the source of uncleanness must be identified. Jesus did this when he taught, "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander,

arrogance, and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'"[25]

Further on, the means for overcoming the effects of sin on interpersonal communication will be treated. Following immediately, are some other causes of poor communication.

Communication - A Matter of Understanding

There are situations where the hearts of the parties involved are set on the same high purposes and yet communication breaks down. In such cases, signals are transmitted and received but something happens in the decoding process; the message is mininterpreted and thus is misunderstood.

One of the most vivid examples of misunderstanding in sacred history is recorded in Joshua chapter 22. The Reubinites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh had been granted permission to settle east of the Jordan. The one stipulation was that they were to join fully in the conquest of the land west of the Jordan until the land was fully in Israel's control. This they did. Joshua 22 begins with Joshua's words to the two and one-half tribes after the battle for the land was over:

> You have done all that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded, and you have obeyed me in every thing I commanded. For a long time now - to this very day - you have not deserted your brothers but have carried out the mission the Lord your God gave you. Now that the Lord your God has given your brothers rest as he promised, return to your homes in the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you on the other side of

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[25]Mark 7:20-23

the Jordan. But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.

Joshua's words are very clear and straightforward. He commends them for accomplishing what was formerly agreed upon and he challenges them to continue in obedience to the Word of God.

There is an important principle taught here that is worth mentioning even though it is not essential to the misunderstanding that later occurred. That is that Joshua made good what had been promised to these people. They had agreed to fight with their brothers for land that would never be their own. The land they wanted had already been secured. Joshua drives down a stake when he says, "You have obeyed me in every thing I commanded." As their leader, he made them accountable and commended them for their accomplishment. He then followed through and gave them what had been promised them. The important elements could be listed as follows:

    a. <u>Promise given</u> - the eastern land will be yours

    b. <u>Duty enjoined</u> - <u>as a condition for receiving the promise</u> - fight with us

    c. <u>Accountability</u> - Joshua was their commander; they were answerable to him

    d. <u>Commendation</u> - "You did every thing I commanded"

    e. <u>Reward</u> - they were given what was promised

Obviously, the prospect of one day possessing the land east of Jordan provided motivation for the difficult days of fighting. Also, the just and fair way that Joshua dealt with various situations gave them confidence that he would be just and fair with them. And he was.

What would have been the result if he had called them out
to stand before him and told them that there were some others that
wanted the eastern lands and that he was sorry that he had to dis-
appoint them? The results can be imagined. Yet, this kind of
thing is sometimes done by Christian leaders. At times, team leaders
do this with members of their staff. Duties are given, promises are
made, and then there is a breakdown in communication. Accountability,
commendation, and follow-through go out the window. The team member
who bears the brunt of this poor handling of the situation is dis-
appointed and many times angry.

In verses 10-12 of Joshua 22, the occasion for misunderstanding
is described:

> When they came to Geliloth near the Jordan in the land of Canaan,
> the Reubinites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh built
> an imposing altar there by the Jordan. And when the Israelites
> heard that they had built the altar on the border of Canaan at
> Geliloth near the Jordan on the Israelite side, the whole assembly
> of Israel gathered at Shiloh to go to war against them.

Misunderstanding results when a message communicated is mis-
interpreted.
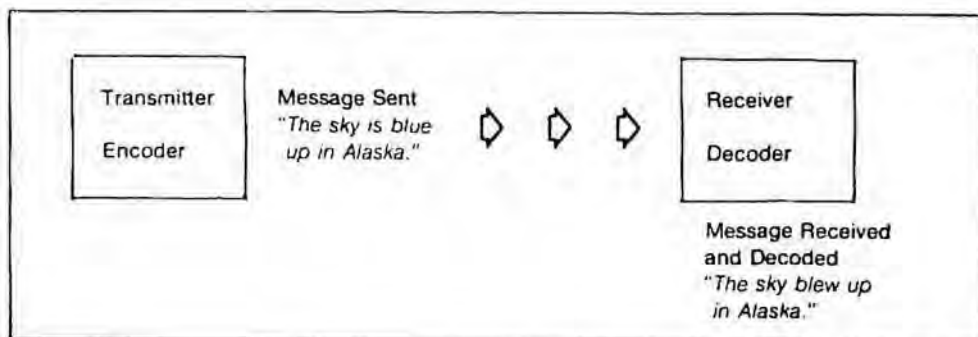
In the process of decoding the real meaning is lost. The
reaction to the improperly decoded message will certainly be different
from that intended by the sender.

All communications involve symbols that are used to convey a certain meaning. Words are the symbols that make verbal communication possible. When we learn a language, we learn to associate certain meanings with certain symbols.

Non-verbal communication is communication utilizing symbols other than words. The most familiar form of non-verbal communication has been recently dubbed "body language." So the gestures and positions of the human body supposedly convey certain messages. (The fact is sometimes missed that interpreting non-verbal·communication is much more open to misunderstanding than is verbal communication.) There are other forms of non-verbal communication. Various art forms convey messages to the human mind. Symbols come in many forms; some crude and simple; some complex and finely fashioned.

The altar constructed by the two and one-half tribes was a symbol that had great significance to them. Unfortunately, it was misinterpreted. Using the communication diagram it might be portrayed this way:

2½ Tribes — Transmitter Encoder

Nonverbal Symbol — Means Solidarity (We don't want our children to forget we are part of the people of God)

Rest of Israel — Receiver Decoder — Means Idolatry (They have turned against God)
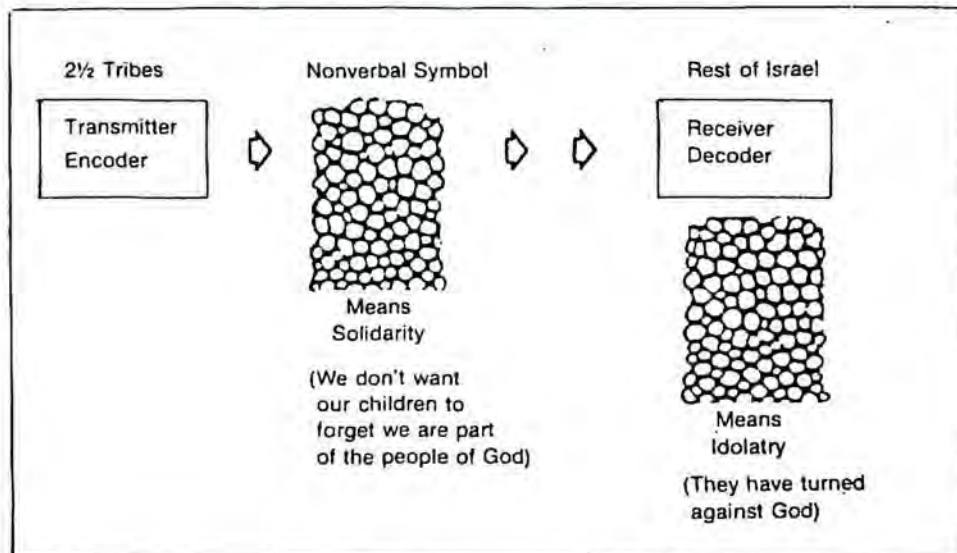
Because of the misunderstanding, Israel readied her tired

soldiers for a new kind of battle. They prepared to fight against

those with whom they had fought alongside of against a common enemy.

Their reaction was absolutely correct! It was the interpretation

of the message that was incorrect.

In this case, the leaders of the two and one-half tribes

were also negligent. They should not have depended on non-verbal

communication to convey their message. John Calvin described their

fault in his comment on Josh. 22:10:

> Nothing was farther from their intentions than to innovate
> in any respect in the worship of God. But they sinned not
> lightly in attempting a novelty, without paying any regard
> to the high priest, or consulting their brethren, and in a
> form which was very likely to be misconstrued.[26]

And so a brief description of their intentions to build the

memorial before they left would have cleared the air. Perhaps such

a discussion would have included some sound advice from Phinehas such

as, "Make sure you don't make that thing look too much like an altar!"

Many conflicts among those working closely together can be

traced to a similar set of circumstances. With good intentions, a team

member may launch out on a new project or attempt to work something

out without consulting his brethren, especially the team leader. The

action is misunderstood and evil intent is attributed to the well-

meaning team member. The situation becomes more serious if the

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[26]John Calvin, Commentaries on the Book of Joshua, (Grand
Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1949), p. 253.

misunderstood party is attacked before any attempt is made to sort

the situation out. This was not the case in Joshua 22 which will

be looked at again under "Conflict Resolution."

Communication - A Matter of Time and Effort

One of the chief reasons for tension and conflict within

teams is simply neglect. The team leader does not put forth the

effort to provide for a good flow of communication. The following

except from an interview with an associate pastor in a large suburban

church illustrates this point.

        JG: What is the most important factor for maintaining harmony
             and unity in staff relations?
        Associate Pastor - henceforth AP:
             Open communication.
        JG: What provision is made in your situation for open communication?
        AP: Very little, if any.
        JG: Do you mean there isn't very much communication going on?
        AP: Well, that which is, is very random and there is no formal
             provision for it.
        JG: No staff meetings?
        AP: No, no scheduled meetings.
        JG: You said that open communication is the most important thing
             and yet you say there is very little going on. What kind of
             strain has this put on you?
        AP: Right now, quite a strain. There's a lot of strain within
             the staff right at this time.
        JG: Has this led to conflict?
        AP: There has been tension for over six months and it is leading
             to conflict.
        JG: Who would the principles be if conflict should occur?
        AP: All the staff versus the senior pastor.
        JG: The staff versus the pastor!
        AP: Yes, most of the staff finds time to meet, have lunch together
             and discuss things. So they communicate and work out their
             conflicts. They get together to talk about things and pray
             over things and that gives them unity.
        JG: When you say the staff, does that include the senior pastor?
        AP: No, that is why there is the conflict that goes on.
        JG: Is the senior pastor aware of the tension that exists?
        AP: I think he is becoming aware. I've mentioned quite a few times
             that we ought to be meeting. Other staff members have too, over
             the past few years. So far, there has been no response. I
             think he is aware that something's up.

This troubled associate went on to describe several situations where the staff was caught up short because of this silence, e.g. "Big programs will be planned involving the staff, but they will be given only twenty-four hours notice to get ready, etc." Team leaders who do not make time for communicating with their staff are asking for trouble. One of the complicating factors is that many leaders think they are talking to their associates when they really are not. The senior pastor mentioned in this excerpt was also interviewed. He is a very able man with a great deal of experience in multiple staff work. He knows the value of communication and said in the interview that his staff has ready access to him whenever they want to talk. Clearly, there is a contradiction between what his associate said and what he said.

Other leaders depend too much on informal talks with staff members and fail to work for unity through getting the whole staff together on a regular basis. Marvin Judy cites an example of this:

> . . . in a very large church where this type of government is in operation, one member of the staff related, 'It is amazing how many informal staff meetings go on in the corridors.' The senior minister is a strong authoritarian figure who is actually directing the group by one-to-one relationships. Seeds of discontent are present.[27]

In some cases, one staff member is pitted against another in these one-to-one relationships. The effect obviously is to divide rather than unify the team.

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[27] Judy, _Multiple Staff Ministry_, p. 43

Another aspect of this need for time and openness in communication is the fact that in some cases the time alotted is not well used. There is no effort to talk about basic issues and in some cases these are purposefully avoided. In too many Christian organizations there is a list of taboos that you do not dare bring up to those in leadership. These are either blind spots or tender spots that are avoided and evaded by those in control.

An observant leader does not need a seismograph to detect the tremors of discontent that such avoidance causes. Like a person living on the edge of the San Andreas fault, he tries to ignore the possibilities for a major quake. Few escape when neglect becomes a habitual pattern in their style of leadership.

The wise team leader will pay solemn heed to the observation made by Warren S. Benson in a paper delivered to the Evangelical Free Church:

> In this writer's judgment, the primary weakness in church staff relationships is this neglect of taking time to worship, pray, plan, and share together.[28]

Conflicts Related to Status

The Gospels record an incident when the disciples disputed over their status in the Kingdom of God (Matt. 18:1-14; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48). Mark explains that Jesus asked the disciples what the big discussion was about on the road to Capernaum. No one spoke up

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[28]Warren S. Benson, "Multiple Staff Relationships--The Associate's Point of View," unpublished paper.

for they were ashamed that their argument centered upon "who was the greatest." Their preoccupation with their own futures made it impossible for them to understand what Jesus had revealed concerning His coming suffering. The hidden agenda, their selfish concerns, caused them to miss what was the most important event on God's agenda.

In the background of this dispute were a number of factors that primed their sense of pride. The transfiguration had recently taken place which probably caused them to think that the Lord would soon inaugurate His visible kingdom. They anticipated a radical change in status from lowly wandering disciples to being the chief men in the court of the King of Israel.

Peter, James, and John had been chosen from among the others to accompany Jesus up the sacred mountain. This advantage gave them status the others did not enjoy. Also, Peter himself, had been singled out on a number of occasions by Jesus (Matt. 14:28-29; 15:15; 16:16-18, 22, 23; 17:4). This might have led to the conclusion that Peter would be exalted to a position second only to Christ Himself when the kingdom appeared. Their reaction to these events and others made the disciples overly status conscious and since the subject was very much in the front of their minds, it came out in their conversation.

Status has to do with the state or condition of a person. It has to do with the advantages or disadvantages a person has in relation to others. Because of sin, status is of great importance in human relations. The average person's mind is sorting data constantly in

regard to his status in relation to other people. "How do I stand with my wife, my family, my boss, my friends at work?" In any human encounter, the data bank is drawn upon to assess one's status with respect to the other person. In some languages there is even a different way of addressing those above you and those below you. The human mind finds ingenious ways of grasping some advantage that will satisfy the desire for higher status.

The term "status symbol" is a well-worn cliche in our society. A new expensive car, fashionable clothes, a new house in the suburbs, are supposedly the symbols of success. The heads of many large corporations are so conscious of the importance of these symbols that they insist that their executives evidence them.

During the 60's many young people adopted the status symbols of protest; worn clothes, long hair, and a back to nature life-style. Every group has a set of symbols which identify them in relation to the rest of society. In addition, there are "in-group" symbols which set them apart from one another.

Ministers are often no different than others in that they also seek for status within their profession. In some circles, the size of one's church is the key symbol of success or it may be his salary or his education. In some cases, it can be his theological point of view that is thought to be superior to that of all others. The question "who is the greatest?" is still being asked by the Lord's servants and many are open to being nominated.

When several ministers work closely together in a team situation the matter of status, though often hidden, is a real factor in their

relations with each other. Though it is admittedly a sinful tendency, people who work together tend to size one another up and decide what their advantages and disadvantages are in relation to each other. People are very conscious of the symbols that are appropriate to their position. If someone thought to be below them possesses the status symbols of someone above them, it is a potentially tense situation. For example, if a young associate minister lives in a house that is bigger and more expensive than the senior minister or others on the team, it is thought to be inappropriate. Also, if one in a lesser position possesses more education or has achieved other honors, it could become the occasion for interpersonal conflict.

Status symbols among ministers are not only related to these external things. More important are the "spiritual" status symbols; how well a man can preach; how many converts has he seen in his ministry; how many enemies he has left wounded and bleeding in the field; and not to be neglected, the approval he has received from others. (For example, honorary doctorates.)

The Corinthian Christians discussed the relative merits of Paul, Peter, and Apollos, and divided into groups based on their evaluation of which of these was "the greatest." In all probability, their arguments related to the preaching or teaching skills of the different men.

It is clear that the preachers themselves did not encourage this comparison; it was the congregation's idea. A similar scene is sometimes created today in a church with a multiple staff. Despite

efforts to avoid such, various parties form around favorite staff members. This, in turn, often causes tension and conflict between the staff members.

A situation may also develop which is similar to the time Peter, James, and John were given privileges not afforded the others. There are times when some members of a ministerial team may engage in tasks or privileges that the others are not invited to share. For example, suppose the senior minister invites one or two members of a six man team to accompany him on a trip to attend an important seminar. The seminar affords training that is valuable to increasing the effectiveness of the participants. Upon their return from the seminar, the senior minister and those who went with him are buzzing enthusiastically about the valuable things heard and seen. In the eyes of non-participatin staff members those who went gained a real advantage not shared by those who were left behind.

Should certain staff members feel that this is part of a pattern, they may accuse the senior pastor of passing them over everytime something like this comes up. They sense that their status in the group is very low and that this is a result of unjust discrimination. The stage is set for conflict.

Conflicts That Grow Out of Frustration

Frustration results from someone being thwarted in their attempt to achieve a certain goal. Frustration can be caused by a variety of things; here we will look at several situations which often lead to frustration.

Frustration results when someone or something interferes with the achievement of legitimate, normally achievable goals. Goals are important because nearly everyone desires to be useful, creative, and productive. A sense of achievement is necessary to satisfaction and happiness. Much of the dissatisfaction and unhappiness in our technological society is related to boredom with work, and the sense of uselessness that results from doing a seemingly meaningless task. A production worker is like a cog in a machine. He has no need to be creative or even very productive. He must simply do his appointed task day in and day out. If he fails to show up for work someday, the company can replace him rather easily. This kind of work yields no sense of achievement and is very frustrating.

When a person goes into the ministry he is often motivated by a desire to do something truly worthwhile with his time and talents. He wants to achieve the high goal of glorifying God through his service to Jesus Christ. (The Christian factory worker also should desire to glorify God through his work.) Specifically, he wants to minister to people effectively so that as a result of his labor, people will be saved and will come to maturity in Christ.

If such a man is working in a church or mission field and for some reason is disassociated from the productive process, he is very likely to become frustrated. This can happen in a number of ways.

A man can be made a part of a ministerial team and yet not be allowed to minister to the congregation. This seems patently absurd. Why should a church call a man who is willing and able to minister and then have him painted into a corner where he can do little or nothing? How can such a thing happen?

It happens in some cases because of poor management. The team leader or the church board simply do not know how to divide up the work. A poor manager is unable to plan and delegate authority in a way that gets the job accomplished. He is likely to try to do everything himself and give only a bit of busy work to others.

It happens in other cases because the leader, or others on the team, are unwilling to let someone else share the ministry. Either they don't think another person could do it correctly, or they fear for their own position.

One respondent to our survey said this: "I came from a staff position where the pastor was not supportive at all. He changed my job description while I was on vacation from C.E. Pastor to Evangelism Pastor. I tried it, but things got worse when there was some degree of success in it with more people coming to church." It is difficult to reconstruct the whole situation from a comment. It does seem that here was a man who wanted to minister, but he was only allowed to do so as long as he was unsuccessful. When he was effective, the leader intervened. This led to frustration and eventually his leaving the church for another position elsewhere.

A man may be allowed to minister but is not invited to be part of the decision making process in the area of his ministry.

This is less destructive than not being allowed to minister at all. Though better, it can still be frustrating if a man has a lot of creative ideas for expanding or deepening a ministry but he is not allowed to really share his ideas. (He may verbalize them but they are ignored.) In a sense, the man is able to be somewhat productive,

but he is not allowed to be creative. This situation often arises when the team leader is authoritarian. He does the planning and assigns people work and expects them to report back when the job is accomplished. In such cases, the team leader usually views the others on the team as functioning to extend his ministry and not to have a ministry of their own.

Another respondent to the survey reflected this point of view in answer to the question, "In your view, what is the most important quality needed for team leadership?" This senior minister replied: "An understanding of the pastor-assistant pastor relationship-assistant an extension of pastor's ministry." In answer to question ten, which has to do with the best quality in a team member in a non-leadership position, he wrote: "a good follower and loyalty." This man is a very successful pastor, and his view is held by many who have built large productive churches. If the assistant is satisfied with a role in which he functions, i.e. to enhance the ministry of the senior pastor, the system can work smoothly. In most cases, however, those in subordinate positions look upon their position as a steppingstone to a senior pastorate. It is a kind of apprenticeship for the young minister to afford the opportunity of learning the ropes. While there is a real need for this kind of experience for young seminary graduates, it is hardly the ideal team situation.

The disadvantages include the following:

(a) The assistant is likely to remain in the church for a short time.

(b)   There is no place for the experienced man who believes he is called to minister to the congregation but not as the team leader (senior pastor). He is not interested in a steppingstone but desires a ministry that will allow for the exercise of his gifts.

(c)   The senior pastor is relieved of some duties but the areas of ministry outside his particular gifts and expertise are never really developed.

For a ministry to be satisfying and productive the man responsible for that ministry must be allowed to be part of the decision-making process. Ideally, every team member should be invited to sit in meetings of the churches official board especially when that body is discussing that member's area of ministry. It is a strange but rather frequent phenomena that church boards will make decisions regarding a man's ministry without his presence or without consulting him. The minister will simply be informed of the decision or in extreme cases, will find out about the decision secondhand. Some readers will think this is incredible, but it does in fact take place. It is not difficult to imagine the frustration felt by the man caught in such a web of adverse circumstances. This is especially true when the decision puts a damper on the man's plans for developing a particular area of work. This is not to say that every staff member should have absolute freedom to do whatever they wish apart from the oversight of the official ruling body. This is simply a plea not to exclude a responsible staff member from those processes that directly affect his area of ministry.

This pastor may invite his assistants to be a part of the decision-making process. The fact is that this view of subordinates could and does lead to frustration. There are those that are fulfilled in their work if they can help the senior pastor to be more successful. This is commendable. It is more commendable if the senior pastor has the same attitude toward his subordinates. That is, that he wants them to have an effective ministry for the glory of God.

The second form of frustration grows out of a situation where a man is assigned, by himself or others, a task which involves unachievable goals. This may occur when a man is assigned a task for which he is not qualified.

Suppose a team member with no training or gifts in the area of music is assigned the task of getting the choir ready for the Christmas concert. He is to teach them a new cantata. He obediently jumps in with both feet and both arms waving, but the choir does not respond favorably. He works and works, but Christmas comes and the concert is a disaster. The man is frustrated and resentful. He has failed miserably to achieve the sought for goal.

This example is inappropriate, many would judge, because nobody is going to assign such a task to a non-musician. This is largely true, but what about a situation where a man is assigned the task of youth pastor when he lacks the gifts and training to do this specialized work. He also may join the task with all his might but see little progress towards achieving the desired goal. The result again will often be frustration and all that goes with it.

Frustration of this kind also results when unrealistic goals are set. There is a man in Uruguay who set as his goal, visiting every home in that country. He purposed to leave with each person encountered by a verbal witness for Jesus Christ, along with appropriate literature. He was a very buoyant, zestful individual who appeared to be anything but frustrated. The fact was that he was well on his way to achieving his seemingly impossible goal. He had already visited all the homes outside of Montevideo and was working through the capital city at the time he was encountered. What would have been impossible for some was simply a challenge to this energetic man.

There is everything right about setting high goals. In doing so, a man must realistically evaluate his ability and gifts and set his sights on a goal that is achievable. Here we must be cautious for there are some startling exceptions to what seems to be the rule.

Recently, the story was heard of a junior high school girl who was the object of ridicule by her classmates. She weighed over two hundred pounds in her early teens and wore glasses as thick as bottle bottoms. One day the teacher was going around the room asking each person what they were going to be when they got older. The other kids were anticipating what this fat, bespectacled girl was going to say. When it came her turn she said: "I'm going to be the greatest woman tennis player in the world." The reaction can be easily imagined. The little girl grew up to be Billie Jean King, whose name is known even by people who would not know a half volley from a double fault.

There are such exceptions to the rule in the ministry. Thomas Titcomb was turned down by every mission board in his quest to go to Africa to work among the pygmies. He went anyway, and his ministry was one of the most effective ever known in that continent.

There are also those who experience frustration and even failure but do not give in to despair. They seem to become tougher with experience and rise from the canvas to take on another challenge.

Though these exceptions exist, care must be taken to set goals that are realistic for the person asked to perform a given task.

Frustration is also a possible result when two people are striving to reach the same goal that only one can achieve. This is called competition. In the case of two prize fighters, both may train vigorously for a fight, but only one will win. The other will suffer the frustration that results from falling short of achieving a desired goal.

In a team ministry, the structure and management of the team should rule out such competition, but it does not always work that way. The most common example of this problem in teamwork is having two or more people competing for team leadership. Such a situation is likely to produce a great deal of frustration and conflict.

Another frustration producing arrangement is when there is a conflict between personal goals and team goals (or in some cases, between personal desire and God's revealed will).

At this writing, one of the churches contacted in the team ministries survey, is in the midst of an explosive situation. For years this church progressed in a healthy way without a team ministry. The senior pastor is a very able man who worked well with others from the congregation in carrying out an effective ministry. Within the last several years, the church board saw the necessity of adding another minister to the staff. The senior pastor was fully in favor of this move. A Director of Christian Education was sought for, and subsequently called. The man called applied himself to the work of building up the educational aspect of the church's ministry. He had a lot of good ideas and was effective in implementing these ideas.

As time passed, it became apparent that the man had a conflict of interest. He was worming his way into every aspect of the church's organizational structure. This was welcomed by many because he seemed to have real gifts in administration, and he was picking up some of the details not attended to by the senior pastor.

There came a day when it became evident to the two men that they differed in their philosophy of how the church was to be run. At first, the senior pastor said that he would discuss the matter with the board. The second man objected saying that if that was done, it would appear that there was a conflict between the two of them. The senior magnanimously agreed not to take the matter to the board. Soon after this, the DCE took his plan to the chairman of the board even though he had agreed not to do so. It was clear that he was attempting to upstage the senior pastor. A number of other incidents pointed to the same kind of activity.

At about the same time, a pattern began to develop in reference to this man's reputation. He had lied about his credentials and many other adverse facts turned up about his background. One minister from the area where this man had lived previously, exclaimed to the senior pastor upon hearing his name, "He won't be satisfied until he has your job!"

Unfortunately, the board and many in the church sided with the DCE. The DCE offered to resign with the stipulation that all the evidence against him would be kept secret from the congregation. Foolishly, the board agreed and accepted his resignation. His leaving was interpreted as being the result of a personality conflict with the senior pastor. The board will not permit the facts to be known, and even though there is enough evidence to say that the man should be dismissed, the board has turned against the senior pastor and seem to be waiting for his resignation. The senior pastor does not want to see the church split, and so he is not making any effort to rally people to his cause. For him, the situation is most frustrating for all that he had labored to accomplish could be greatly damaged.

The DCE was also frustrated in his efforts to achieve his personal goal. His conflict of interest has produced a very bad situation that could destroy what has been a very effective testimony.

Frustration causes inappropriate reactions that can be very destructive to harmony. A person who is unable to achieve what they have been striving for often becomes hostile and agressive toward the person blocking the way to success. Anger is usually the most visible symptom. If not dealt with, the anger may settle into resentment. The sinful mind begins to work overtime plotting ways to equal the score.

Judas Iscariot was a member of the most celebrious ministerial team in history. It is evident from the biblical account that he had a conflict of interest as he went about his tasks with the other disciples. He was ambitious and probably often fantasized concerning what his position would be when the earthly kingdom was at last established. When his hope faded that his dream would come true, he became hostile and agressive towards the Lord Jesus Christ. He probably rationalized that his betrayal was justified by the circumstances. It is also probable that his suicide was a final display of self-pity calculated to further wound those who thwarted his plans. The sequence often follows the pattern illustrated below:

5. AGRESSION

4. RESENTMENT

3. SELF-PITY

2. ANGER

1. WORKING TOWARD GOAL

GOAL

A.

B.
BLOCKER
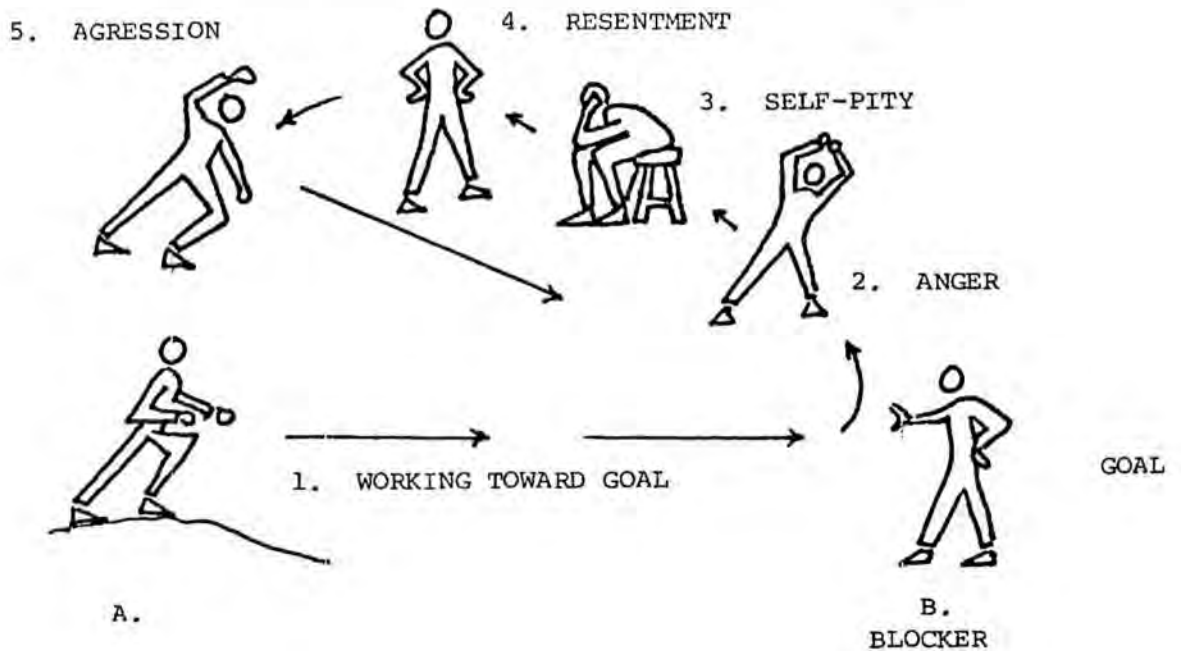
Diotrephes (the name means Zeus-reared) is a character mentioned in the Apostle John's third epistle. Little is known about him outside the brief reference in 3 John 9 and 10. It is possible that Gaius and Diotrephes were leaders in the same congregation. It is clear that Diotrephes was in conflict with the Apostle John and was doing everything possible to counter his influence in the church. This brought him into conflict with Gaius who was sympathetic to John and accepted his leadership.

Diotrephes' goal was "to be first." This goal put him in conflict with Christ himself. He evidently had forgotten what Paul wrote to the Colossians. "And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the first born from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy."[29] If Diotrephes had truly recognized the supremacy of Christ, he would have treated His last apostle differently.
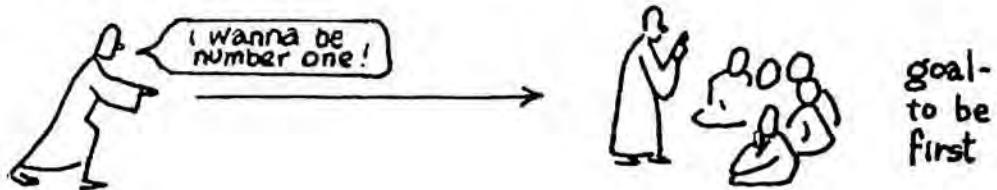
There is some evidence that Diotrephes was in a position of considerable authority (he put people out of the church, but there is no evidence that he reached his goal unchallenged. It appears that Gaius was the leader of the church favored by John. Diotrephes might

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[29]Col. 1:18

have intercepted an earlier communication and suppressed it (vs. 9).
Perhaps John's influence had greatly aided Gaius and harmed Diotre-
phes' cause. Therefore, if this speculation is correct, John was
blocking the ambitious elder from becoming the unrivaled leader of
the congregation.

Diotrephes reacted agressively toward John and did everything
he could to hinder John's work and influence.

1. He broke off fellowship with John - "Diotrephes, who
loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us."

2. He engaged in senseless gossip about John, seeking to
destroy him with unfounded accusations: "gossiping maliciously about
us."

3. He refused to accept traveling missionaries who were
associated with John. "He refuses to welcome the brother."

4. He excommunicated those who wanted to receive the
traveling missionaries associated with the Apostle John.
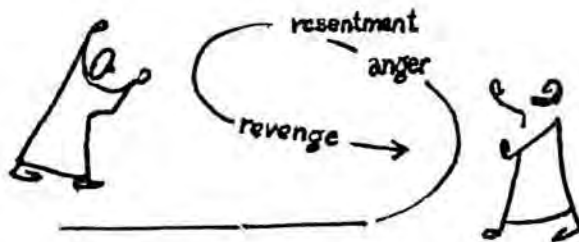
Diotrephes did everything he possible could to cut himself
and his followers off from the apostle's influence. In this way,
he attempted to remove the block and achieve his goal.

It may seem strange that John, the beloved, could have such
a bitter enemy among the leaders of God's people. It isn't strange
to those who have been in positions of leadership in the church.
There are men like Diotrephes in the ministry today and their
ambition and agressive actions have hurt many.

Those who engage in teamwork must be aware of the Diotrephes
syndrome. The selfish ambition to be first is a dangerous objective.
The only honorable thing about Diotrephes was that his dislike for
John was quite evident. In the case of Judas, the resentment boiled
below the surface for sometime before erupting.

Agression isn't the only result of frustration. There are
those who realize how inappropriate agression is and so this tendency
is suppressed. The anger and self-pity resultant from a blocked goal
may become the occasion for depression.

Ahab, King of Israel, was never involved in a team ministry,
but he does provide an example of depression occasioned by a blocked
goal. In 1 Kings 21 the account is given of Ahab's evil ambition to
obtain Naboth's vineyard.

The King first went to Naboth and requested that the Jezreelite
sell him the plot of land, "Let me have your vineyard to use for a
vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace, I will pay you
whatever it is worth." (1 Kings 21:2) Naboth was obligated to hold
on to the land because it had been in his family for some time, and

the law specified his responsibility (Lev. 25:23-28). He replied, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers." (1 Kings 21:3)

The Scriptures record the King's reaction, "So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, 'I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.' He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat." (1 Kings 21:4)

So the King wallowed in self-pity, experienced a loss of appetite and other symptoms of depression.

The Hebrew words used to describe his condition are סַר וְזָעֵף. סַר is an adjective which means "stubborn, resentful, sullen or implacable."[30] זָעֵף means to be "out of humor, vexed." The usage of the verb and noun forms make it clear that the mood could be likened to the rage of a fierce storm.[31] While Ahab's self-pity is not described, it is clearly implied by his actions (cf. 2 Kings 20:2 Hezekiah's self-pity). Like a little child whose request for a new toy has been rejected, he stares at the wall but sees only his poor wounded self.

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[30]Brown, Driver and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1907), p. 711.

[31]Brown, Driver and Briggs, Lexicon of Old Testament, p. 277.

Men of greater spiritual stature than Israel's wicked king have succumbed to depression. In some cases the goal sought for was perfectly legitimate (unlike Ahab's objective). The blocking of the goal might have been the unwise move of an incompetent leader. Whatever the circumstances, the inner rage and resentment leading to depression is not simply an inappropriate or immature reaction; it is sin.

In Ahab's case, his wife Jezebel, came to his aid and offered her services. The agressor bent on revenge was a surrogate for the frustrated party. She saw to it that Naboth not only lost his vineyard, but also his life.

When a minister involved in a team effort becomes depressed, his wife will surely notice. She may sound the familiar, "What's the matter dear?" He is likely to reply at first, "Oh, nothing," but she won't accept this as the final word. After more prodding, he may say:

He: "Ah, I just can't do anything I want to do to get the Sunday School rolling!"

She: "Why dear, what's standing in your way?"

He: "You mean, who's standing in my way? Three guesses, and the first two don't count."

She: "You mean to say Harry (the senior pastor) won't let you implement any of your ideas?"

He: "Good grief! He won't even allow me to have any ideas. My hands are tied."

She is not a Jezebel; she is normally a fine wife and a spiritual woman. However, the fact that her husband is not permitted to exercise his abilities and do his job has rankled her. She experiences a growing resentment for Harry. Though her husband may refrain from any form of agressive activity toward him, she will not. She may not, as Jezebel did, plot the man's execution. Though her acts are milder they are nevertheless calculated to remove the block to her husband's ambition.

She may simply begin to share the story of her husband's dilemma with close friends. In time her complaints spread to others. The image of a tyrannical, unkind senior pastor grows in many people's minds. Sympathy flows toward her husband. Other similar incidents occur in which her husband seems to be the brunt of the senior pastor's unfairness. If the campaign thus begun by a team member's wife runs its course, parties could form around the two men and divide the church. It is not a fantasy; it has happened more than a few times.

The same thing could happen in the case of a leader who is acting depressed because his ambitions have been blocked by one of his team members. His wife or another sympathizer may go to work on his behalf to destroy the opposition. In some cases, acting depressed is a clever manipulation device calculated to get others to do the dirty work.

A third result of frustration is that the person blocked may simply withdraw from the field. Withdrawal can take various forms.

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Withdrawal can be used as a means to manipulate others. This is when the person blocked leaves a meeting or a job knowing that the others will come and beg him to return. In seeking to persuade him to come back, he is offered the thing he was blocked from obtaining. The block is thus removed and he returns (acting reluctant, but only for effect.)

Another form that withdrawal takes is the silent retreat. There are those who just do not want any trouble. They flee from conflict situations like birds put to flight at the report of a gun. Such people usually have an excuse for their departure, but it is likely to be rapid and with little or no explanation. It is also likely that this person will bounce from one position to another until a non-demanding niche is found.

There are cases, however, where a silent retreat is very honorable and effective. The person withdrawing may simply realize that he is a square peg that is supposed to fit into a round hole. That is, he comes to realize that his view of the ministry or his doctrinal views are incompatible with those of his associates. He also comes to realize that an amiable compromise is impossible. It becomes clear that a withdrawal would be strategic in that it would allow for greater unity within the team and a happier situation for the one leaving. The differences are never discussed. The parting is cordial and the relationship continues on a friendly level.

In some other cases, a frustrated team member may withdraw attempting to take as many as possible with him. This sometimes results in a new work being started down the street pastored by the departed.

There are times when believers working together must agree to disagree and part graciously. Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark made up the earliest foreign missions team recorded in the New Testament. After their successful journey to Cypress and the Roman province of Asia, and after the Council of Jerusalem, they came into conflict. Barnabas desired to give John Mark another chance at missionary work and sought to pers...de Paul to take the younger man along (Acts 15: 36-37). Paul disagreed (vs. 38) and thought it unwise to take Barnabas' relative on the journey. Acts 15:39 says, "They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company." Both men were blocked by the other in achieving their desired goals. Barnabas doubtless experienced frustration due to Paul's unwillingness to comply with his request. Paul, on the other hand, was frustrated with Barnabas' unwillingness to go without John Mark. The team broke up and each man organized his own team and went on with their missionary work (Acts 15:39b-41).

There is no evidence that their actions were judged to be sinful by the Lord. They did not attempt to hurt or hinder one another in the process of parting.

Lastly, a person who is constantly frustrated may refrain from agression but may become cynical. Since so many efforts have seemingly gone awry, expectation is lowered to near zero. Work is done

mechanically with little or no inspiration. There is usually

resignation to a kind of fatalism wherein the subject accepts

fortune or loss with much the same flat emotional response.

In some cases, such a person finds relief and fulfillment in

diversions of various kinds, e.g. hobbies, sports, t.v., etc.

There is some effort to maintain a "front" that would satisfy the

observer, but inwardly, the lights have gone out.

In most cases, the cynicism spreads to the individual's

personal walk with Jesus Christ. Bible reading and prayer may

continue, but God is doubted too.

Os Guinness in his very helpful book, In Two Minds, des-

cribes the process that leads to such doubt:

> What has happened to create this doubt is that a problem
> (such as a particular weakness of character or a bad ex-
> perience) has been allowed to usurp God's place and become
> the controlling principle of life. Instead of viewing the
> problem from the vantage point of faith, the doubter views
> faith from the vantage point of the problem. Instead of
> faith 'sizing up' the problem, the situation ends with the
> problem 'scaling down' faith. The world of faith is upside
> down, and in the topsy-turvy reality of doubt a problem has
> 'become God' and God has 'become a problem.'[32]

In the case of the frustrated minister, the problem is the

prison of circumstances and people (imagined or real) that prevents

him from achieving any of his objectives. If he does not come to

his spiritual senses, he may resign himself to a life behind

spiritual bars and blame God for putting him there.

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[32]Os Guinness, In Two Minds, (Downers Grove, Illinois:
Intervarsity Press, 1976), p. 175.

III.   PREVENTING CONFLICT

"None of us is immune from interpersonal conflict.   It is
as natural as eating."[1]   Such an admission reflects the prevalence
of destructive conflict in human affairs.   The comparison to "eating,"
however, is faulty in that while eating is necessary to the life of
an organism, destructive conflict is not necessary to the life of
the church.   In fact, there are many places where the Lord makes
clear His desire that His people live in unity and harmony.   To be
sure, such conditions are not "natural" to interpersonal relations
but are made possible through supernatural means.

In Paul's epistle to the Romans, chapter 12, verse 18, there
is the exhortation: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you,
live at peace with everyone."   Often the words, "if it is possible,"
are taken as an excuse for conflict.

In fact the phrase, "if it is possible" has nothing to do with
making allowances for our weaknesses.   It rather refers to the limits
of peace.   Peace becomes impossible when pursuit of harmony involves
compromise with evil.   As John Murray put it, "The responsibility for
discord must to no extent be traceable to failure on our part to do
all that is compatible with holiness, truth and right. . . There is no

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[1]Kelinski and Wolfford, Organization and Leadership in the
Local Church, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), p.
101.

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circumstance in which our efforts to preserve and promote peace may be suspended. This is the force of 'as much as in you lieth.' On the other hand, we may never be at peace with sin and error."[2]

Since this is a responsibility that the Lord has enjoined, it is necessary that thought and effort be given to the matter. Also, if Christ has commanded that we love one another and evidence such love by working together in harmony, it must be that He has also given instruction as to how to prevent disharmony. The following discussion is an attempt to work through that instruction with the objective of discovering the biblical method of preventing conflicts in interteam relations.

<div align="center">

Preventing Conflict Through
Good Communication

</div>

Improving Communication by
Changing the Heart

"Effective communication is the transmission and reception of ideas and feelings for the establishment of mutual understanding, agreement, and a favorable response."[3] The communications process could be depicted as shown on the following page.

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[2]John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans, vol. 2, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 139, 140.

[3]Kelinski and Wolfford, Local Church, p. 111

ENVIRONMENT · INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL POLITICAL LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT

ENCODER

STORED EXPERIENCE

TRANSMITTER

interference

feed back

channel

interference

ENVIRONMENT · INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL POLITICAL LINGUISTIC ENVIRONMENT

DECODER

STORED EXPERIENCE
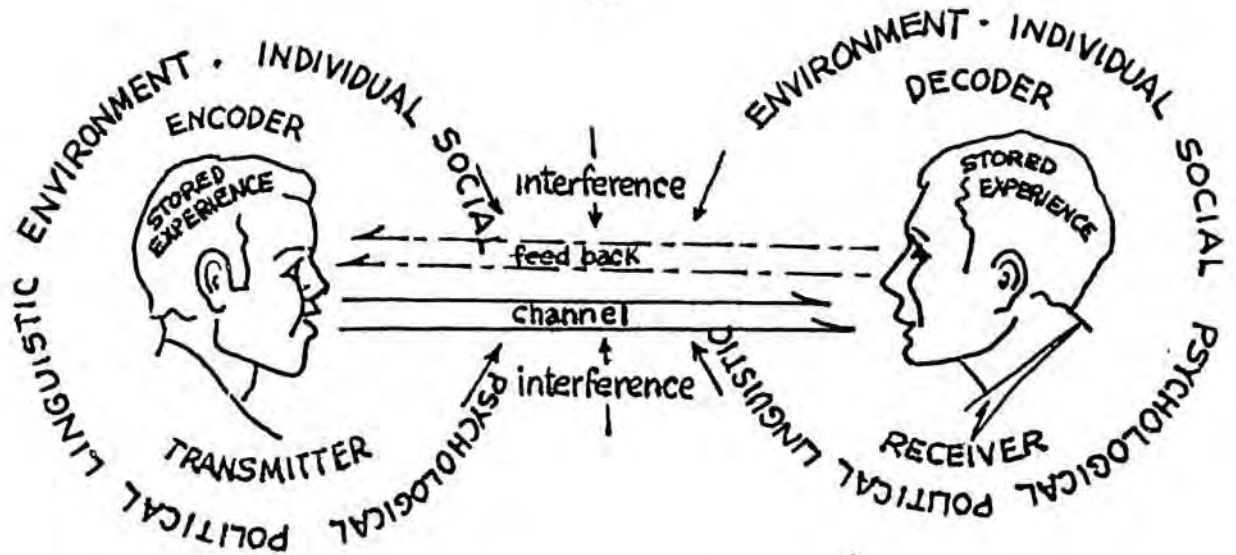
RECEIVER

For communication to be truly effective, the signal must
be strong and clear and the receiver must be turned on and tuned in.
Each human communicator speaks out of his stored experience "con-
sisting in part of his individual, ego related beliefs and values,
and in part, of the beliefs and values of the group to which he
belongs."[4] Differences in experience backgrounds can make communica-
ting difficult. Very few works on communication theory take into
consideration the most important single factor in the transmission
and reception of messages. That factor is the individual's heart
attitude. If the heart is right, cultural and mechanical difficul-
ties can be overcome. If the heart is evil, communication skill
cannot solve the problem; the heart must be changed.

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[4] Emery, Ault and Agee, Introduction to Mass Communications,
(New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1971), p. 8.

Transforming the fleshly heart

The context of verses 19-26 of Galatians chapter five has
to do with the sub-Christian interpersonal relations in the
Galatian churches. The severity of the situation is indicated
in verse 15: "If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch
out or you will be destroyed by each other." Paul describes the
means of taming the beast within sinful man as walking in the Spirit,
(vss. 16, 18, 25). It is of the greatest importance to see that the
cure for interpersonal conflict does not come from the behavioral
sciences but from the sanctifying work of God's Spirit within the
believer.

"Walking in the Spirit" is an expression that conveys the
nature of this remedy. It is not once and for all; it is not a
thirty-second cure that can be gulped down with a few swallows of
spiritual resolve; it is not even a celestial spa that can be
visited periodically to give some tone to the sagging spirit. It
is a lifelong process that will require exercising spiritual muscles
on a daily basis.[5]

The process is one of clearly identifying and preventing the
exercise of the bad, and consciously planning to put into practice
the good. The lists Paul has given serve to define and identify the
two classes of thought and behavior.

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[5]In 1 Tim. 4:7, Paul admonishes, "Train yourself to be godly,"
and also in 2 Tim. 3:16, ". . . training in righteousness." The word
Paul uses in 1 Tim. 4:7 is *γυμναξω* "to exercise." See also Heb.
5:14; 12:11.

During World War II many people took the trouble to memorize the configurations of friendly and enemy aircraft. While I was in elementary school, I obtained a set of cards that bore the silhouettes of dozens of war planes. I memorized those cards and, like other boys my age, could identify a B-25 or a Japanese Zero at a glance. It was not a game, but serious business at that time. I also remember going with my cousin to a spotting tower to actually stand watch and identify and call in by telephone the planes that were seen.

These lists are to be used in a similar way. The friendlies and the enemies must be recognized readily. The enemies must be resisted and blown from our sky with spiritual weapons. The Spirit of God must have free course to work in our lives enabling us to live in peace and harmony.

Many have commented on the meaning and significance of the nine terms Paul uses in the list given in verses 22 and 23. The interest here is in how this list relates to interteam relations.

The nine terms appear to be arranged in three groups of three. The first three terms could be viewed as superintending attitudes which govern both the inner life of the believer and the outflow of that life to others. The next three, patience, kindness, and goodness, describe the way a person, so governed, treats other people. The first group, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, appear to be especially significant of those inner graces that act as checks and balances on the believer's behavior.

None of these graces are natural to any individual;
all are supernatural and are available to every believing person.
The great question is, "What happened on the way from studying
Gal. 5:22 & 23 to the reality of interpersonal relationships with
other believers?" For our purposes, we ask, "Why is it that those
who by gifts and training know the most about Christianity fail so
often to relate to one another in a truly Christian manner?" The
gap between theory and practice needs to be closed.

The first item on Paul's list is so important it should be
singled out for special treatment. Love is the crown of the
Christian graces. Like the divisions in an orange, the other eight
terms on Paul's list are sections of this one fruit. The word "love"
in the English language is emotion-packed and is often wrongly des-
cribed as a "feeling." Love is, first of all, an attitude which
issues in action. Love is defined in Scripture by what it does.
If one word could be found to define what love does, it would probably
be the word "give." Love gives, or love is giving, rather than
getting.[5]

In a most helpful discussion of "love," John W. Sanderson
directs attention to Lev. 19:9-18 for a biblical commentary on
loving one's neighbor.[6] This same passage is used here as a source

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[5] Adams, Christian Counselor's Manual, p. 119-120.

[6] John W. Sanderson, The Fruit of the Spirit, (Grand Rapids:
Zondervan Corporation, 1972), p. 46.

for principles to be applied in exercising Spirit-produced love in team relationships.

Love seeks to meet the needs of others in a sacrificial way. Lev. 19:9-10 "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God." This has to do with meeting the needs of poor people, those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable to exploitation. It may seem that the passage has very remote significance for people working together in a team ministry. However, the principle implicit in this passage is that the person who loves does not look only to his own interests, "but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4).

It is very significant that this passage gives a clear illustration of what love does quite apart from feeling. It would be fitting if the farmer felt compassion for the people he provided for, but such feelings are secondary. The important thing is doing what God says to do.

In Eph. 4:29 the Apostle Paul shows how this principle of meeting the needs of others carried over into the realm of interpersonal communication.

> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

The person who loves will not allow unwholesome talk to come out of his mouth. The word translated "unwholesome" is a word used to describe fish or meat that has spoiled. It is also used to describe fruit or other forms of vegetation that have decayed and become rotten.[7] Hatred and anger bring decay to our thinking and result in rotten speech.

In Col. 4:6 Paul instructs the believer to "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." It may be that the "salt" here has the primary meaning of making conversation appetizing to the hearer. However, salt in the ancient world was a preservative. It was the agent used to hold back putrefaction. It speaks then of purity. In Mark 9:50, Jesus said to His team, whose conversation had evidenced decay on a recent occasion, (vs. 33), "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other."

The salt in this case was grace that rendered pure their committment to Jesus Christ and the work He had called them to do. Their task was to challenge the corruption of a fallen world by being new men in Christ, proclaiming the good news of His salvation.

In a team ministry, the pure objectives of serving Christ and accomplishing what He commands should superintend all that is said and done.

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[7]Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 749.

In an interview with Dr. Allan A. MacRae, who has had experience in teamwork for more than fifty years, this matter of objectives was reflected upon. Dr. MacRae said that one of the most important principles in maintaining harmony is "a determination to consider the objectives of the operation as primary and to do one's best to lay aside questions of personal prominence or personal recognition. This is a factor that enters into all teamwork, and errors on this point may be very subtle."

The minister who becomes petty in his thinking is one who has forgotten his purpose and has lost sight of his specific objectives. He is usually one who is endeavoring to meet some need in himself rather than that of others.

One reason conflicts disrupt the life of a ministerial team is that either the team's objectives are not clearly defined, or they have been lost in the shuffle. Infighting is more frequent among soldiers lingering behind the lines than among those in the thick of battle.

Communication directed toward another person should have as its purpose, building that person up according to their individual needs. It has been seen how sin has corrupted interpersonal relations, making the encounter with another person a contest to see who can gain the greater advantage. Love does the opposite. It seeks to discover the disadvantage (nned) and does everything possible to change it to an advantage. In a cooperative ministry, this means I relate to my colleagues, not with the attitude, "What can I get you to do to make me more successful?", but, "What can I do for you to make you more successful in accomplishing what the Lord has called you to do?"

There are some special needs subordinates should look for in their leaders. A man who is burdened with the responsibilities of being a senior pastor, or a team leader in some other kind of ministry, can feel alone and discouraged at times. He rarely has opportunity to talk to members of his congregation about his discouragements and frustrations. He ought to be able to do this with an understanding associate.

Leaders need to know that they are respected by their associates. There is the need for humble submission to authority on the part of subordinates. While there should be parity among a group of ministers, there should likewise be a recognition of the authority of the presiding officer.

Also, there are special needs leaders should look for in their subordinates. A person working in a subordinate role needs to have some recognition of his contribution. Such recognition can be given publically and privately in various ways. Often approval or disapproval comes through from a leader to an associate non-verbally. Various signals say, "I like having you on board" or "I wish you weren't around getting in my way."

Positive signals include: 1. Eye contact.

                             2. Smile.

                             3. A moving toward or an evident desire to spend some time with an associate.

Negative signals include: 1. Lack of eye contact.

2. Blank expression or frown.

3. Avoidance of contact cutting short necessary contacts, etc.

Non-verbal communication can be easily misunderstood and so it should never be relied upon. A leader who is burdened down with the heavy baggage of hurts or problems completely disassociated from his relationship with a staff member may send many negative signals that could be interpreted wrongly. It is far better to rely on clear verbal messages.

Many of the successful teams investigated spent time together both in their work and simply for enjoyment of each other's fellowship. They took the time to get to know each other as friends and this supplied a real need in their lives.

One of the leaders interviewed shared the fact that he often consults his team members for ideas they might have on a passage he is exegeting in his sermon preparation. He might ask them for ideas or suggestions in regard to other matters. The very fact that he goes to them for their wisdom helps to bind the team more closely together. It says to his associates, "I value you and your ideas." This supplies a real need in them and also makes them think very positively of the man with whom they are working.

Another leader explained that his associates were experts in their own fields, and he revered them as such. He consulted them in their areas of special training and knowledge, and also sent members of his congregation to them for special help. Again, his message to

those men was that they had a worthwhile contribution to make. Such a message meets a primary need for those working in a sub-ordinate position.

Another real need of subordinates is the need for freedom. There must be direction from leadership, but there must also be elbow room to work and develop ideas.

A respondent to the "Team Ministries Survey" indicated in a number of his answers that he felt very restricted because of the inflexibility of the team leader.

In answer to question seven which has to do with "tension because of unexpressed irritation" he remarked, "Pressure of no flexibility to do things another way." Under question eight, where he was to rate the causes of conflict on a scale from one to fifteen, his first three choices were:

1. Lack of openness and honesty

2. Style of leadership

3. Lack of recognition of one's work

Under question eleven, "How does your team resolve conflicts when they arise?", he said, "We take it the way the senior pastor would have it go or we don't take it at all."

These responses could indicate that this man has difficulty in working under a strong leader. More likely, the leader of this team is neglecting the needs of his associates. He is not providing any room for them to function. The flow of communication appears to be one way and lacking in any commendatory elements.

Marvin Judy describes the essentials of a freedom granting administration:

> The cooperative administrator will attempt to provide a situation in which each person in the group has: (1) freedom of expression, (2) opportunity for full development of talent and ability, (3) the opportunity to make a worthwhile contribution to the goals and objectives of the group, (4) and, as far as possible, complete freedom of action for the fulfillment of his own personal goals and aims in life.[8]

This is a large order and is only possible in a situation where love reigns. In John 8:31, Jesus made it clear that freedom is only possible to those who hold to His teaching, an important element of which is that believers must love one another. Christ's love sets men free to plan and work to meet the needs of others.

Love does not deprive others of what rightfully belongs to them. Lev. 19:11 says, "Do not steal." In assertiveness training the objective is to obtain and hold on to "my rights."[9] The Scriptures teach that "my rights" are not to be grasped tightly, especially at the expense of others. I am willing to be reduced to nothing as a slave of Jesus Christ.[10] However, I am not to treat a fellow minister as a slave with no rights, (even though he may see himself in that light). When love asserts itself, it does not seek its own

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[8]Judy, Multiple Staff Ministry, p. 51.

[9]In the book Don't Say Yes When You Want to Say No by Herbert Fensterheim and Jean Baer (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1975), it is said ". . . Assertiveness Training consists in teaching them to know their legitimate rights, how to stand up for them and prevent them from being usurped."

[10]Phil. 2:1-11.

right, but scrupulously seeks to observe the rights of others.
In a truly Christian environment, individual rights are not pro-
tected so much by oneself as they are by others. Even though a man
abandons all selfish claims, his fellow believers treat him as a
king, or so it should be.

Love does not lie or deceive. In Lev. 19:11b-12, God
commands, "Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. Do not swear
falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the
LORD."

These commands relate to the various ways communication can
be used to distort reality for some selfish purpose. In Eph. 4:25,
the apostle deals with a problem that disrupted the Ephesian assembly.
He says, ". . .each of you must put off falsehood and speak truth-
fully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body."

Some of the common ways that this principle is broken in
teamwork would include the following examples.

a. Team members should not talk about an associate to
others, saying things and giving an impression that is quite differ-
ent from what is said to that person face to face. A person working
in a subordinate position may be very quiet about things that bother
him when in a staff meeting or in conversation with the senior pastor,
but he may unload his cares and criticisms on another team member.
The team leader is oblivious to his discontent, thinking that all is
well. Such a tactic may breed further trouble if the complaints are
shared with others outside the circle of the team.

b. The team leader may give the impression to a sub-ordinate that he is doing what is expected of him, but he may rehearse the man's weaknesses and his discontent with the man's work before others.

c. The team leader or team members may make promises to others that are not kept. These are simply forgotten and not brought up again.

d. The team leader may say one thing and mean another. One example of this is what Mitchell calls the "double bind." This he defines as a "pair of contradictory messages or commands to which a person receiving them attempts to respond simultaneously." He goes on to explain how this occurs in multiple staff relations:

> In the multiple staff, this frequently becomes the following pair: 'Do as you see fit,' and 'Do as I tell you.' Authority is given with the one hand and taken away with the other, and a demand is made that one must respond to with 'both hands.'"[11]

The cause of this is often the conflict within a senior pastor who wants help but does not want to give up an area of his ministry. He, therefore, delegates authority to someone else to be responsible in that area, but finds it difficult to keep his hands out of the work. In such cases, it would be helpful if he would openly discuss his problem with the man who has been assigned the responsibility in question. Through honest communication the two could come to understand the dynamics of the situation and deal with it appropriately.

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[11]Mitchell, Psychological and Theological Relationships, p. 174.

If this is not done, the delegation of authority is in effect a lie.

      e. Team members may hide their deep concerns. This is also what is often referred to as the "hidden agenda" in interteam rela- tions. Matters of importance that are feared to be potentially disruptive are in the minds of the team members, but not in their mouths. There is usually a good bit of tension involved in such a situation. This often results in the non-verbal and sometimes verbal communication of cryptic messages that serve to keep the pot boiling. Everyone is kept off balance not knowing what the others are thinking, but imagining the worst.

      f. Lastly, there is almost total avoidance of communication. Team members or some team members, are given the silent treatment. The reason for this is usually that there are problems that the people involved are unwilling to face and work through using a direct honest approach. The situation is too threatening and so the problem is ignored.

      In each of these examples, it can be seen that the focus of attention is on self rather than on the other person and his good. Putting off dishonest communication and doing what love does, regard- less of how one feels, is the way out of disharmony. Love necessitates the abandonment of all forms of dishonest or deceitful communication.

      Love gives to a person what is due to him. Lev. 19:13 & 14 says, "Do not defraud your neighbor or rob him. Do not hold back the wages of a hired man overnight." It is often within the province of a team leader to influence the pay scale of a subordinate. Love would see to it that a man is properly taken care of financially.

The principle could also be applied to subordinates in that they would be obligated to give an honest days work for their wages. In one of the team situations observed, a subordinate was dismissed because he invested so little time and effort in the work given him.

Love does not play favorites. Lev. 19:14 & 15 says, "Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God, I am the LORD. Do not pervert justice: do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly."

This command requires putting off prejudice and treating people as God would treat them. James 2:1-13 provides a commentary on this principle. Fairness is another necessary element in harmonious interpersonal relations.

Love does not slander another. John Sanderson comments:

> . . . the sin of character assassination, or of loose talking which leads to the discrediting of an individual is widespread in Christian circles, so much so that in church disputes it is frequently difficult to get at the truth of a matter. Loose talking should be countered by a scrupulous concern for the truth and for the sacred name of the person, whether we like him or not, whether he is on our 'side' or not, he bears the image of God, and his name and reputation are worth preserving.[12]

Ministers who work together are obliged to provide an example of how love protects the name of another. If those who are expected to provide spiritual leadership slander one another, the congregation

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[12]John W. Sanderson, The Fruit of the Spirit, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1972), p. 53.

will undoubtedly follow in doing the same.

Several Proverbs speak clearly to the issue:

Prov. 11:13 - "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trust-worthy man keeps a secret."

Prov. 16:28 - "A perverse man stirs up dissension and a gossip separates close friends."

Prov. 26:20 - "Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down."

Love deals directly with a source of irritation. Lev. 19:17 says "Do not hate your brother in your heart, rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt." When one person wrongs another, the person who has been treated badly may become resentful and harbor bitter hatred towards his assailant. Rather than keeping silent and allowing the bitterness to deepen, love dictates that the wrongdoer must be confronted and the situation dealt with openly. This clears the air and often leads to reconciliation. There are a number of wise sayings that underline this principle.

Prov. 9:8b - ". . . rebuke a wise man and he will love you."

Prov. 15:31-32 - "He who listens to a life-giving rebuke will be at home among the wise. He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding."

Prov. 17:10 - "A rebuke impresses a man of discernment more than a hundred lashes a fool."

Prov. 27:5 - "Better is open rebuke than hidden love. The kisses of an enemy may be profuse, but faithful are the wounds of a friend."

Love forgives and forgets. Lev. 19:18 tells us, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD." It is said of the African buffalo that if wounded, it will relentlessly track down the one who wounded him and kill him. He doesn't give up until he makes amends for the hurt he suffered. For this reason, he is one of the most dangerous game animals in that continent.

Some people react the same way to hurts suffered in inter-personal conflict. They maliciously stalk their opponent until the opportunity arises for revenge and then they strike. In contrast, love forsakes all bitterness and malice, (Eph. 4:29ff) knowing that such displeases the Lord and grieves His Spirit.

It can be seen from this review of Lev. 19:9-18 that love is something a believer, filled with God's Spirit, can train himself to do. There is no mention of "feelings" in this passage, although there are strong emotions that are connected to, and flow from the things that are to be forsaken and the things that are to be done. Below is a check list that could be used for self-examination by those engaged in a team ministry.

1. Have I given thought and energy to meeting the needs of my associates? (List your fellow team members and those needs you are aware of that you could help to meet.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Have I violated the rights of any of my associates? e.g. Their right to have an opinion, their right to have a ministry and exercise their spiritual gifts, their right to have time with their families, etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

What can I do to assure these rights will be honored?

_____

_____

3. Have I been dishonest or deceitful toward any of my associates? e.g. Have I lied, distorted facts, manipulated, or spoken with hidden motives, etc.

_____

_____

What must I do about it?

_____

_____

4. Have I met all my obligations to my associates?

_____

_____

What must I do to remedy the situation?

_____

_____

5. Have I been fair in my dealings with my associates?

_____

_____

What must be done to make things right?

_____

_____

6. Have I engaged in loose talk or gossip about my associates?

_____

_____

How can I repair the damage?

_____

_____

7. Have I been direct and open about faults I have seen in my associates'

_____

_____

What has been overlooked and what should be done?

_____

_____

8. Do I have any bitterness or hold any grudges toward any of my associates?

_____

_____

What can be done to right the situation?

_____

_____

If definite faults have been discovered through this review, there should be no hesitation in doing what needs to be done to put the relationship that has been harmed back on a solid basis. The check list could be used further as a reminder of those things that should be avoided in the future.

Renewing the resentful (bitter) heart

It has been seen that bitterness often results when there is interference with a person's personal ambition or when expectations are unrealized. Prevention must deal with this selfish ambition if it is to be effective.

In Eph. 4:31 the believer is instructed to "get rid of all bitterness. . ." The verb here is a first aorist passive imperative of $\alpha \acute{\iota} \rho \omega$ which means "to bear away."[13] Thus it is a command to rid oneself of bitterness. It is an act of the will wherein a believer takes decisive action to purge himself of all grudges, bitter feelings, or schemes of revenge against other people. This is not done in the strength of the flesh, but it is a response to the Word of God. It is grace that enables a person to obey.

To facilitate such action it is helpful to make a list of all those people that are the object of bitterness. With their names, list the reason why they are resented or what they have done that has occasioned the resentment. Take each case and pray that God would give

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[13]J. H. Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1901), p. 16.

the grace to put to nought every strand of the web of bitterness that has been woven in the heart. Leave nothing for pride to cling to -- get rid of it all.

This sounds so simplistic, but anyone who has struggled with bitterness knows how difficult it can be. Once it is forsaken, there must be the determination to reject any attempt to revive it in the future. This can only be accomplished if the right thing is introduced to take the place of the bitterness.

Kindness, compassion, and forgiveness are the Scriptural replacements for bitterness (Eph. 4:31). To forgive in this case is the translation of $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\zeta\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu o\iota$ which has the wider meaning of dealing graciously with a person. The manner in which this is to be done is described as "just as in Christ God forgave you." This phrase eliminates all justification for retaining bitterness.

Col. 3:12-14 is a parallel passage to Eph. 4:31-32.

> Therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and for-give whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues, put on love, which binds them altogether in perfect unity. (underlining mine)

In this passage Paul uses the word $\pi\rho\alpha\acute{v}\tau\eta\tau\alpha$ which is translated "gentleness." It is this which was the hallmark of Christ's character (Matt. 11:29) and that which he taught was essential to the character of His followers (Matt. 5:5). W. E. Vine defines it as an "inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly toward God. It is that temper of Spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or

resisting " He goes on to point out that it is "the opposite

of self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is an equanimity of

spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is

not occupied with self at all."[14]

Paul, in another place, shows the necessity of possessing

God-given meekness to counter the tendency to engage in conflict

which often results in harboring resentment toward one's opponent.

> ....the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead he must
> be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those
> who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that
> God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge
> of the truth.[15]

The basic principle in this passage, gentle instruction of those

with opposing viewpoints, is applicable to team relationships. One

of the men interviewed, who has worked under several different pastors,

remarked that such an attitude was almost totally lacking in those

with whom he worked. There is, in fact, a great need for the cultiva-

tion of meekness among Christian workers today. How is this to be

done?

Meekness has its foundation in strength. To turn to W. E.

Vine once more, he remarks:

> It must be clearly understood, therefore, that the meekness
> manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the
> fruit of power. The common assumption is that when a man is
> meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was
> 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His
> command.[16]

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[14]W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words,
(London: Oliphants, 1940), pp. 55-56.

[15]2 Tim. 2:24-25

[16]Vine, Expository Dictionary, p. 56

The leader or subordinate who would be meek must be "strong in the Lord and in his mighty power."[17] A person who is confident in the Lord and what the Lord is doing in and through him does not need to crush or silence those who disagree with him. It is usually the person who is not sure of his ground who becomes caustic and agressive.

Meekness is produced by the Holy Spirit. Gal. 5:23 includes meekness in the list of the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit's requirements for such production would include putting off hostility and all that accompanies it and yielding oneself to the Spirit's control. This implies that there must be a conscious effort to put the interests and welfare of others before one's own interests and to treat them with kindness.

Meekness is not self-assertion. Assertiveness Training is an outgrowth of Behaviorism. Andrew Salter, Joseph Wolpe and Arnold Lazarus developed the basic concepts of what is known at AT. Their starting point was the Pavlovian system of stimulus/response behavior. Training involves the removal of inhibitions which hinder an individual from gaining their rights. Counselees are taught to counter the anxiety that arises in threatening situations by expressing an emotion or concept that challenges the anxiety and asserts the real self. The popularity of this approach is largely due to the change people experience through receiving the training.

AT therapists do not look kindly on the Scriptural concept of meekness. A well known popularizer of AT, Herbert Fensterheim,

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[17]Eph. 6:10

comments:

> Parents, teachers, clergymen, and businessmen have unwittingly conspired to produce a nation of timid souls. In most cases, the church fosters the idea of humility and sacrifice rather than standing up for self.[18]

A few pages later Dr. Fensterheim gives a description of the "neurotic spiral." He lists the signs that show that a person is descending into neurosis. The fourth sign he lists is "you feel the rights of others are more important than your own."[19] It is interesting to compare this statement with that of Paul in Philippians chapter two, verse three, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."

AT is clearly based on concepts that are unbiblical. Yet as the methodology and goals of AT are reviewed, it is apparent to this writer that there are some helpful ideas taught. It is like so many other things wherein people are taught to do some things that are right but for the wrong reasons. It is right for a person to express himself honestly and openly to others but to do so out of self-interest is wrong.

In contrast, meekness can help a person to "speak the truth in love" with the needs of the other person in mind and for the ultimate objective of pleasing God. Being timid and withdrawn is not

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[18]Herbert Fensterheim and Jean Baer, Don't Say Yes When You Want to Say No, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1975), pp. 20-21.

[19]Fensterheim and Baer, Don't Say Yes, p. 30.

characteristic of biblical meekness. Meekness is active in reach-
ing out to others. It is firm and yet gentle, it can be tough and
yet kind, assertive yet self-effacing. It can be seen in its per-
fection in the person of Jesus Christ.

Having the privilege of working with a team leader who
exercises meekness can be a rewarding experience. In discussing
leader-subordinate relations with a Christian school teacher, a
description of her supervisor was given. "She's (the supervisor)
always thinking of us and our interests." The meekness of this very
effective leader comes through in her attitude and actions toward her
subordinates. Those working under her direction are very happy hav-
ing a person like her in charge. A youth pastor who is in his forties
working under the direction of a senior pastor who has been pastoring
the same church for more than fifty years described a similar rela-
tionship. He said that the pastor was always doing things to help
him to be more successful in his work. Whenever the pastor had
something he thought would be valuable to this youth pastor he called
him in and shared it with him. Again the relationship was a satisfy-
ing one for both men.

Resentment and bitterness must be gotten rid of and the focus
of attention shifted from self to others. If the main objective of
team members is pleasing God through serving the interests of others,
bitterness can be conquered.

Changing the envious heart

The Apostle Peter speaks of getting rid of envy in 1 Pet. 2:1 and he does so in the context of his discussion of the New Birth. Holiness begins with a holy birth. Self-centeredness which gives rise to envy can only be overcome by a supernatural intervention. Through the provision of redemption and through the "precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" the believer can overcome envy. All past offenses are forgiven and the enablement to live for God's glory rather than selfish goals is imparted.

It is possible that a person could attain a position of spiritual leadership without being spiritually reborn. Such a person is bound to be on a different wave-length than those who truly know the Lord, and this is bound to cause conflict. Not a few people have experienced the joy of coming to know Christ as Lord and Savior after beginning their ministry.

Peter admonishes those who have been born again to rid themselves of "all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and slander of every kind," (1 Pet. 2:1). As has been so ably pointed out in the writings of Dr. Jay E. Adams, the growth process in Christian experience involves putting off the old and putting on the new. Here the focus is on those sins which divide those who ought to be living in harmony.

Peter has already shown that the new life gives us a love for other believers (vs. 22, chapter 1). He encourages believers to "love one another deeply, with all your hearts. . .for you have been born again. . ." (vs. 22b, 23a). He makes clear that the love given must

be exercised thoughtfully and diligently. In the interest of main-
taining and increasing such love, everything that is inconsistent
with, or contrary to seeking the good of others must be renounced.

The complaint is often heard that renunciation is only
effective for a very brief period of time. This is too often the
case. The reason for this is that people tend to look upon renun-
ciation as a once-for-all act. It would be more accurate to think
of it as being similar to weeding a garden. After a spring rain
you may spend considerable time and effort pulling every alien
sprout from among the good growth. That does not settle the matter.
Constant attention will be required to keep the garden weed free.
There is still more to the process than pulling the weeds. The good
growth will need to be cultivated, fertilized, and guarded against
the host of varmints that would destroy it. So the putting off,
putting on process is a discipline rather than a single act. There
are definite steps to be taken in accomplishing this.

a. Identify envy as sin.

In a team situation it is all too easy to see envy as legiti-
mate competition or as zeal for God's work or some other convenient
rationalization. It is necessary to be brutally honest with oneself
in evaluating motives, goals and attitudes. The person who is motivated
by selfish ambition could be represented as having the tendencies seen
in the figure on the following page.

It is all too easy to disguise the ambition to increase one's personal influence under the cloak of "living for God's glory." All the other expressions of selfish ambition could be similarly hidden behind a facade of spirituality. It is inevitable that such hidden ambition will cause bitter envy when anyone interfers with its progress, and this in turn will cause contention.

Dealing with such a situation is not an easy task for team members or outsiders. A. B. Bruce comments on the difficulties of such a situation:

> ....nothing is harder than to train the human will into loyal subjection to universal principles, to bring men to recognize the claims of the law of love in their mutual relations, to expel pride, ambition, vainglory, and jealousy, and envy from the hearts even of the good. Men may have made progress in the art of prayer, in religious liberty, in Christian activity, may have shown themselves faithful in times of temptation, and apt scholars in Christian doctrine, and yet prove signally defective in temper; self-willed, self-seeking, having an eye to their own glory, even when seeking to glorify God...men full of ambitious passions and jealous of each other could only quarrel among themselves, bring the cause they sought to promote into contempt, and breed all around them confusion and every evil work.[20]

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[20] A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve, (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1891), pp. 200 & 201.

It is instructive to see how the Lord Jesus Christ handled the situation when His disciples were wrangling about who would be the greatest in the Kingdom. Their discussion reflecting their ambitious spirit came on the heels of the Lord's announcement of His coming suffering.[21] It is frightening to see how these good men could ignore the prospect of His cross for their own future concerns. Their self-centered thoughts produced envy that threatened to drive them apart. Again A. B. Bruce observes, "....vanity and jealousy lie very near each other."[22] The Lord's rebuke came in the form of a little child: "....Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:2)

    b. Self-forgetfulness is the key.

The restraint Jesus used as well as the nature of the visual lesson are of great value to those interested in interpersonal relationships. The child provided a living example of unpretensiousness and humility. The innocent, trusting face of the little boy or girl witnessed to an unconsciousness to class, status, upward mobility and the like.

When we grow older, unfortunately, we become more conscious of ourselves as we compare ourselves with others. In this age, this tendency is goaded into an obsession by the unremitting quest for identity, a better self-image, self-awareness, self-actualization, etc.[23]

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[21]Matt. 18:1-6.

[22]Bruce, Training the Twelve, p. 200.

[23]Thomas Howard, "Who Am I? Who Am I?," Christianity Today, July 8, 1977.

The Scriptures do not encourage us to continue such a search, rather they call for an abandonment of what is often a great opportunity for sinful flesh to indulge itself. We are exhorted rather to love God and love our neighbor and to forget self. Helmut Thielicke puts it well when he comments:

> That is to say, it is a remarkable fact -- and this has become my personal conviction, confirmed at every step of the way by life itself -- that I do not attain the greatest possible development of my personality when I consciously try to develop myself, when I am constantly considering: 'where will I have the best chance to live to the fullest? How can I gain prestige in society? Where can I reach the maximum of accomplishment and where can I experience the greatest pleasure?' On the contrary, I arrive at this fulfillment of my personality and my life as a whole only when I do not think about it at all, but rather when I forget myself and devote myself to something else, to another person or to a task, in short, when I serve and love and in both do not think about myself at all.[24]

If in a ministerial team each member is thinking in terms of their own prestige, development, and happiness the situation is ripe for envy which will inevitably cause strife. Contrawise, if each member is aware of the dangers of preoccupation with self and through the strength of the Lord works toward self-forgetfulness, harmony is possible.

c. Proper structuring can help to minimize envy.

In those arrangements where subordinates are not permitted to carry out a full-orbed ministry there is the occasion for the flesh to produce a sinful reaction. If a man is prevented from doing what he is

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[24]Helmut Thielicke, How the World Began, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), pp. 90, 91.

called and trained to do he will be dissatisfied. He may well look
at the fuller ministry afforded the team leader and envy his position.

There are other situations where some team members work to-
gether well but leave no room for others to function. Kenneth R.
Mitchell discusses just such a case:

> ....it is clear from a reading of the case history that in the
> three-man situation the value of the third man's contribution
> was never recognized. It never became clear that he had any
> contribution to make in the eyes of White and Green. No one
> interfered with White's leadership and preaching functions.
> Similarly, no one interfered with Green's educational admin-
> istration. But both White and Green interfered with the third
> man's pastoral functions. This third man was always hired as
> a minister of pastoral care, and yet this was a ministerial
> function which White and Green would in no sense give over.[25]

One can imagine the frustration and dissatisfaction this
third man must have experienced. While Mitchell does not comment
on the problem of envy in his discussion of this situation, it is
clear that envy with accompanying strife is highly probable.

In this case restructuring is a necessity. The need for a
third man should be re-evaluated. If a third man is needed then
his job description needs to be rewritten. More importantly, White
and Green need to discuss the situation openly with the session or
church board and hammer out policies that will allow a third man, if
needed, to have a ministry.

d. Just compensation for each team member helps avoid envy.

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[25]Kenneth R. Mitchell, Psychological and Theological
Relationships in the Multiple Staff Ministry, (Philadelphia:
Westminster Press, 1966), p. 178.

Where there is a wide disparity in compensation all parties must openly discuss the situation and reduce the unjust differences in the rewards offered to the various team members.

It is interesting to note the difference in this regard between stateside ministerial teams and overseas teams (missionary teams). In a study of churches that range in size from 700 to 2,000 members that have multiple staffs, Marvin Judy found the following results:

1. These churches spent between 28% and 33% of their total budgets on staff salaries. Budgets ranged from $60,000 to $200,000 per year.

2. The associate ministers were compensated at a much lower rate than the senior ministers. For example, if the senior minister's salary was represented by 100%, the first associate's salary would be 66.3% of that and the next associate would be paid 45.9% of that which the senior minister was paid. The Director of Christian Education would be paid 59.1% of the senior minister's salary.[26]

If we give the senior minister's salary at $20,000, this would break down in real figures as follows:

> Senior Minister - $20,000
>
> First Associate - $13,260
>
> Second Associate - $9,180
>
> Director of Christian
> Education - $11,820

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[26]Marvin T. Judy, The Multiple Staff Ministry, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1969), p. 53.

In many cases the other benefits offered the various staff members would further widen the gap. This tends to feed the ambition of associate ministers to someday become senior ministers. Thus a lesser position is only a way-station on the road to true success as a senior minister.

The compensation given to missionaries is much the same for every family regardless of experience or position. The reason why there is such a different system for paying people who labor abroad is not apparent. It appears to be the result of custom and necessity.

There is no way to completely eliminate inequalities. Such an objective is not even very desirable. The cure for envy is not equalitarianism. The aim should be toward the kind of fairness that helps to eliminate unnecessary inequalities that may cause dissatisfaction.

Changing the anxious (threatened) heart

There are some fears that have their origin in a guilty conscience. A person in a leadership position may fear losing that position because of the haunting fear that God is going to punish him for sin. It may be that the sin is neglect of responsibility or sin in some other area, but the presence of guilt undermines confidence. John Brown of Edinburgh explains the reason for this lack of confidence.

> Conscious guilt unfits a man for acceptably serving God. The essence of the service which God requires of His intelligent creatures is love. The man whose conscience is polluted with unpardoned guilt cannot love. He knows he has offended God; he knows he deserves punishment; he does not, he cannot, love the Being whom he regards as his enemy; he cannot seek his enjoyment in communion and fellowship with Him. Nothing can fit a man for the service of God but what purifies the conscience

from the pollution produced by these 'dead works;' and nothing
can do this but the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.[27]

(comment on Heb. 9:14)

It is here made plain that guilt interfers with both loving
God and perceiving His love. It is perfect love that "drives out
fear."[28] The Apostle John shows further that fear carries with it
the idea of punishment. In the case of a threatened leader the
feared punishment is often the loss of position. Confessing and
forsaking sin is the biblical means for overcoming fear that results
from guilt.

This principle is also applicable to the person working in
a subordinate position. Conscious guilt in this case may cause the
person to imagine disapproval on the part of his superior and other
colleagues when such disapproval has not been expressed. Again,
without the confidence afforded by God's approval the person cannot
believe that others approve of him and his work. The only way out
is to deal with the sin that has produced the guilty conscience.

There are certain people who have been conditioned by their
experiences and habitual thought patterns to be fearful or threatened
people. Some of these are represented by the following examples:

a. This is too good to be true!

There are those who feel totally inadequate for the task they
are expected to carry out. Many senior pastors are men who began as

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[27]John Brown, An Exposition of Hebrews, (London: Banner of
Truth Trust, 1961), pp. 403, 404.

[28]1 John 4:18

pastors of small churches. Because of various factors, including their own outstanding gifts in certain areas (for example, preaching or evangelism), these churches grew and it became necessary to add to the staff producing a multiple staff or team situation. Thus a man who never felt terribly confident as a pastor of a small church finds himself in the leadership of a large church with the responsibility to direct the activities of several other ministers. The same man probably has never had a course in administration, which factor contributes to his sense of inadequacy.

Looking in the mirror at his half shaven face, such a man may say to himself, "How in the world did I get here?" and that may be followed by the question, "How long can it last?" Such a person can be greatly helped by a program of continuing education in the areas where he is meeting new challenges in his ministry. Seminaries need to give thought to helping to meet the needs of such an individual.

b. You can't trust anybody!

There are those who have lived in an atmosphere of mistrust. Parents may have begun the conditioning process by teaching their son not to trust other people. The same parents may be very suspicious people who constantly question the motives and objectives of other people including Christian people. A person does not have to become suspicious because of living in such an atmosphere, but it can be a contributing factor in the life of one who is overly suspicious and threatened.

It is possible too that the conditioning could be the result of a string of incidents where a person was abused by people thought to be sincere and trustworthy. Some senior pastors have had so many bad experiences with assistants or associates that any new man is under suspicion from his first day in the position.

Whatever the process, the result often is a person who imagines the worst in an associate rather than thinking the best. In overt and covert ways, this suspicion is conveyed to the associate making him most uncomfortable.

While conditioning may be a reality it is never an excuse for sinful attitudes toward other people. The love that drives out fear is a love that always trusts (1 Cor. 13:7). It is not risky to trust a brother with whom we are working. It is one of Christ's commands to His followers that we love one another. There can be no risk in obedience to Jesus Christ. (John 15:12)

    c. I've never done it this way before!

For a man who has been in the ministry for a number of years as the sole pastor of a church, adaptation to a multiple staff arrangement is not an easy thing. One of the senior pastors interviewed shared very candidly his own struggle. In answer to the question, "Have you found it difficult to make the transition to a team ministry this man replied:

> Yes, very, very much so; very difficult. To be very frank with you, again and again, it's my own self that rears its ugly head in seeing someone else take over some aspect of the ministry. It is very easy to become envious when another man comes in and can do some things better than you yourself can do. It is very

easy to envy his successes, or when people will turn to him
and not to yourself. All these things are very vital things
you struggle with, and you just have to come to the place
where you believe you are working together; that you are
accomplishing something, not as separate individuals, but you
are accomplishing something as a team. You just have to keep
in mind the idea that like on a baseball team, you are the
pitcher and don't play center field. If you are the catcher,
you don't play first base, and you just have to keep this con-
cept in mind. The selfishness that does naturally come,
(wherein you were the number one man, and everybody kind of
looked to you), has to be challenged and the loyalty of the
congregation must be shared.

Pastor_____ and myself know we are both different in person-
ality, in gifts, in philosophy to a degree, not so much philosophy
as emphasis, and this causes real difficulties, and could cause
real clashes if we didn't constantly love one another and be
cooperating with one another and realizing that we are comple-
menting one another. We have had it said by many, both old ones
and new ones in the congregation, that they feel that they can see
the great differences, but they can see how we are complementing
one another, and that's what I really wanted and what we were
really after.

There are several elements in this answer that help to answer

the problem of adaptation to a team situation.

1. This man openly acknowledged the problem. Wisely, he does

not act as though it has been easy and wonderful; he rather admits

the difficulties involved. These difficulties are discussed by the

two pastors working together in this situation.

2. He counters the negative feelings with solid concepts.

That is, he seeks to gear his thinking to the team idea and focuses

on the benefits of the arrangement.

3. Here, and in the rest of the interview, it became clear that

this pastor knew himself very well and knew his strong points as well

as his weaknesses. He has been able to see how the strengths of the

other man blend well with his own.

4. The relationship of this senior pastor to his associate is built on love and appreciation for one another. (The associate was also interviewed and it was evident that he respects and honors the leadership position of the senior pastor and is careful to consult him often.)

5. The ministerial team see themselves as a model for the congregation. Their willingness to work together in harmony, in spite of differences, is a ministry in itself to the flock.

There are doubtless many other examples that could be used to illustrate the problem of anxiety in team relations. Besides what has been said concerning love driving out fear, the most important doctrine to apply to such situations is the sovereignity of God and especially the Lordship of Christ as the Chief Shepherd over His church. Fear often results from thinking that the situation is out of control. Trust in the sovereign Lord quells such fear.

In Psalm 11 the man who was such a threat to King Saul was evidently facing a serious threat to his kingdom. David's advisors urged him to flee to the mountains. David gave a four-fold answer to his fearful advisors:

Ps. 11:4 - "The Lord is in His holy temple." The Lord is present with His people.

Ps. 11:4b - "The Lord is on His heavenly throne." The Lord is King and has things in perfect control.

Ps. 11:5 - "The Lord examines the righteous. . . but judges the wicked." The Lord will see to it that justice is done.

Ps. 11:7 - "The Lord is righteous. . .upright men will see His face." Those who obey the Lord will ultimately triumph.

David comforted his own heart by meditating on the reality of God's sovereignity. He knew that the Kingdom could not be destroyed unless God allowed such a thing to happen.

While the love of God provides the means by which a person can appreciate his colleagues and even put them before himself, the sovereignity of God assures such a one that nothing can happen to his ministry or the welfare of God's people apart from divine rule.

Preventing Conflicts Caused by Status Seeking and Frustration

Conflicts that are caused by frustration and status seeking can also be avoided by a change of heart. There are two additional factors that if observed, will greatly help to avoid occasions for such conflict.

Preventing Conflict Through a Proper Concept of Leadership

A leader is someone who influences people to cooperate in pursuing certain objectives. A Christian leader is one whose influence is biblically correct and which is primarily spiritual in nature. He is one who motivates people to cooperate with him and each other in pursuing goals that will glorify God and advance Christ's Kingdom. The model for the Christian leader must be Christ Himself, and ideally the Christian leader's influence will be an extension of the Lord's influence upon others through him.

Leadership skills can be learned to some extent, but it must be recognized that Christian leadership is a calling for which the called one is equipped with certain spiritual gifts. In Rom. 12:6-8 Paul enumerates a number of spiritual endowments:

> We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is show-ing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. (underlining mine)

The word used for leadership is προίστημι which means to put before, to be over, to rule, to superintend. It is used eight times in the New Testament. It is used three times of Christian leaders in their capacity of ruling the church (Rom. 12:8; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 5:17). It is used three times of managing ones own family. In 1 Tim. 3:4-5 those who aspire to church leadership as elders must be those who manage their own families well. The same requirement is made of deacons in 1 Tim. 3:12. The other two times the word is used are found in Titus 3:8 and 14. The New International Version translates both phrases in which προίστημι is found: "to <u>devote themselves</u> to doing what is good."[29] The meaning here seems to be taken from the root idea "to put before," so to be for-ward in or devoted to good works. (See Donald Guthrie's comments in <u>The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries</u>; <u>The Pastoral Epistles</u>, London: Tyndale Press, 1951, pp. 207, 208.) However, Dibelius and Conselmann may be more accurate in focusing on the idea of "care"

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[29]The verb προίστασθαι is used here in the sense of "to be concerned with," "to care for."

in the word.[30] The word does not simply mean to lead in the sense of being first in order of rank, but conveys the idea of caring for or being responsible for the welfare of the people ruled. As Bo Reicke comments, " Οἱ προϊστάμενοι are a special group separated by the Spirit for the primary task of caring for others."[31]

In a multiple staff very often all the staff members are elders and therefore, are all οἱ προϊστάμενοι , that is leaders over the people of God. Each staff must have its internal structure and someone must be the leader. (Some have experimented with the leaderless team, but it has been discovered that if the team does not recognize a team leader, the congregation will.)

The team leader is responsible for both the coherence of the team as well as its function. Coherence has to do with the maintenance of the team. The care of those other team members and their harmonious cooperation is in view. Function refers to the planning and performance of the tasks for which the team is responsible.

The following list of requirements for staff coherence is based upon a similar list in Kenneth R. Mitchell's book entitled Psychological and Theological Relationships in the Multiple Staff Ministry.[32]

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[30]Dibelius, Martin, and Congelmann, Hans, The Pastoral Epistles, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 151.

[31]Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, vol. 6, pp. 700-702.

[32]Mitchell, Psychological and Theological Relationships, p. 161.

1. Each staff member must find the opportunity to enrich his relationship to Jesus Christ within the context of staff relationships.

This is accomplished through staff worship, mutual edification and sharing, intercessory prayer for one another and to those outside the group, Bible study and discussion of spiritual problems, and implementation of biblical principles in future ministry. In other words, the team leader must set a tone and be an example of the believer so that the team will truly "serve one another in love," (Gal. 5:13-15).

2. There must be open and free communication between staff members. (Much more will be discussed on this topic later.)

The team leader is responsible for keeping the lines of communication open and providing an atmosphere where people feel free to express themselves without fear of reprisals. The team leader can best accomplish this by his willingness to communicate his ideas to team members and also by his acceptance of what others have to say to him and each other.

3. There must be an appreciation of the contribution made to the total ministry by each member of the team.

Happy people are appreciated people. A quick road to conflict is the neglect of recognizing the worth of a fellow laborer's work, e.g. between vss. 3 and 16 of Romans 16, Paul greets twenty-seven people by name and commends many of them for their works (vs. 12, "Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.")

Imagine what it must have meant to these people to have their names recorded in the inspired text of the Apostle's letter.

4. Problems in staff relationships are quickly and tactfully dealt with.

Here it must be recognized that the responsibility for dealing with internal problems is the team leaders. To neglect problems is asking for a larger, more difficult problem.

5. There must be periodic rehearsal and redefinition of goals and methods in accordance with the developing and changing situation.

Too often, people involved in team ministries lose heart because of lack of direction. They fail to see any clearly defined targets in their sights because the leader has not set any targets up for them. This leads to frustration and conflict.

There may be some long term goals which need not be redefined, but short term goals must be reviewed fairly frequently and changed if necessary. For example, a flood of new converts into a church will necessitate an adjustment to meet the needs of these spiritual infants. The team leader is responsible for taking the initiative in goal setting and coordinating the activities of the staff in relation to goal achievement.

This leads into the second major responsibility of the leader; that of overseeing the function of the team and the actual performance of tasks. In this regard it is the leader's part to see that every team member has a task to perform.

With the frequent emphasis on the fact that the harvest is great and the laborers few, it would seem that there would be no problem

in seeing to it that everyone is busy at an important task. There are several reasons why this is not always the case.

a. The leader may be reluctant to give up any area of ministry to a member of his team. He may try to find busy work for people to do or may hand out a few assignments which are limited in scope and which can be accomplished in a relatively short period of time, e.g. Why don't you go and visit the Smith family today?

It is important that the team leader realize that he must be willing to hand over to another minister working under his direction, an area of ministry that can be developed and expanded. The subordinate must be "turned loose" to exercise his gifts in a given corner of the harvest field. This should include authority to make decisions and policies in that area with the approval of the team leader and the church's official ruling body.

b. The leader may not acknowledge that the other members of the team minister to the whole congregation. The team leader may hand over an area of ministry, i.e. education, youth, singles, evangelism, etc. to a member of his team, but he may seek to isolate that person in that particular area. In the attempt to have division of labor and no overlapping of responsibilities, the leader bricks his assistant or associate into a corner. The man is made to feel that he is not part of a team ministry to the congregation, but is a hired specialist charged with a certain limited function. Herman J. Sweet speaks of the effect of this on the young minister:

There are increasing numbers of instances in which men who would be willing to continue their ministry as members of a multiple staff in charge of education and allied activities, become thoroughly disillusioned with their inability to establish a team relationship in which they will have a full ministry while specializing in certain phases of the church's program.[33]

There are ways in which a leader may affirm a man's ministry before the congregation.

1) Referring to his contribution before the whole congregation.

2) Reporting on progress (or letting the man himself report) in that area of the church's program, treating it as a part of the whole thrust of the church's ministry.

3) Inviting the man to minister in other ways from time to time. This would include preaching, teaching a special series to the congregation in his area of expertise, participating in the worship services, joining in special services, etc.

4) Since the senior pastor is often the chief motivator he could spend time seeking to motivate the congregation to support the ministries of his team members.

c. The leader may make decisions in an area without consulting the minister given charge of that area.

There are churches which do not allow any assistant minister, youth pastor, etc. to sit on the board of the church or sit in on

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[33]Herman J. Sweet, The Multiple Staff in the Local Church, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963).

board meetings where problems in their area are being discussed
and decisions made. In fact, there is the possibility of two teams
functioning in the leadership of a single congregation. One team
is made up of the senior minister and his staff. The other team is
made up of the senior minister and the official board of the church
(ruling elders or deacons or both).

A minister of youth may be told that he is in charge of lead-
ing the young people and developing programs to nurture them. Later,
the official board may meet and take up the youth program as one of
their responsibilities. It is possible that they may make decisions
and formulate policies without the presence or input of the man
supposedly in charge of that area. The effect of this is to make a
powerless, figure-head of the youth pastor. He really has no authority
to develop a program. He is only a functionary, carrying out the orders
and policies made by the official board. This may work well with a
student youth director or a volunteer youth sponsor, but it will not
work with a full time minister who is called to minister to young
people.

If he is not set free to minister within certain guidelines
and under the oversight of other ministers, especially the senior
minister, he will become disillusioned, discouraged and will either
soon be gone or may become a dissident who will become the focus
of conflict.

A great deal of thought and planning needs to be invested in
arranging the lines of authority and decision-making. If people are

given responsibility, it should not be withdrawn from them arbi- trarily. If a team member is given charge of an area no decision should be made effecting that area without consulting him. If a senior pastor or church board member does not think the man competent enough to handle such responsibility, they should not have assigned him that area in the first place.

There are few things that contribute more to team harmony than the satisfaction which comes from accomplishment. It is the team leaders job to see that each team member has the opportunity to experience such fulfillment.

There are some positive things that a team leader can do to assure greater success in the function of his team.

a. He can involve himself thoughtfully and prayerfully in the selection of team members.

Sometimes this is not possible because the team leader may have arrived on the scene later than the other members. (It is my conviction that senior pastors coming into a multiple staff situation ought to be given the option of making changes in the staff if they desire.)

In this process, attention needs to be given to matching per- sonalities and personal philosophies as well as reviewing academic qualifications and experiences. A senior pastor or team leader should be aware of the dangers involved in adding to the staff hurriedly. Sometimes after a period of rapid growth, a tired pastor is unable to cope with the added work load. The church board may become anxious

about his welfare and also desirous of keeping up the momentum toward greater expansion. A quick decision is made to find an assistant for the pastor who will share the burden of work with him.

The fact is that in most cases adding a man to the staff will mean more work for the pastor. This is particularly true in the church that is moving from having one minister to having a multiple staff. The change necessitates a new style of ministry for the man who formerly did it all himself. He must now work out just how the new man is going to fit in, help him adjust to the situation, and provide time for staff meetings, etc. At times the pressure of having to hand over to someone else certain aspects of the ministry is greater than the pressure of a heavy work load. This factor is increased when care has not been exercised in finding the right person to fill the position.

b. He can help to define the duties and performance requirements for each position.

One means by which this can be done is the job description. Marvin T. Judy provides excellent guidelines for using and formulating a job description in his book, The Multiple Staff Ministry. His opinions for use of a job description are:

1. A job description is necessary for clarifying the role of an individual on the staff.
2. A job description needs to be reviewed annually and revised in the light of a person's abilities, talents, desires, changing situations, and needs of the staff and congregation.
3. A job description should never be so rigid that it becomes binding rather than a releasing instrument.

4. All members of the staff need to understand the position of other members of the staff.
5. The congregation ought to have in printed form a brief statement of positions and functional responsibilities of each member of the staff.[34]

These principles provide a means to avoid unnecessary confusion and conflict. Every football team has a playbook. The playbook describes in detail what each man in each position is to do on a given play. Every man must memorize what he is to do on any and every play in the book. If the quarterback calls 24A on 2, the tackle should know exactly what steps to take to be at the right place at the right time and block the man that he is assigned. The whole team practices 24A over and over again on the practice field to make sure that their efforts will be coordinated when the play is used in a game.

Most football fans have seen the phenomena of a broken play. Sometimes a player will move right into the path of the ball carrier on his own team and knock him down. The confusion is almost comical to observe, but it isn't funny to the coach or to the players. Somebody forgot his assignment and got in the way of another man attempting to carry out his responsibility.

This same thing can happen with a ministerial team. Very often there isn't even a playbook, that is a job description. Assignments are not clearly defined. The confusion begins at the beginning of the game because the players do not know their individual responsibilities. The members of the team are bound to get in each others way.

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[34]Judy, Multiple Staff, p. 68.

There is a game called Irish basketball. It's played with any number of players and it's every man for himself. If someone gets the ball, he struggles to get down the floor and shoot it. However, everybody else on the floor tries to steal the ball and knock him down so that they can take their turn at being a hero. Such is the potential for a staff with no guidelines.

A good job description does set a staff member free to carry out his ministry. The suggestion that the job description be reviewed periodically is excellent. This could be the factor that would help to avoid the problem of allowing the job description to be too confining. It may be seen after a time that a staff member has real abilities in an area where he is needed. If this is not included in his job description a revision could be made.

Judy also gives a list of what a job description should include:

1. Statement of title of the position.
2. Lines of responsibility, i.e. to whom the party is responsible for reporting, advice, guidance, complaints, or requests.
3. A statement of duties or areas of responsibilities.
4. Schedule of work time.
5. Vacation periods, days off, and holidays observed.
6. Salary, retirement benefits, expense account, and other considerations.
7. Opportunities for self-improvement.
8. Advancements.

Sometimes statements in a job description are too general and thus introduce an element of uncertainty. For example, the description presented to an associate or assistant may say that he will be expected "to share the pulpit ministry." To the new staff member this may mean preaching once a week; to the senior pastor it may mean

preaching a half dozen times a year. If the new man is looking
forward to preaching frequently and later finds this will not be
the case, he may well be disheartened. This could be avoided by
specifying that "he will be expected to preach twelve times a
year." This could be revised later, but the man would know from
the start what was expected of him. The description should be con-
cise, but specific enough to eliminate confusion.

    c. He can be a pastor to the members of his team.

It may seem strange, but ministers are often the only Christians
without a shepherd. Yes, they are under-shepherds of Christ, the
Chief Shepherd, but they also need another earthbound shepherd to
confide in, pray with, and be encouraged by. Too often the relations
between leaders and their team members are not warm and open enough
to provide for this need. A senior pastor who feels threatened in
any way by his associates will find it difficult to minister to them.
He may instruct them and counsel them, but it may be an effort calcula-
ted to increase the productivity of the person or to show him his
place. Bible study, counsel, and prayer can be used to manipulate
rather than shepherd.

The atmosphere should be one of openness and love. This is
best achieved when the leader sees himself as first among equals and
views his staff as peers rather than underlings. If he can look at
his staff members with the attitude, "How can I help you succeed and
be all God wants you to be?", the atmosphere will be conducive to
everyone's growth. If, on the other hand, his attitude is, "You are
here only to help me succeed," then real harmony is difficult if not
impossible.

The question arises, who then is the team leader's pastor.
There are mature men of God who are pastors to pastors, but these
are few. In some close knit teams, team members minister to one
another. It isn't difficult to imagine Barnabas ministering to a
discouraged Paul. Why couldn't a leader confide in one of the other
co-workers?

d. He can adopt a style of leadership that will promote
openness and harmony.

Most books on leadership mention the three standard styles
of leadership; authoritarian, democratic, and Laissez Faire. These
are portrayed diagrammatically below:

1. Authoritarian - Directive Leadership

Leader

Makes plans - decisions

decisions handed down

Decisions accepted and acted upon -
very little feedback permitted
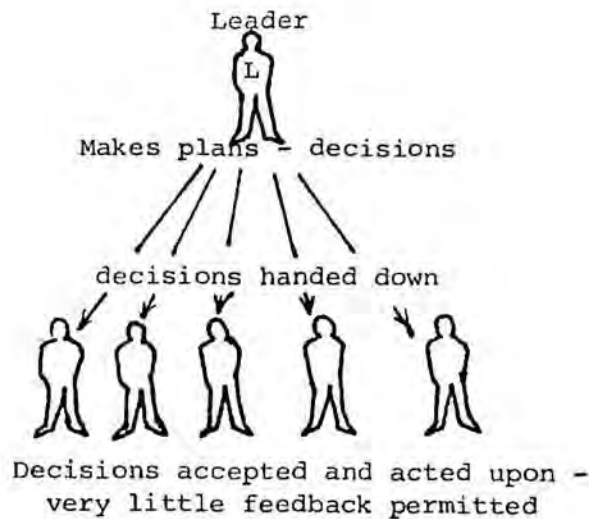
2. Democratic - Cooperative Leadership

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interaction
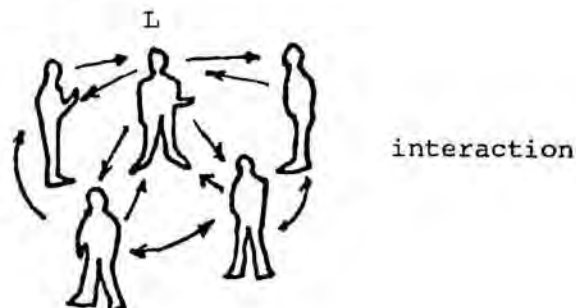
The leader acts as executive, planner, and mediator in the group. Everyone has an opportunity to share their ideas and these are weighed and evaluated carefully by the leader.

3. Laissez Faire - Assumed Leadership

Everyone does their work independently. Direction and goals are assumed.

A person's leadership style is often a reflection of how he views his position. He may see his ministry as the medium through which the Lord is leading and ministering to the flock with which he is working. All other ministries are auxillary to his own. Our respondent to the survey said in answer to the question, "What is the most important quality needed for team leadership?", "An understanding of the pastor--assistant pastor relationship--assistant an extension of the pastor's ministry." So far as the quality needed in a team member, he wrote, "A good follower and loyalty." I would guess that his leadership style is authoritarian.

There are a number of schools and influencial men who promote the concept that authority in a local church rests with the senior pastor. He is God's man and any additions to the staff are for the purpose of giving him more hands and feet to get his work done.

An interesting example of this kind of thinking can be found in the book Character Sketches published by Rand McNally Co., 1976, for Bill Gothard's organization. On pages 123-125 there is a discussion

of Moses concerning the need to delegate some of his work to others.
The author of Character Sketches looks upon this as a turning point
in Moses leadership where he rejected God's plan and adopted Jethros.
The commentator writes, "The leader's request for less responsibility
was granted, but the cost was far greater than he anticipated. He
lost direct contact with many of the people, and they lost some of
their respect for him. Confusion of leadership resulted and his
most trusted friends began to challenge his authority. As a result,
the goal which he had worked toward for eighty years suffered a set-
back that required forty additional years to overcome." (p. 123)
The commentator concludes by saying that these seventy "became the
organization which years later voted to crucify the Son of God."

The next two pages contain additional material to illustrate
how wrong Moses was to give up a part of his responsibility to others.
The strong implication in the whole section is that if he had trusted
the Lord to help him, he could have done it all himself. That was
God's plan.

It is easy to see how that this kind of thinking would militate
against a sharing of responsibility in a team ministry. Delegating
a task to another man would evidently be significant of weakness with
the probability of disastrous results.

There is no evidence in Scripture that the Lord disapproved of
Jethro's plan. Certainly blaming Moses' later troubles and the action
of the Sanhedrin on this delegation of responsibility is unwarranted.
It seems like the author is stretching the point to build the case for
his idea of leadership.

Preventing Conflict Through
Accurate Self-Evaluation

The question "Who am I?" is overworked. It is often asked as an invocation to self-worship. It is, in fact, the wrong question for the Christian to pose. On the Damascus Road, Saul of Tarsus cried out, "Who are you, Lord?" In the Lord's answer and subsequent working in Saul's life, the problem of the Apostle's identity was solved. It is ludicrous to imagine Paul, the aged servant of Christ, staring blankly at his prison walls mumbling the question, "Who am I anyway?" In addressing his inspired letters, it is clear that his identity was never in doubt after his encounter with Jesus Christ on the Syrian road.

The same man exhorts believers to "think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."[35] Thus the proper questions to ask are: What is God's design in and for my life?; What task has the Lord prepared me for?; What gifts have I received that are to be developed and put to work for God's glory? All of this is couched in a word of caution that I am not to think of myself more highly than I ought.[36] So along with assessing strong points, there should be a serious evaluation of my limitations.

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[35]Rom. 12:3b

[36]Rom. 12:3a

There are dangerous shoals on either side of the channel
of sober judgment through which the believer is to pass in making
a self-evaluation. On the one side is pride which is the heart
attitude of the one who over-estimates his abilities.[37] Ministers
are not helped in this when people expect them to possess all the
gifts in perfect balance and working order. In spite of expectations,
Anders Nygren's advice is fitting:

> The Christian must not strive to be everything. There is only
> one who comprises everything, Christ. . . So it is true of the
> Christian that he is only a member of that body. However richly
> equipped he may be, and however great the commission entrusted
> to him, he still is, and ever remains, only a member.[38]

There is a great need for both ministers and congregations to
assimilate the principles taught in Rom. 12:3-8. A truer image of
the minister and his role is urgently needed. Sound teaching in this
regard will take some of the undue pressure off those who desire to
serve Jesus Christ.

The danger on the other side, that of underestimating oneself,
is probably less a threat but nevertheless is to be noted. Too often
this attitude grows out of sinful comparing with others and in some

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[37]Trench distinguished the shoals of pride expressed in the
words ἀλαζών , ὑπερήφανος , and ὑβριστής . The first
term has to do with verbal boasting, empty professions of virtues and
exploits not possessed or accomplished. ὑπερήφανος has to do with
the proud person's thinking, "He that is sick of himself above others,
in honour preferring himself." Trench. The last term describes the
cruel spiteful actions of pride. Richard C. Trench, Synonyms of the
New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1953), pp.
98-105. Also see Rom. 1:30 and 2 Tim. 3:27.

[38]Nygren, Anders. Commentary on Romans, (Philadelphia:
Fortress Press, 1949), p. 421.

cases, self-pity. What Paul calls for is the sound-mindedness
that issues in a right and healthy view of ourselves and our posi-
tion. This does not involve comparisons with others but rather a
comparing of oneself with the biblical pattern.

As a part of this study, a questionnaire was developed as
a tool to aid a person in self-evaluation, particularly in relation
to spiritual gifts.

The questionnaire was designed to provide an opportunity for
the respondent to evaluate his or her spiritual endowments. It is
not a tool to determine what a person's gifts are, but what the
person thinks they are. It is probable that such self-evaluation
is a fairly accurate indicator of the gifts the person possesses but
more data would be needed for such a determination. There is a place
in the questionnaire for recording what others have said about the
respondent's gifts. There is also space to indicate one's desire for
a particular gift and also a place to indicate what the person has
learned by experience about their lack of certain gifts. The question
there reads, "What abilities have you attempted to develop but found
that these are not God's design for you?"

The group to whom the survey was given are students presently
enrolled at the Biblical Theological Seminary. There were 59 men and
2 women who responded. It can be seen from this data that there is
a great variety in the way that these people see themselves with
respect to their spiritual endowments. There are quite a few who
judge that they have the gifts necessary to become effective preachers

and teachers, but at the same time, lack the gifts for administration or at least see themselves as being weak in that area. For example, one seminarian choose d., "Speaking to people on God's behalf" as his greatest ability and i., "Overseeing the work of others, offering guidance and help in getting the work accomplished" as his weakest ability. In many situations, this man will be forced to administrate in order to get an opportunity to preach. This is so because the messenger of the congregation must also be the administrative leader in most churches. If the church should grow under his preaching, he will probably be responsible for administrating a multiple staff someday. This may bring with it many responsibilities for which this man is not prepared. The full results of this survey can be found in the appendices. It serves to illustrate that among those seeking the pastoral office, or some other influencial position in Christian work, there is a great diversity of gifts. It would seem that more attention should be given to this factor in ministerial teamwork.

In conversation with a man who has deep experience in teamwork, the subject of placing men without certain gifts in the wrong position was broached. This man is the head of a large mission and explained how that the mission spends considerable effort trying to match personnel with the right position by analyzing their gifts and attitudes. He mentioned that this has led to a high level of satisfaction among the missionaries and a minimum of conflicts caused by frustration.

He went on to describe a pastor friend who functioned

successfully as an associate pastor for a number of years. Because

this man was able and effective people pushed him to "get a church

of your own" as if that spelled real success. He finally did accept

a position as a senior pastor. After a short time the frustration

of doing a job that he was not suited for began to take its toll.

He became irritable and critical especially of his own family. Today

he is divorced and out of the ministry. It is probable that a faulty

self-evaluation or the ignoring of an accurate self-evaluation is

responsible, in part, for many similar tragedies.

IV.   CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Principles to Apply

When the well-published Three Mile Island incident occurred
near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania in 1979, there was great concern that
the heat generated by uncontrolled atomic fission would result in a
very destructive melt-down. The solution lay in acknowledging the
danger, containing the problem, cooling down the reactor, and re-
pairing the damaged systems.

A good ministerial team is made up of people who generate
a lot of energy, ideas, and activity. When such highly energized
and motivated people clash, there is likely to be considerable heat
and destruction. The destruction increases in both degree and scope
as the problem is ignored. As with the defective atomic generating
plant, there must be open acknowledgement of the problem among those
involved, a concerted effort to contain the conflict, cooling through
mutual understanding, and repair of those relationships and systems
that have been damaged (or which were never in proper order in the
first place).

Acknowledgement

Matt. 18:15-17 provides instruction in regard to both acknow-
ledgement and containment, (and for that matter, repair of broken
relationships). Verse 15 reads, "If your brother sins against you,

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go and show him his fault, just between the two of you."

The verb translated "tell" is the aorist imperative of

ἐλέγχω . In an article in The Theological Dictionary of New

Testament, Fredrich Buchsel points out that while the use of

the term in classical literature is complex (can mean to scorn,

bring to contempt, shame, blame, expose, to investigate), in the

New Testament its meaning is restricted. "It means 'to show some-

one his sin and to summon him to repentance.'"[1] In this case,

the offended party or one aware of the offense takes the initiative

in acknowledging the fault.

Such a confrontation is necessary when the offender refuses

to make the first move. Ideally, in a ministerial team, the acknow-

ledgement would come from either the offender or the offended at the

onset of the problem. There should be the kind of atmosphere wherein

problems and potential problems could be discussed freely without

intimidation or sanction. This point is made in the discussion of

conflict prevention but is repeated here for obvious reasons.

Among the respondents to the survey, there were a number who

were involved in conflict situations. In each case, the failure to

acknowledge the problem was a necessary component of the conflict.

In answer to the question, "How does your team resolve conflicts when

they arise?", the following replys were given by those team members

involved in teams that handled conflict poorly:

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[1]The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament s.v. ἐλέγχω
by Fredrich Buchsel, vol. 2, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdman
Pub. Co., 1964), pp. 473-474.

1. Usually a fast talk, but often conflicts are just avoided by ignoring them by submission to the leader.

This team member, who is in a non-leadership position, appears to be muzzled by a leader who is not open to any questioning or criticism of his ideas, programs or position.

2. Difficult for associate to express frustrations and confusion to senior pastor--not open or responsive.

In answer to question nine, "What is the most important quality needed for team leadership?", he wrote, "Determination to pay any price to achieve teamwork. The senior pastor must be 'open' yet lead the way to this and know how to communicate."

In both of these replies there is a note of obvious frustration caused by a lack of communication within the team (only two members). Problems cannot be resolved because there is no freedom given to acknowledge that problems exist.

This particular respondent is a young man (27) who has worked under two different pastors in the space of two and one-half years. Perhaps the impatience of youth is an important ingredient here. Even so, a wise leader should allow such a man to openly discuss his ideas and frustrations in a non-threatening atmosphere. By doing this, the young man could be helped to sort things out and grow into a more useful servant of Christ. As it is, his frustration could pro-duce bad results both in himself and the church he serves.

3. Sweep them under the carpet, do not mention them.

This minister, like the others, is in a non-leadership position. Just as a runaway atomic fission can eat through any barrier, unresolved

conflicts can eat through any carpet, like termites working in the
dark; things swept under the carpet will probably eat through the
floor, too. The whole foundation of the team will be undermined
if this condition is not remedied.

In contrast to these examples of teams where acknowledgement
of problems is discouraged or prevented, below are a number of
replies from team members that worked in a freer atmosphere.

In answer to the question, "How does your team resolve con-
flicts when they arise?", several team leaders replied:

1. We address them openly and directly. We deal with them
   fully (as time allows) until they are solved.

This leader added an explanatory note to the question,
"Do you function as the leader of the team?" He said, "But I am
not the 'dominant force' at all times. In fact, I seldom play
that kind of role." Several of the others who responded to the
survey were members of this same team. Their responses compare favor-
ably with his giving evidence of the good relationships that exist
and the willingness to be open to one another.

2. We get them out in the open, discuss each other's views,
   and pray about the situation.

3. Keep talking, take time to arrive at understanding, follow
   with positive prayer about what has just happened.

4. Pray and talk it through to a mutually agreeable solution.
   Often we table matters for a week to think and pray about them.

The last suggestion might seem unwise to some, and it would be
if the matter was left "on the table." The wisdom of tabling a matter
is relative to the nature of the conflict situation. If there is a

deadlock with regard to a matter of opinion as to how to approach

a future problem, tabling would provide more time to think about

other possible solutions or compromises. If a matter is put on the

table simply as a means of escaping from a bad situation, in hopes

that the conflict will "go away" in the meantime, it is a very poor

strategy.

    5. Direct discussion between the two pastors involved.

All of these leaders see the need for open acknowledgement

of tensions and problems.

The next set of replies to the question as to how team con-

flicts are resolved come from team members in non-leadership posi-

tions.

    6. Any personality conflicts or conflicts between team members
       are resolved individually. If they are with laymen and a
       member of the staff, they are resolved with the pastor, laymen
       involved, and the board. We have a very supportive team,
       even through our board. The backdrop of love makes correction
       easier to take.

From what this minister has written, it is clear that his

membership on this team brings great joy and satisfaction. He mentions

one of the sources of this happiness as being, "the backdrop of love."

The confidence that he is accepted and valued by his co-workers is the

element that makes open acknowledgement of difficulties not only possible

but profitable.

    7. Talk it out. Decide together what to do and live with the
       decision.

This last phrase "and live with the decision," is important.

From other answers this man gave, it does not appear that he said this

with fatalistic resignation. Rather, I believe he is acknowledg-
ing a fact which mature individuals must recognize; that the
resolution to a conflict does not always result in every party
being deliriously happy with the outcome. Some compromises may
involve a certain amount of disappointment for one party or the
other. For the sake of harmony and the advance of God's work, the
loss is accepted as God's will.

Proverbs 18:1-2 speaks of a person who refuses to be party
to the kind of openness spoken of by these men. "An unfriendly man
pursues selfish ends; he defies all sound judgment." This same
attitude is amplified in vs. 2. "A fool finds no pleasure in under-
standing, but delights in airing his own opinions.

The cause of such behavior is given in the words, "pursues
selfish ends." Such a person does not have time for the ideas and
opinions of others because he is entirely wrapped up in his own
supposed superiority (or in some cases, his sense of inferiority.)
He must have an audience who will obediently applaud his opinion but
dismisses the thought of others with an, "Uh, huh, that's interesting--
now as I was saying..." He illustrates the fact that pride will demand
to be heard, but is oblivious to the fact that love demands that others
be heard. It is not hard to imagine a Diotrephes standing in the shoes
of the man of Prov. 18:1-2.

Containment

Every team, figuratively speaking, should have a rubber stamp
that reads, "Classified Information" or "Top Secret." Certain informa-
tion should stay within the scope of the team unless disclosure is

absolute necessary. (No team leader or member should ever agree to keep a matter absolutely confidential. There may be cases where a team member will have to be disciplined by authorities beyond the team itself. In such cases, evidence should not be kept in confidence that would help those involved in a judicial process[2]).

In some cases, team members wounded in an endogenous conflict seek solace from those outside. The person so informed of the struggle will probably feel that the information brings with it the obligation to become involved. Their involvement may only go as far as passing the information to someone else. Like the concentric circles that move out from a pebble dropped in a quiet pool, the information spreads wider and wider. As it spreads, the information is distorted which exacerbates the situation.

Proverbs 17:9 speaks to the matter plainly. "He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."[3]

The idea of containment is even clearer in Prov. 26:20. "Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down." In the case of a forest fire, bull dozers and other equipment are used to make a corridor through the unburned trees in the path of the fire. When the fire reaches the clearing, it dies for want of fuel. The fire is "contained."

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[2]Dr. Jay E. Adams elucidated this principle in a counseling seminar at which the writer was present.

[3]Also Prov. 11:13; 16:28.

Matthew 18:15 specifies that the containment should go fur-
ther than simply keeping a matter within the borders of a team of
ministers. If the offense involved two members of the group and if
those two can justly deal with the matter before the Lord, there is
no need to take it further.

Cooling

Containment facilitates cooling as is clear from passages
such as Prov. 26:22. Anger is likely to increase as well as other
emotional reactions if the matter is spread. The heat of anger
deepens the division that has resulted from the original conflict.
The wisdom of Proverbs throws light on this fact. The following
references show the dangers of uncontrolled temper:

Proverbs 29:22, "An angry man stirs up dissension, and a
hot-tempered man must pay the penalty;" Prov. 19:19, "A hot-tempered
man must pay the penalty if you rescue him, you will have to do it
again."

In contrast the advantages of a cool head are mentioned:

Prov. 15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh
words stir up anger."

Prov. 15:28 "The heart of the righteous weighs its answers,
but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil."

Prov. 16:32 "Better a patient man than a warrior, a man who
controls his temper than one who takes a city."

Prov. 17:28 "Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent,
and discerning if he holds his tongue."

Prov. 21:23 "He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity."

Stuart Chase describes a Quaker meeting in which the principle of "cooling" was used very effectively. The situation was that the burial ground of a Quaker meeting house had been filled to capacity. The business meeting was called to decide where future burials would be located. Enlargement of the filled burial ground would take away from the area set aside for their school's playground. There were deep feelings aroused regardless of the plan that was considered by the leaders. Chase describes what happened:

> As emotions flared in the first meeting, the clerk called for silence, and then, when he found the atmosphere still electric held the matter over for a month--put it, as it were, into the refrigerator to cool. The second meeting showed little sign of cooling, however, and back to the icebox the subject went. It took six months for the temperature to get suitably low, but agreement when it came was unanimous, with no resentful minority or jubilant majority. . . The issue was not compromised but moved up to another level where a new plan was evolved--a plan in nobody's mind at the beginning of the discussion.[4]

Chase points out that this Quaker principle of calling for silence to cool emotions is used rather widely in political and labor relations. There are some disadvantages to such a device.

1. It may be used manipulatively to control the course of a meeting or discussion within a meeting. A leader who did not like the way things were developing could call for silence. It is not altogether uncommon for manipulative leaders to use a "season of prayer" as a device to turn back legitimate criticism and in some cases make people ashamed that they brought the matter up.

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[4]Stuart Chase, Roads to Agreement, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 49.

2. When there is a limited amount of time to deal with a problem, it is inconvenient to have to keep putting it back in the refrigerator again and again. There are those urgent matters that cannot wait for weeks to be settled.

Dr. Jay E. Adams has developed a helpful cooling device for family conferences. The family members are instructed to sit round a table, preferably not the one at which they eat. If one of the members becomes overly emotional and begins to attack another person the others are to stand up at their places and remain silent. The attacker finds this disconcerting and he usually backs off and agrees to go on according to the rules, (attack the problem, not persons).[5]

Such a procedure would be adaptable for team meetings. Especially those meetings that are called to resolve a conflict.

Repair

When people whom God intended to be together are torn apart by conflict, there is sin involved. Some may object, saying, "It's only a difference of opinion," but people can still be together in heart while differing in opinion. If the relationship is tense to the point of being uncomfortable, there is something more than a difference of opinion involved. If the relationship is held together only by the demands of propriety, but totally lacking in brotherly love (1 John 4:12-13) there is sin involved.

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[5] Adams, Christian Counselor's Manual, p. 324

Others may object and say it's only a "personality conflict." The problem with such terminology is that it is wholly unscriptural. There is no scriptural basis for being out of fellowship with a brother in Christ because of personality differences. In most cases, when the so-called personality differences are boiled down, they spell "sin." If personality differences are legitimate cause of conflict, then heaven isn't going to be as harmonious as was once thought. Since people will take their personalities along with them, then we can expect the conflicts to persist.

While it is true that we are drawn to certain people more than others, grace makes it possible for us to love all kinds of people. The way to resolve personality conflicts is to stop using personality as an excuse for being on the outs with another Christian.

Because interpersonal conflict is caused by sin, repair must utilize the means God has provided to deal with sin. Four steps are necessary: repentance, confession, forgiveness, and restoration.

a. Repentance

Jesus taught His team of disciples in Luke 17:3, "If your brother sins, rebuke him and if he repents, forgive him." The context of this remark was Jesus' concern for His disciples' relationships with others, including each other. Norval Geldenhuys comments on the context, particularly vss. 1 and 2:

> The Savior here addresses His disciples expressly and warns them
> (cf. vs. 3a: 'Take heed to yourselves') against the danger that
> their example, their words, their attitude or neglect of duty may
> do spiritual harm to others (especially the weaker ones in the

circle of disciples--e.g. former "publican" and outcast sinners who had turned to Him.)[6]

His words in vss. 1 and 2 encourage self-examination and control. The first part of vs. 3, "So watch yourselves," belongs to the thought of vss. 1 and 2. The words following, "if your brother sins...," emphasizes looking to the faults of others. This is the same sequence as Matt. 7:3-5:

> Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

In resolving a conflict, the parties involved must first examine themselves and ask, "What have I done to contribute to this situation?"

At the Christian Counseling Center in Laverock, Pennsylvania, counselors often refer to a counselee's "log list," (the "log" or "plank" in the NIV that they must remove from their own eye.) Married couples in conflict are asked to make lists of their own faults. (See Christian Counselor's Manual p. 328 ff.) The lists are to be as thorough as possible. After a husband or wife has attempted a full disclosure of their faults, they are encouraged to exchange lists and fill in the faults that their spouse has neglected to record. The method is effective for it brings into the open the causes of conflict.

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[6]Norval Geldenhuys, Commentary on the Gospel of Luke, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1951), p. 431.

In some cases, when this assignment is given, the counselee will resist admitting any faults, or may come in with a few generalizations: "I'm selfish sometimes," or "Sometimes I get angry." The counselor must ask for more specific items and a more comprehensive list. With some counselees, the bastion of pride does not fall without a struggle.

This method is adaptable for use in resolving team conflicts. The most difficult step in adaptation has to do with the absence of a counselor, or third party in such situations. If the situation is such that church discipline is called for, then the elder or official board could be brought in to work out a solution to the problem. A case where a team member was confronted with sin and refused repentance would occasion such action.

In the case of a missionary team, a field director, or some other missionary with counseling skill could be employed as a moderator. However, unless it is necessary, it would be far better to resolve the conflict without outside help.

The key to accomplishing this would be to have an established procedure that is worked out and agreed upon by all involved. In fact, it would be useful to role play the procedure in harmonious times to familiarize each member with the "how to" of the method. Such fire drills may be helpful in enabling everyone to get out of the conflict alive and well.

It would be the responsibility of the team leader to call a conference. If he refuses to do so voluntarily, for one reason or another, the team members ought to have the right to petition for such

a meeting. The petition should be in writing and signed by at least one team member. Specific charges should not be made in the petition, but simply a statement regarding the conviction that a conflict conference is needed.

When the conference convenes, the team leader should begin with prayer and the reading of appropriate Scripture such as 1 Cor. 12:12ff, and Eph. 4:1-16. The team leader or the petitioner (in the case of a meeting called for by a team member) should outline the reasons why the meeting was called. The petitioner may, in fact, be a guilty party who wants to clear his conscience by confessing his fault to his brethren. "Brethren, I asked Bob to call this meeting because I want to confess to you that I have been harboring a grudge against several of you for some time, and I want to make things right with the Lord and with you."

In this case, the man's repentance is evident in his attitude. If there is a known procedure for providing such an opportunity to clear one's conscience, it is more likely that this kind of thing will be done. If it is done, many potential conflicts will be eliminated before they start. There will be a greater sensitivity to sin that divides and a desire to deal with it before it goes very far.

It is not always necessary to go through a formal procedure. Such confessions may come in an informal meeting or a regular Bible study and prayer time when the Scriptures and communion with God presses the guilty conscience. Much depends on the atmosphere within the team. If a man knows he is loved and accepted for what he is by the others, he will not fear to confess his faults. If he is rejected or senses rejection by the others, he will fear making such an admission.

There are those cases where a team member finds it necessary to call attention to the faults of others. If a team member in a non-leadership position sees that other members of the team are in conflict, his first obligation is to talk directly to those parties. If this does not help, petitioning for a team meeting would seem to be in order.

If the opening statement of the team leader or petitioner is not in the form of a confession, it should be in the form of an introductory statement explaining what the problem is or is thought to be. "The reason I called this meeting is that I have sensed that our relationships with each other have become tense and in some cases, downright unfriendly. I believe this tension goes back to our discussion of the problems related to the youth banquet. We came out of that discussion with some hurt feelings and implied accusations and it appears that the rift created has continued to deepen and widen. It is time that we dealt with the matter and resolved it."

The next step is very important. Everyone involved is aware of the problem as outlined, but there may be the tendency to prepare for another round of battle. The various members may begin to strengthen their mental defenses at the prospect of another discussion or argument where their views will be tested. For this reason, this segment of the meeting ought to be divided into two parts: self-examination and examination of the charges.

Part 1, e.g., Leader: "Let's take a few minutes for personal prayer and thought in reference to our own contribution to the conflict.

I would like each of us to ask the Lord to reveal any wrong atti-
tudes or actions for which we ourselves are responsible. The ground
rule is that you focus on your own faults and not those of anyone
else, (repeating Matt. 7:3-5 would be appropriate here). As you
become aware of these faults, list them on a piece of paper. Be
as specific as possible and as thorough as possible."

After these instructions, everyone is given a period of time
to himself to work this out. Preferably, the team members would be
dismissed to find a solitary place to pray and meditate and write out
their list. Morbid introspection is not encouraged, e.g. "I'm really
a total zero," etc. The purpose is to nail down the attitudes and
behavior that caused and is causing the problem. True repentance is
based on an accurate knowledge of the offenses committed. That know-
ledge comes through the convicting work of the Spirit of God. (The
other three steps will be discussed within the context of such a
meeting.)

b. Confession

After an agreed upon amount of time, everyone returns to the
meeting place. The leader then gives everyone an opportunity to read
and comment on his list, for example:

Leader: "Fred, what did the Lord show you about your contribu-
tion to this situation?"

Fred: "Well, Bob, during these few minutes I came to the realiza-
tion that my attitude towards Frank (the youth pastor) has not been what
it should be. I've judged him to be rather frivolous, and I know that I

have a tendency to write off some of the activities he plans for
the young people as being worthless. I was speaking out of this
context when I made the remarks that I did several weeks ago, when
we discussed the youth banquet. I also must confess a certain de-
gree of envy toward Frank because of his youth and his ability to
get next to young people."

Leader (Bob): "I find that I have some of the same things
on my list. My relationship with Frank has been strained because of
envy and pride on my part. I appreciate your admitting it Fred, be-
cause it helped me to face the same thing in myself. Do you want to
respond to this, Frank?"

Frank: "I can't tell you how much I appreciate you men at this
moment. However, the fault is not only on your side. My sinful pride
has been expressed in the way I've been going about things around here.
I've come to realize, especially today, how arrogant I've been. I
haven't really given you all the respect I should have. Rather than
coming to you for advice, I've sort of looked upon you as being over-
the-hill in matters relating to young people. I've made some serious
mistakes and I realize that I do have a tendency to be frivolous and
too carefree when it comes to certain serious matters. Also, I know
I've been more concerned that the young people like me than that they
grow in the Lord, etc."

As each person speaks of their own faults, the convicting
work of God's Spirit works in those listening. Love grows in such
fertile soil. We tend to appreciate much more the person who is big

enough to voice his humble confession of sin in the hearing of those he has offended.

Of course, there is need for caution that such a session does not degenerate into a "can you top this" performance. Participants should be encouraged to confess only those sins that have caused or contributed to the present conflict.

c. Forgiveness

Confession of faults can stir up deeper feelings of resentment if there is not true repentance on the part of all offenders and a spirit of forgiveness. Eph. 4:31ff. speaks clearly to the situation.

> Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.[7]

Without real forgiveness, the bitterness, rage, and anger, etc. would not be put away for very long. Forgiveness means that the person will be henceforth treated as if the incident had not occurred. Thomas Watson expresses this in a quaint way when he says: "God not only makes a show of forgiveness, and keeps our sins by him; but he really forgives, he passes an act of oblivion."[8] He refers to Jer. 31:34, the last part of which assures, "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Thus, if we forgive as God forgives, we forget.

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[7]See also Matt. 5:44; Mark 11:25; Col. 3:13.

[8]Thomas Watson, A Body of Divinity, (Grand Rapids: Sovereign Grace Publishers,) p. 584.

This is so very important because it is a principle so often ignored. People say that they have forgotten, but in situations where they need ammunition against another person, there is the tendency to reach back in the memory and resurrect supposedly dead issues. Such a practice must be very offensive to a God who, because of His holiness and justice, is incapable of doing such a thing.

d. Restoration

In some cases, restoration may involve restitution. If public confession or apologies to other people are necessary to normalize the situation, they should be given without hesitation.

Biblical Examples of Conflict Resolution

Numbers 12 - Moses, Miriam and Aaron

Numbers chapter 12 illustrates how God Himself resolved a conflict involving His servants.

Moses, Miriam and Aaron formed a leadership team set over Israel by the Lord. It is obvious that Moses was the team leader and that Miriam and Aaron worked with him under his leadership. On this occasion the team subordinates spoke against the team leader, "Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses..." It is assumed that this talk was with others behind Moses' back. It is possible that it was talk confined to the two jealous subordinates but it probably went further.

This in an all too common scenario of team work. Disgruntled subordinates communicate their dissatisfaction to each other and to

others outside the team. The leader is often unaware of what is taking place until the insurrection causes some overt difficulty that reveals the spreading poison.

The occasion of the conflict

Ostensibly, Moses' marriage to a Cushite woman was the cause of distorted thinking and acting on the part of Miriam and Aaron.[9] That Miriam was the chief culprit is clear from the feminine form of the verb used in verse 1 and also that she was the one punished. Possibly a rivalry between two women triggered the rebellion.

This was only a surface cause, the root problem is revealed in verse 2 of Numbers 12 where both Miriam and Aaron are credited with the statement: "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses. . . hasn't he also spoken through us?"

God had privileged Moses with face to face communication (verse 8). There is no evidence that anyone else had such an opportunity. In chapter 11, verse 16, the Lord communicated His will to Moses concerning the need to appoint seventy elders over the people. The Lord explained, "They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone." It is probably that Miriam and Aaron felt slighted by the way in which the Lord worked through Moses on this occasion.

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[9]Many commentators mention the connection between Cush and Midian in Hab. 3:7 in support of the idea that the woman was Zipporah. It is likely, however, that this is a reference to a more recent marriage.

It is a feature of sinful human nature to focus on the negatives rather than the positives. In this case, Miriam and Aaron might have turned their minds to all the good things God had done for them and the high privileges they enjoyed as leaders among God's people. Instead, they compared themselves with Moses and became jealous, angry, and bitter. Their distorted thinking effected their communication so that they "began to talk against Moses."

It is not uncommon for people involved in plural ministries to feel slighted. In a local church situation the congregation almost always looks to one man as the leader and he is often the object of their plaudits. Those who work in association with a senior pastor must be content with working in his shadow. As has been suggested, the team should be structured so as to give every member an opportunity for a fulfilling ministry.

Even so, absolute equality is impossible. One or some team members will have advantages over others. The tendency will be for those with fewer privileges to become envious. This could lead to "talking against" others in a more privileged position. In many cases, this could take a similar line as did the talk of Miriam and Aaron; that is, criticism of the family, friends, or personal life of the one who is the object of the jealousy. Thus a campaign is waged to cut the other down or to reduce or take away the objectionable advantage. This causes a schism in the team and could cause a division in the church if carried on.

The resolution of the conflict

1. Acknowledgement

The Lord confronted Miriam and Aaron soon after the problem developed. He called a staff meeting in front of the tent of meeting and addressed the parties involved concerning the offense, (verses 4-9).

2. Containment

The insurrection was contained because it was immediately dealt with (verse 4a). Also, the Lord dealt only with those directly involved in the problem.

3. Cooling.

Verse 9 reveals that "The anger of the Lord burned against them, and he left them." This, of course, is controlled righteous anger. There was no need for the Lord to cool down.

The indignation evident in Miriam and Aaron toward Moses certainly must have cooled quickly in the awesome presence of an angry God. His word cleared their understanding of their roles in relation to that of Moses. Miriam had considerable time to let her thoughts cool during her confinement.

4. Repair

Aaron confessed, "Please, my Lord, do not hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed." There was evidence of repentance on the part of Miriam and Aaron. God forgave the wrongdoers and made provision for restoration through removing Miriam's disease and confining her for seven days outside the camp.

5. Several other instructive principles are found in the passage that relate to conflict resolution.

a. The situation was dealt with immediately.

Underlying the Lord's immediate action is the knowledge that everyday such a situation will get worse and effect more and more people. The matter must be dealt with by those aware of its presence. People who enter a multiple staff ministry must be forewarned about the possibilities of such thoughts and feelings.

One possible way to do this is to role play a situation where one or the other member is slighted and is made to live in the shadow of another. This should make the team leader aware of what his associates may face when he is singled out for privileges and praise not afforded them. Also, it would make the team members aware of possibilities which they can anticipate and arm themselves against. Such an exercise would open communication about such a problem. This would make it easier to discuss such problems in the future. Every precaution should be taken to discover and deal with such a problem before it does damage.

b. All parties were brought together before the Lord.

In any attempt to resolve a conflict it is advantageous to have all parties present. In a team situation where there is a division caused by envy and bitterness, there may be the tendency for one faction to meet with the leader and discuss what we should do with "them." If all are willing to come together, all should be present. This helps to eliminate distorted explanations of what really happened. It further

helps to avoid talking about people behind their backs. There is no mystery, everything is put on the table in the hearing of all involved.

Also, the process of conflict resolution is carried on before the face of the Lord. He is the most important offended party and also the chief problem solver. The process is a spiritual process and should be characterized by a humble, earnest seeking of God's face by all parties involved.

To review God's will for harmonious relations between His servants, it is appropriate to read such passages of Scripture as Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Cor. 12:12-13:13; Phil. 2:1-18 and/or Numbers 12:1-16.

In verses 6-16, Moses tells what God did to discipline Miriam and Aaron. It would be impossible to follow the passage to the letter in dealing with a similar situation today. The principles hold true and should be observed carefully.

c. The advantage of Moses is reviewed in respect to God's sovereign will.

Moses enjoyed the privileges he had according to God's design and therefore, the others should have no complaint. If some are jealous of the spiritual gifts of other team members, the same principle applies. It is not uncommon for the chief spokesman on a team to be given the most attention. Others may work as hard at their ministries, but the chief teacher often is given the credit for the success of the entire ministry. This can be offset somewhat by giving recognition to the unsung heroes of the team. (Some will object to

this saying, "If they serve the Lord, why should they receive recognition from men?" While this is true in principle, it is not realistic because the chief spokesman also serves the Lord, but is in fact receiving a great deal of recognition for his work from men. Wisdom would see the danger in such a one-sided situation and seek to reduce the disparity.)

Another way of dealing with the problem is to discuss it openly. The chief spokesman might say, "I hope you people realize that the praise given me is really due to God for what He is doing through our whole team." The discussion could center on the fact that all the gifts being exercised are from the Lord. The exercise of some gifts is more visible than others, e.g. preaching is more visible than administration, etc. However, all of the gifts are necessary to the accomplishment of God's purpose. God rewards His servants for their faithfulness in using wisely what they have been entrusted with and not according to an applause meter, (1 Cor. 4:2).

Reviewing Scriptural principles in an atmosphere of mutual affection and trust can be very helpful. The thinking of team members that might have become clouded by circumstances is cleared by exposure to God's Word.

d. The punishment of Miriam.

Miriam was afflicted with a serious skin disease (not necessarily leprosy). The effect, while not fatal, certainly produced shame in the errant woman. Some speculate that she criticized Moses' wife because her skin was black and now hers was an ugly lily

white. The speculation lacks support, but certainly the disease was a painful blow to Miriam. The punishment is reduced to a seven day isolation after Moses' intercession.

What should be done in disciplining a similar offender in this age? It would seem to depend on how far the poison has spread. If the insurrection has been discovered in its beginning stages it should be dealt with within the circle of those affected in the spirit of Matthew 18. If it has been an inter-team matter, it could be dealt with at a team meeting. The offenders should be confronted and dealt with according to the attitude they evidence. If repentent, a rebuke may be sufficient punishment. The unrepentent should be suspended from duties and isolated from other team members. Dismissal from the position may be necessary for those who persist.

In Num. 12:11 Aaron interceded for his fellow worker before Moses, "Please, my Lord, do not hold against us the sin we have so foolishly committed." Aaron's words give evidence of the repentent spirit of the two. Aaron does not defend Miriam's action or his own compliance, but rather owns up to their sin and confesses what a senseless deed it was.

Here again, can be seen the importance of an open discussion of the matter. The parties involved talked it over freely and thereby clarified the situation.

Too often, this is not the picture in team work today. One of the chief causes of deepening conflict seen in our survey is the lack of adequate meaningful communication. Small problems are allowed

to grow like weeds in a summer garden. The ally of the weeds is
the neglect of the gardener and in the end, they take over and the
garden becomes a disaster area. Frequent team meetings need to be
held to facilitate both the cultivation of good relationships and
the pulling out of young weeds that will grow if neglected.

e. Moses meekness.

As has been seen, meekness is needed by both leaders and
followers if relations are to be harmonious. Moses stands as a
peerless Old Testament example of a strong leader who was gentle in
his dealings with people who worked with and under him.

In a situation where many leaders would be vindictive, Moses
was forgiving and concerned for the well-being of the offenders. Here
there is no call to contrast God's anger with Moses pleading for Miriam.
Both anger against sin and Moses' meekness had their origin in the
character of God. Moses meekness was the fruit of the Holy Spirit's
work in his life.

Team leaders and team members have the same Holy Spirit in-
dwelling them as did Moses. Insurrection is a great blow to a leader
and will usually produce a considerable amount of anger. Sinful human
nature will think "revenge." This is why conflict situations must
cause those involved to flee to the Lord for grace. Much harm can be
done in the heat of such a problem. A cooling off period in which time
the team members spend time alone with the Lord, is appropriate and
necessary.

f. The cost of conflict.

For seven days the people of Israel had to stay put while Miriam was isolated outside the camp. Team conflict of this kind nearly always hinders the progress of the church or mission where it occurs.

Joshua 22 - The Resolution of the Conflict Caused by Misunderstanding

To give a further example of the use of the principles for conflict resolution, the conflict caused by misunderstanding in Joshua 22 will be examined again.

Both parties involved in this case of misunderstanding in Joshua 22 were desirous to uphold the Name of God and obey His Word. Though the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh did not do all that they could have done to avoid the conflict, it is clear that their motives were pure. Francis Schaeffer touches on this when he writes:

> The reason these people were able to have a real unity and a real peace was that they were locked into the truth and commandments of God. Without the concept that is laid down here, any right unity is impossible. Any unity, any peace, that is not rooted in truth is nothing.[10]

Thus the principle that purity is the pre-requisite for peace is seen. The resolution or misunderstanding then is simply a matter of correcting the misinterpretation of the message transmitted by a clear explanation of the facts.

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[10]Francis A. Schaeffer, Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History, (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975), p. 179.

If one party says, "I misunderstood you," but in fact, purposefully distorted the message for some impure reason, the problem is quite a different one. In such cases, the problem centers in dishonesty and ulterior motives and not mere misinterpretation of symbols. How can you tell whether it is one or the other? Most of the time it is impossible to know absolutely. Christian love dictates that the parties approach the problem thinking the best of one another and not the worst, (1 Cor. 13:4-7) until the facts prove otherwise.

The resolution of the conflict

1. Acknowledgement

When the stone altar was seen, the leaders of Israel acknowledged that there was a serious problem that needed immediate attention (verses 11, 12). The battle for the land had just ended and Joshua and the other leaders of the nation might have been inclined to ignore the threat posed by a pile of stones. It is possible that the pressure of a busy ministry could tempt Christian leaders today to ignore internal problems which threaten their staffs. If the problem is real it should be acknowledged and taken care of as soon as possible.

2. Containment

In this case, the act was public and threatened the whole nation and so the whole assembly is involved. There are situations similar to this today. Suppose a team member is accused of teaching false doctrine publically and everyone is aware of the situation,

Everyone who is aware of the problem must be considered in working out a solution.

In the situation referred to earlier involving the dishonest Director of Christian Education, the church board attempted to contain the problem within the ruling body of the church. These men promised the man who was forced to resign his position, that not a word of the reasons behind his resignation would be made known to the people. This was very unwise because the people interpreted the man's action as being caused by his conflict with the senior pastor. As a result, many fault the pastor and defend the man who resigned. The facts would vindicate the pastor, but the board has pledged to keep this a secret. This is no way to contain the problem; it has had an effect similar to pouring oil on a fire. If a man called by a congregation resigns under duress, the congregation deserves an explanation.

3. Cooling

It may not appear so at first, but Joshua did deal with the misunderstood party in love. He could have ordered an immediate attack and a calamitous situation would have developed. Instead, he sent a delegation led by Phinehas, including a prince from each of the ten tribes to confront the leaders of the two and one-half tribes.

The cooling process in this case was one of coming to understanding of what the true situation was. It was to be sure, an emotion charged situation that would have exploded if the two parties had not taken time to talk things out. Though he completely misunderstood the true situation, the speech Phinehas gave evidences both restraint and love

The whole assembly of the Lord says: How could you break
faith with the God of Israel like this? How could you turn
away from the Lord and build yourselves an altar in rebellion
against him now? Was not the sin or Peor enough for us? Up
to this very day we have not cleansed ourselves from that sin,
even though a plague fell on the community of the Lord! Are
you now turning away from the Lord?

If you rebel against the Lord today, tomorrow he will be angry
with the whole community of Israel. If the land you possess
is defiled, come over to the Lord's land, where the Lord's
tabernacle stands, and share the land with us. But do not
rebel against the Lord or against us by building an altar
for yourselves, other than the altar of the Lord our God.
When Achan, Son of Zerah, acted unfaithfully regarding the
devoted things, did not wrath come upon the whole community
of Israel? He was not the only one who died for his sin.
(verses 16-20)

Here is an example of a straightforward verbal confrontation.
Even though those confronted were not guilty, the open, honest
approach by Phinehas helped to clear the air. There are several
principles implicit in this speech that are worthy of note.

a. Phinehas spoke on behalf of the "whole assembly." He
or his father Eleazer could have taken the supposed apostasy of the
two and one-half tribes as a personal affront. Throughout this dis-
course, Phinehas shows concern for the honor of the Lord's Name and
the welfare of His people.

In interpersonal conflicts, there is a tendency toward self-
defense and self-vindication. It is an important rule of thumb to
think of how the conflict will effect the whole congregation. There
are times when it is better to suffer personal hurt without responding
defensively if such an action could contribute to the maintenance of
unity and the good of the greater number. Contrawise, there are also
times when neglecting to confront someone who is evidently doing wrong
could be detrimental to the many.

b. Phinehas focused on the particular behavior that was offensive to God and refrained from innuendos and unjustified generalizations. He didn't say, for example, "We didn't think you people were really to be trusted," or "You people are always messing up; when are you going to start acting decently?" Statements like these make resolving a misunderstanding very difficult. They are judgmental statements that give a general assessment of the party which goes beyond the particulars. If it is found that the incident was misinterpreted and the party is innocent of any wrong doing, they are left to ponder these negative evaluations of themselves. Negative generalizations are common in interpersonal relations. Such statements as "You're always doing that!" or "You never pay any attention to what I say," and "Every time I call you you're too busy to talk to me," etc., are the kind of statements that should be discarded. Generalizations are almost always inaccurate. It is a type of hypebole used for emphasis that often evokes negative emotions. Too often, misunderstandings escalate into full blown conflicts because of careless communication. Those involved attack each other rather than the problem.

c. Phinehas offered a remedy that was costly to the tribes on the west bank. He said, in effect, "If the land you have chosen is unclean and has influenced you to fall in idolatry, come over and live with us in our land." The attitude was one of desiring the restoration of those in error at any cost rather than a desire to punish them or see them suffer. It is interesting that Phinehas did not threatel

these people ("Tear down that altar or we're coming in here and blow you away!") He rehearsed before them the seriousness of what (it appeared) they were doing but, at the same time, offered them help to remedy the situation.

Suppose a team leader hears a rumor that one of the team members is undermining his authority and his ministry. Properly, he confronts the person and gives the evidence of wrongdoing. The magnanimous leader usually includes a statement to the effect, "If you're dissatisfied with the arrangements, speak up and tell me what it is that bothers you." He offers to make changes if they are justified. At the same time, he avoids personal attack. It may be that the person is guilty of wrongdoing; if so, such an approach will probably bring him to shame and repentance.

4. Repair

When Phinehas heard the explanation of the building of the altar, he and the princes with him were "pleased." They were delighted that there was no longer a reason for God to cause His wrath to fall on Israel. A careful presentation of the facts clears the air.

Sometimes it is difficult to keep a healthy balance in a situation like this. When the accused clear themselves by a cogent defense, the accuser senses himself in a vulnerable position. This is especially true if there has been a period of time during which the accuser has been allowing his imagination to work. Imagined plots and actions expand the situation and deepen the emotional involvement. When the clear defense is given, the accuser tends to be incredulous—"There's

got to be more to this than that!" Rather than rejoicing that the problem has been solved, the accuser may listen to the defense but continue to be suspicious and unfriendly toward the accused. Such a response is inconsistent with true Christian love. Love believes and trusts and rejoices in the truth.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The increasing interest in teamwork is a welcomed trend.
However, such a trend brings with it the increased incidence of
interpersonal conflict. This factor should not discourage those
interested in cooperative ministries. It should rather be a stim-
ulus to a greater interest in working out ways to demonstrate the
hallmark of Christian discipleship which is love for one another,
(John 15:12).

The real cause of destructive conflict among Christians is
sin. The seat of sin is the deceitfully wicked human heart. Methods
that attempt to bring about harmonious relations within a group of
people without considering this factor may treat outward symptoms
but neglect the root of the problem. The emphasis of this ~~paper~~ *manual*
has been on the inner attitudes that constitute the real cause of
destructive conflict.

Awareness of the motives of sin within the heart is the
initial step in conflict prevention. The chapter on the Nature and
Causes of Conflict provides material to increase such awareness.
Readers are encouraged to review this section periodically as a kind
of check list which would help in the identification and avoidance
of potential problems.

Prevention of destructive conflict should be an objective of every ministerial team. A detailed study of the measures that can be taken to prevent conflict would be a means to achieving such an objective. The chapter on prevention could be used as a basis for discussion of potential problems. It is hoped that such discussion may serve to motivate team members to adopt policies and procedures which will contribute to greater team harmony.

The principle factor in resolving a conflict is to face the problem squarely and work through it with all the parties involved. In doing this, it is helpful to have some guidelines. Such guidelines are provided in Chapter IV. This chapter could also be used as a basis for role playing various conflict situations. Time and effort invested in such an exercise might prove to be invaluable in preparing a team to deal with a conflict situation swiftly and efficiently.

As another aid to discussion of various team situations, a case book is provided on the following pages. The interviews are transcribed conversations with men who have had a variety of experiences in teamwork. Some of the examples given and suggestions made by these men provide positive instruction for achieving harmony and effectiveness in teamwork. The description of some of their experiences serves to show that conflict situations do occur. Perhaps familiarity with such experience will help others to avoid similar pitfalls.

In most of the interviews the participants are not identified because of the nature of the information they shared.

VI. CASE STUDIES

Teamwork in Missions

The following is an interview with Mr. George Murray, who is a missionary with the Bible Christian Union, and who is Field Director for Latin-Europe.

JG: We're talking with George Murray who is a missionary to Italy under the Bible Christian Union, and George, you're the Field Director for Europe, Latin-Europe?

GM: For Latin-Europe, yes.

JG: We're especially interested in your involvement in team ministry and teamwork. What led to your keen interest in teamwork on the mission field?

GM: Well, I think a combination of things. First of all, my own background. I can't pass over that; in growing up and being in evangelistic work in the particular family that I grew up in. You were involved in this yourself, you know, often. I can't remember many times that we ministered that we weren't a team. It was always a group of us working together in presenting the Gospel to people, whether it was in a musical way or just in personal work or speaking, there was always a team and I know that my father is always desirous to have a team. So, whether teamwork is right or wrong, that was my background, so of course, I grew up thinking that way, and I saw the tremendous strengths that there are in having a team with different personalities and different gifts, etc. Then I think the other major factor that influenced me in terms of the mission field is that the majority of missionaries in the past, at least in the fields that I'm familiar with, have been working basically alone, especially if you're talking about evangelism and church planting. If you're talking about institutional work, of course, you've got a concentration of missionaries in a school or hospital, but in evangelism and church planting it's been pretty much the lone man out there trying to do the job. Over the long haul it has proved very frustrating and although one or two have succeeded in building a work of some kind, the majority have not seen much in the way of results. Of course, the whole thought was if we split our missionaries up then we will be able to reach more cities because there are so many places with no Gospel

witness. If we could send a couple to this city and another couple to that one, it's better than putting both couples together in the same city. I think we've seen now that that's not the wisest policy and that it is important to find missionaries that we can put together in teams and as a result they can strengthen each other, they can share their spiritual gifts; well, there are many advantages which maybe you'll ask me about later, I don't know.

JG: I think you mentioned that there are 30,000 cities in Italy that have no witness at all.

GM: No witness of any kind, 30,000 cities in Italy with no Gospel witness. That could be multiplied into Western Europe; west of the Iron Curtain we have 250,000 cities and towns with no Gospel witness, and we're talking about sizable places.

JG: In what city are you working presently?

GM: We're working in the city of Pordenone which is about on hour north of Venice, driving time.

JG: And are you working there with a team?

GM: Yes, we are building a team. We have not completely built the team the way we would like it to be, but we are experimenting with the team concept and very happy so far with what has been happening. We have five full-time workers in Pordenone and five more joining us within the next few months after they finish their formal language study. So we'll be a total of ten.

JG: What do you look for in a team worker?

GM: Well, I think you have to ask yourself not only who works best in a team, but what is the team going to be doing? In our particular case, the teamwork that we're talking about is teamwork in a pioneer type situation where you are moving into an area where nothing has been done in the way of Christian work at least for centureis. There is no Christian presence or even the slightest hint of anything Christian in that area. We're going there to do grass roots evangelism in church planting. As a result, we need people that have that particular interest also. They must be willing to move into a pioneer situation, and they must be willing to get involved in the nitty gritty of talking with people as over against working behind a desk, that kind of thing. So we are looking for people that are really convinced of the primary importance of evangelism and church planting. Then having that conviction of course, is not enough. We are looking for people also that are willing to work with other people. I guess this is your biggest strength in a team and your biggest

weakness; that you work with other people. That is, of course, very difficult many times because we are all unique individuals. So we are looking for people who recognize the uniqueness of each individual created in the image of God, and who recognize the strength that there is in the uniqueness of an individual rather than insisting that the individual think the way that he or she does or be like they are. Rather being one in the Lord, not because we are alike, but because we have the same head and we are members of His body. This is not always easy to find, especially among, may I say, older missionaries who have perhaps been on the field longer and are used to a pattern of working alone. It's not as easy for them to move in this direction, but for younger people coming out to the mission field, fresh from Christian service in the states, or Bible school, or seminary, we found a greater willingness to attempt to work together on teams.

JG: If a person is oriented toward working individually, how do you get them to work together in seeking to accomplish a task?

GM: Well, it definitely involves an educational process which takes time, and I think actually that process should begin before they get on the mission field. One of the things that Bible schools, where the vast majority of missionary candidates come from, are starting to re-think is, "Should we be teaching young people now while they are in Bible school to work together in teams?" A lot of schools are moving in this direction. The school I am going to this month is corresponding with different people about their burden for creating team working evangelists and church planters while they are in Bible school, and I think that this is important. This education can be started now.

JG: Would that be done through the practical work department, putting together teams of people, or would it be actually done in courses?

GM: I think a combination of the two. In fact, trying to coordinate classes with outreach, which I think is very important. They were starting to do this when I was in Bible college, but nothing that could be compared with what could be done. The idea of having a close-knit group of people working together in a classroom situation and studying in that class, perhaps principles that involve the outreach that they have on the weekends, has proved to be very helpful.

JG: How do you structure a team so far as individual spiritual gifts? Do you try to put a team together choosing people who would complement one another as far as spiritual gifts, or do you just take a group of people who are interested in a particular area and hope that they will gel?

GM: Probably a combination of the two. Ideally, the first would be great if we could do that. The problem is that many of us, and I include myself, are still grappling with the question, "What are my spiritual gifts?" This is especially true among young people coming out of schools, going to the mission field, many of them with very little Christian work experience. I think it is very difficult to know what your gifts are if you haven't had opportunities to be involved in Christian work. Therefore, to sit around for years and say I'm not going to get involved in Christian work until I know what my gift is, this is putting the wrong emphasis on it. I think that the way that you are going to learn to be a good swimmer is to jump into the water and try, and not just sit around and say, "I wonder if I am a good swimmer?" Get in the water and try. If you see that there is strength there, then keep moving in that area. Otherwise, try your hand at something else. I encourage young people, while they are in their training period, to get involved in as many different types of Christian work as they can, and do some open air preaching and do some child evangelism, and student work, or teaching, or whatever it is, and seek right now to exercise yourself in that area to see if the hand of God is upon you in that particular type of activity, and if you are gifted there. And, of course, you can listen to what other people say who have observed you in that. They can say, "Look, you really are a teacher," but you can't really know that unless you get out and try. Many of those that are coming out are not completely sure of exactly what their spiritual gifts are. I think if we had to wait to form a team on the basis of knowing exactly what personalities are going to work together and what gifts are going to complement each other, we would probably still not have a team. At the same time, we are not just grouping people haphazardly together. This has been done on various mission fields when they have seen the weakness of working alone. Some missions have moved toward consolidating their people, and saying, "Work together as a team." It's been almost disastrous because I do think there needs to be some degree of oneness of heart and oneness of vision that draws those people together, and then they work together from that rather than just kind of sticking them together and saying, "Make it work."

JG: What would be the process that you would use to achieve unity and harmony in structuring a team?

GM: Well, I think that, of course, it takes a lot of prayer and a lot of talking. For example, I have to speak in terms of my own experience in the team that we have there in Pordenone. To give you an example, a missionary said to me, "I'm going home this summer for several months and I'm going to come back with a team like you have in Pordenone. I just want you to give me a couple pointers as to how to do this." I said, "Brother, if you can get

a team in three months, praise the Lord!" I don't think it's
going to happen that fast. The people that are with us here
in Pordenone, most of the contacts were made as many as eight
years ago, and it has been through talking together, praying
together, sharing my burden for Italy, my burden for evangelism
and church planting with as many people as I can, and then
seeing come to the surface different ones who kind of latched
on to that and are convinced that, yes, this is the way I'm
thinking; that is the way I want to move. I would have to say
that the vast majority of people who talked to me about being
part of our team there in Pordenone, I have kind of rejected
in my mind, or told them to think of something else. It's got
to be people that you really sense have a oneness of vision
and a oneness in burden. Working together with people like that
on a very careful basis, not saying, "Oh, I want you to be on
the team," but, "Let's pray about this and talk about it." You
must get to know them in the context of their home or whatever,
and it's been a very slow, careful process in our situation of
picking, if you want to put it that way, the team members that
are on the team. We are still quite a motley crew in a way
when you stop and think about it. Yet there is a real oneness
of heart and purpose that has come after years of praying and
laying out before them exactly what it is we want to do there
and then seeing the Lord bring to us the people of His choice.
So, spiritual gifts have been one of the considerations but
not the only consideration. I would have to say that spiritual
qualities have been far above spiritual gifts in terms of the
requirements we are looking for.

JG: What is the function of leadership in a team, or what is your
concept of team leadership?

GM: Teamwork without leadership is disastrous. I think that the reason
some attempts at teamwork on the mission field have failed, has
been because of this very thing--lack of strong leadership. I
don't think that we are being unscriptural in insisting that there
be somebody who is leading and who is saying this is what we are
going to do. That doesn't mean that the team doesn't have a say
in it, but it is very important that we study again the patterns
given to us in Scripture and see how the Lord works, and then
pattern our work in the same way. Whether it is on the human level
of Paul and his team in the book of Acts or on the divine level of
God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together, we see in
the trinity itself, order and subordination. We say in theology
class equal in essence, but there is subordination in the jobs or
offices in which the different members of the Godhead function.
The Father is sending the Son, the Son is moving in obedience to
the Father, and the Father and the Son are sending the Holy Spirit.
It's not that one is necessarily better than the other, but there
is definite order and there is definite authority and answering to

authority. We should see the same thing in teamwork. The only reason why we don't have more teams functioning right now is that leadership is a tremendous problem--it's not there. We are looking for men and women that can be leaders and can lead these groups. In our particular team, we decided right at the start that we wouldn't just let it work out and see what happens, but that we would get together and talk very frankly about leadership. I am a junior by ten years to another missionary on the team; another missionary who has been on the field many years longer than I have, but we all talked about it and it seemed good to the Lord and to us, that I should be the team leader. This is the decision we made. We have set up the team structure on that basis. We make decisions together as a team, but we have a team leader.

JG: Is it a system of "one man, one vote," in decision making?

GM: Well we don't necessarily vote. We feel that it is important to have oneness, and so we have worked on the same principle that the board of our mission works on, the board of trustees, and that is unanimity. We feel that although it is frustrating to have to wait sometimes, it is better to be one in our think-ing and to move ahead totally together on a particular decision, than to have a democratic vote with the majority winning. Now there are times when there have been some who said, "Well, I'm a little hesitant and I just don't know, but I trust the Holy Spirit in you as our leader to go ahead and let's move on it. You just go ahead and tell us what to do and we'll do it." At the same time if there is a big red flag in somebody's mind, they are free to say so then we discuss it and wait. Often I look upon our team situation kind of like Robin Hood and his merry men. When you stop to think about it, Robin Hood couldn't do anything as well as most of his individual members. They could shoot better than he, they could fight better; this kind of thing. Little John knocked him off the log, and yet they respected him as their leader and they admired him and they followed his leadership. Yet many times it was one of them that had the right idea or the right suggestion or was the skilled one who could do the thing that needed to be done. He recog-nized that himself. Many times it has been a member of a team that has been the one who has brought me back on the track or reminded me of something that I hadn't thought of. This has been a great help. So there is give and take there. At the same time there is authority. There is responsibility and I think we operate best in that way.

JG: Have you experienced conflicts in teamwork, and if so, what kind of conflicts?

GM: Well, I think it would be kind of like John saying in his first epistle, "If any man say he has no sin, he is a liar," and for anyone to live together with other people, or to have a team in Christian work and to say there is never any conflict, I find that hard to believe. We expect this. We know that it is going to be there, and one of the things that we deal with with those that are coming on a team is that this is a big potential area that they are going to have to face. Conflict can come from a variety of reasons. It can be personality, of course, which is a strong factor in all of us. There can be personality conflicts. One of the things that we have done to help resolve this, which has been a real help, is to show the strength of our uniqueness, rather than trying to minimize it by saying that if we're going to work together than we all have to be alike. I think that when we realize that a person can be different than we are, and that doesn't have to effect our working together and our love and our unity for each other, this is a tremendous thing. Otherwise, people feel the pressure, especially if the leader is a strong person. They feel pressure that they have to be like he is, or they've got to do things the way I do them. While as a leader, or course, what I do will certainly probably effect them, and that can be good, but yet for them not to feel that they have to be the same way I am, or they have to get up early like I do, or they have to have family prayers like we do at a certain time of the day in order to be spiritual, but that they can be unique and yet greatly used of God and we can work together in wonderful love and unity. This has been one very helpful thing.

JG: It's true, isn't it, that some leaders are not willing to accept the uniqueness of people that work under them? They want people to conform.

GM: Yes, I think so. One of the biggest helps to me in studying the Scripture in this area was to realize that unity is not conformity, but unity is mutual headship. In other words, the members of my body work together in perfect unity for one reason and one reason only and that is because they have the same head. If you cut my head off then my body would not be able to work together in unity. But unity does not mean conformity. It doesn't mean that every time my right hand comes to my mouth to feed it, my left hand has to come up too. That would be ridiculous. Or every time my right foot goes forward while running, my left foot does too. No, that would be conformity and it would be very crippling. Unity is perhaps my left hand going back while my right hand goes forward when I'm running, because it keeps me perfectly balanced. The only way, and I never really stopped to think how I should run when I was growing up, my head just told me because I'm plugged into that system, and then I'm going to work together in perfect unity. I think that we have a beautiful parallel to that in

Scripture when we see that we are His body and He is the head, and if we are in vital union with Him, and as you are, then no matter what your personality, or what mind, or what direction you may be going, if we can put it in those terms, we can still be having perfect unity and oneness together.

JG: What particular tensions arise in teamwork between a team leader and those who are following his directions? Have you observed conflicts relating to envy, bitterness, fear and the like?

GM: I think these kinds of things are always potentially there. Of course, the key again, like I just said, is that each person is walking close to the Lord. Many times teamwork can militate against that in that my warped natural mind tells me, "Well, since we are working together as a team, I don't have to be quite as cast on the Lord as I would be if I was all by myself somewhere, because there is somebody else somewhere that is going to pick up the ball if I drop it." Of course, that is wrong thinking. When we kind of tend to spend less time with the Lord, then we tend to have more problems, or course, with one another, and jealousy and envy or feeling slighted, all that kind of thing comes many times from the fact that we're thinking more of ourselves than we are thinking of the Lord and His work, and His kingdom, and His glory. Let's say we have been slighted, badly slighted. That at the same time can have a limited effect in the unity of the team, if the person who is slighted takes it to the Lord and accepts it and says, "Lord, you went through a lot worse than this, and I just want to follow you," rather than fighting back and saying, "I've been slighted." That kind of thing. Conflict many times comes because one person steps out of his place, and therefore, the other person that's affected, steps out of his place in order to come back at them and of course, that's where great conflict comes, especially in a marriage situation. Perhaps the husband doesn't love his wife the way the Bible says and so the wife says, "I'm not going to be in subjection to him then." Then the conflict is great. If she maintains her being in subjection to him as Scripture says, even if he doesn't love her, the conflict that will be there will be far more limited than it would be if both of them leave the place that God has told them to have. One of the reasons for conflict is that some team leaders, or leaders in any sphere, don't take the time personally with the people that they are leading as they should. I've come to see, although I've never been a pastor of a church, that one large part of being a team leader is being a pastor to your own team, and spending the time that it takes, and I tell you it has been amazing. I've come to see since we have our team, that teamwork is not easier. It's harder, but it's better, but when we say that teamwork is better and more effective, I hope people don't get the impression that it means it is easier. It's not; it's much harder. It's

much easier in many respects to be on your own, and to not have to be responsible for or to other people. In our particular case there have been many, many hours when I've said, "Oh, brother, what a waste of time to spend with individuals about personal problems they are having, praying with them, talking with them." For example, one of our team members has just fallen in love. This has brought about all sorts of changes and questions about what she should do and she, in this particular case, does not have a family. Her parents are not living, and so we are the closest thing she has. There have been hours of agonizing, and talking, and praying, and talking with the fellow, and the whole thing you know. You sometimes think, "Oh, I just think I'd rather not be on a team because this would not have happened." Well, this is all a part of it. Yet because we have spent that time, and because we've talked and prayed this thing through, it's made our teamwork together so much more effective. She sees that we are interested in her, not just as a team member, as a cog in the machine that we're building in the Lord's work, but as a person who has needs and desires and questions and we're willing to work with her as the Lord is willing to work with us. This has strengthened the team ministry. Many times leadership can be aloof, apart from the team, giving orders, but not working with the person. I think it is so important to see the way the Lord worked with the disciples, and to realize that He worked with them as and where they were, and He dealt with them as well as using them to accomplish His work so to speak. There are times when conflicts come, but I don't think they necessarily have to be there. There are things that we can do to avoid and/or resolve them many times.

JG: Just one last question. Do you see an increased interest in teamwork, and what do you see as the future of teamwork in missions?

GM: I see a tremendous increased interest in teamwork everywhere I go the minute I mention that I'll be talking about that. For example, I'll be in Lancaster Bible College this week and other schools, and when they mention that I'll be giving a seminar on teamwork, there is tremendous interest. Many students are coming, perhaps choosing that over another elective, and the reason being, I think, that they are starting to see that missions has become a live option to them whereas before it wasn't. They thought as a missionary they had to be able to do it all. Now they are starting to see that anybody that has his head screwed on straight, and reads his Bible, is going to see that there is a big world out there that God is concerned to reach. I think that anybody in seminary or Bible college knows that burden is on God's heart, and knows it's out there, and wants to somehow be involved in it to a greater or lesser degree. The idea of being

the evangelist, the church planter, the guy that does the job, you know that gets out there and does everything, has been in our minds for so long that now this idea of "I don't have to be able to do it all, and still can have a meaningful role on the mission field," I think is creating great interest and made many students start thinking about it in a new way about going to the mission field, but working in the context of a team. IFMA, the Evangelical Missions Quarterly (EMQ) has had a series of articles and letters in recent months on teamwork. I think again there is a pulse there that we can feel to see · how people are thinking and what's happening. There have been positive and negative in the EMQ on this subject, but it shows that people are thinking about it and are interested in it, and I think we will see more increasingly, mission societies moving in this direction. At the same time, one of the things that is going to be the key is strong leadership that they can build a team around. That's one of the things that missions are desperately looking for.

JG: Thank you very much. I appreciate the time that you have spent in answering these questions.

GM: It has been my privilege.

Discussion questions for interview #1

1. Encourage the participants to mention as many ideas as they can think of for courses and programs to educate people for a team role. Discuss the merits of the various ideas given.

2. What are some of the ways people can determine their spiritual gifts before getting involved in a more permanent ministry?

3. What responsibility does the church have in helping to determine the suitability of its members for various tasks? How should this responsibility be carried out?

4. Discuss the time factor in organizing a team. How much care needs to be exercised in choosing personnel?

5. What style of leadership has this team leader adopted?

An Unusual Team Structure and Function

JG: Pastor, could you first of all give me some idea of what your involvement has been in the past in teamwork in the ministry?

P: When I graduated from Bible college in 1972, I came into the church as a Minister of Education. However, the church was just starting from scratch, and no funds were available what-soever for any salary, so the man who founded the church basically put me on a program of about 30-40 hours a week of doing evangelism. As people would come to Christ, some of them, of course, would follow through to the extent of coming into the church family. The funds from their coming were some-how designated specifically as having come as a result of my contacting them. Then as those funds built up, that's what I was paid; whatever they put into the offering each week, till such a time that there was more coming in than I needed and then at that point I was salaried. Then, because God's hand seemed to really be upon that work, I was given the title Minister of Visitation, and really went into a visitation, personal evan-gelism ministry almost exclusively, even though I still supervised the Christian education aspect. I delegated as much as I could of that out so that I could concentrate fully on visitation. I did that right up till August of this past year at which time the pastor resigned and I took over the position that he had held. So it's been full time since 1972 to the present. That makes about seven years. That's been my only local church experience and so also my only team experience, but it has been a team experience.

JG: Were there other members on the team beside the senior pastor and yourself?

P: It's almost humorous to answer that question. We had so many different fellows that worked in the ministry during that course of time. I feel a little bit like that servant of Job who said, "I alone am left to tell you." There were, I think, a total of forty different guys over that course of time. Maybe that's a little difficult to believe. They were technically part of the staff.

JG: What different positions did these men hold?

P: Well, that's really what is unusual and maybe unprecedented about this particular situation. I think there were many problems with it and I don't think it is advisable to do it the way it was done, but these men all came on as "interns," ministerial interns.

JG: Were they from seminaries?

P: Well, most of these fellows were not seminary students. The
    emphasis was that the best way to prepare for the ministry
    is with on the job training, and these men were actually en-
    couraged not to go to seminary; not to be trained in that for-
    malistic sort of a way, but to be trained on the job. Now as
    interns, they did not have any title whatsoever. They simply
    were out doing evangelism, bringing people to the church, and
    attempting to establish themselves on salary with the church.
    Then after a period of time, if it all worked out, they would
    perhaps assume a responsibility, or have a title given to them.
    One particular fellow was there for a considerable amount of
    time and that was about three years. His title changed a couple
    of times. I think he was Minister of Education at one point;
    he was also Minister of Evangelism at one point, and it was
    always in a constant state of flux. Many of these fellows just
    did not make it on the basis that it was set up. So, as a result,
    they dropped out and as a matter of fact, a lot of them dropped
    out rather discouraged, feeling like they had failed. We would
    have a staff meeting at least every Monday morning and many times
    we would have two, three, and four a week, where we would get
    together and receive specific instructions about how to more
    effectively call on people and bring them to church and insure
    that they got there. A lot of us led Bible studies into various
    homes through the week. This was intended to give us an ex-
    perience in teaching. So during this course of time, you know,
    I've worked with many, many different people. There were never
    any more than about nine at a time. So the object was to give
    these guys practical training in the ministry, but at the same
    time, to populate the church.

JG: The major reason for having a number of people on the staff was
    to have contact in an evangelistic way, with more and more people
    in the community. Is that correct? Was there any division of
    responsibility?

P: We did have a set-up which the founding pastor had, I guess,
    invented, so to speak. He based the church upon, as he called it,
    seven pillars. These included areas where the New Testament em-
    phasizes aspects or elements of the local church ministry like
    worship, evangelism, education, missions, fellowship, prayer,
    and pulpit. There was a period of time, up till several years
    ago, before we actually had elders, where each member of the staff
    would be kind of plugged into one of those areas and then he would
    be responsible for supervising. For instance, if a fellow had the
    responsibility of fellowship, he would be called the Minister of
    Fellowship, and he would be responsible for heading up that area,
    or he could have been called the Minister of Worship, the Minister
    of Missions, etc. It seemed in concept, that was a fairly good
    idea. It insured that these vital areas of ministry were all
    covered. However, as it is now, that is all done within the deacon
    board.

JG: Were the objectives that were to be carried out clearly defined by the senior pastor in these staff meetings? In other words, did people know exactly what they were to do?

P: It's really hard to answer that question. In some cases it was defined very well. For certain fellows it was defined really well. For other fellows, for one reason or another, it was very, very poorly defined. I think it had something to do with the fellows that seemed to have perhaps a little more potential. They were worked with more closely. Other fellows, where there was a question as to whether they were going to be able to make it, were just thrown out there to sink or swim.

JG: Are you referring to the interns, or to people who had already become staff members?

P: Oh, that will help me answer the question. As far as the few fellows that actually made it on to official staff status, their roles were pretty well defined. The way that was done was that each fellow was to put down the areas where he really felt eager to work and comfortable working in, and felt that his spiritual gifts would lend themselves to those areas. Then we would get together as a group, and we would discuss how that would fit into the overall picture. If two fellows, for instance, really enjoyed doing the same area, one would submit to having another fellow do that, and he would take something else. We would, by discussion, come up with a plan, but of course, the final consideration was always in the hands of the senior pastor.

JG: So you did try to divide responsibility according to gifts. Do I hear you correctly in saying that so far as discerning gifts, it was largely up to the individual to discern his own gifts and to express that to the staff or to the senior pastor?

P: Well, I have to go back a little further and point out that in the cases I'm speaking of, the senior pastor made quite a bit of the fact that he felt that he possessed a gift of discernment. He would many times, right from the very start, mention to fellows what he discerned them to be strong in or what he discerned their gifts to be. A lot of fellows that were told that had no idea, and so they would be pretty pliable. They were new Christians, or did not have much experience in Christian work, and no seminary experience. They were pretty much at the disposal of somebody to give these kind of suggestions. I personally feel many times they would just take that and assume that this was their gift and go with that. So by the time it came for them to put down what they would like to do, they already had a pretty good idea from what they had been told. I think a lot of it came from what they had been told, as much as from them figuring it out themselves. So the had been a lot of input prior to that time. Even though I see some

problems with some of this straightforwardness of fellows
being told "this is what you can do and this is what your gift
is," that nevertheless, the idea of being able to write down
on paper what we really genuinely in our heart wanted to do
was good. We did have the liberty to say we didn't like a
certain thing. I personally felt it was a fulfilling experience
for me, and it has really helped me to crystalize in my mind
the gifts that I do have. As a result of that, I was able to
zero in on areas that I personally wanted to gain experience
in. It's been a real means of broadening out my ministerial
experience and that was good.

JG: So far as the decision that a man should be put on the staff
once he was finished his internship, who made that decision?

P: That was the senior pastor's decision. Pretty much it was decided
on the basis of whether sufficient amount of income had come in
through this very unusual set-up. You would have to say that it
resembled a sales kind of set-up, where a fellow would build up
his number of giving units.

JG: These units were the people that he had led to Christ?

P: Yes.

JG: Were they also approached as to giving him support?

P: Right. We were each encouraged to figure out a budget; figure
out what our financial responsibilities were and then to deter-
mine a figure. When the income began to average that figure over
about a month, we just automatically came on staff. In effect,
it was not even the senior pastor's decision, just by the way he
had set it up. It was something you earned.

JG: What if some of your givers would drop out after you were on
staff? Would you just have to accept whatever came in for you,
or would the church make up the difference?

P: Well, that question was never really raised. There were color
coded emblems that were used, and once you went on salary, they
weren't used any more. There was no way to keep track of that
except by just noticing if a substantial number of families left,
and then you weren't officially asked to find others, but you
were strongly encouraged. A lot of your support had obviously
dropped off and you just needed to make it up. So the guys would
hopefully bring in a couple more families to make up for that.

JG: You mentioned that there was a big turnover on the staff and that
a number of people were discouraged and left. What was the chief
reason for their becoming discouraged?

P: It's a complex question; it requires a kind of complex answer.
    I'll try to give a simple answer. First of all, I believe that
    for a fellow to go out consistently and successfully to win
    souls to Christ on a cold turkey sort of method, requires a
    special kind of gift. I think that was the main reason that
    a lot of guys didn't succeed at this. The reason they would be
    discouraged is because it was stressed that it wasn't so much
    a gift, but that anybody could do it, if they just set their
    mind to it. So if they didn't do it, they would assume it was
    just because they had not worked hard enough, or just didn't
    have it, or just had failed. So if they were discouraged, it
    was because they felt that they had failed.

JG: Do you think that any of these people had gifts in other areas
    that they could have exercised but were not really encouraged
    to exercise? Did they drop out of the ministry, or drop out of
    serving the Lord, when they could have done a job in some other
    area?

P: Well, the answer to that would be most definitely. I remember
    having felt that all the way along, but never really being able
    to put my finger on it. Now in retrospect, I have a very firm
    conviction that that was the case. I just praise the Lord that
    God's grace is sufficient to reinstate a lot of these fellows
    in Christian service. I know most of them are no longer in this
    church, but I know that many of them are in other churches. They
    have made a comeback and gotten over the discouragement. They
    are going on for the Lord and finding their niches in the body
    of Christ. There are a couple that as far as I've heard never
    really made a comeback. But most of them have.

JG: Was there any system of accountability or evaluation other than
    simply how many souls a person had won?

P: Yes, the primary way that was done, John, was through weekly report
    sheets. These sheets had Monday through Sunday down the left side,
    and across the top there would be morning, afternoon, and evening.
    Each day would be broken down into these three parts. We were
    required to catalog every little thing we did. It was required
    to be very, very detailed. We were even to color code it; if time
    was spent in study, we would color it in blue; if time was spent
    in administration, it was outlined in green; evangelism in red,
    and so forth. If we were doing work among church people that
    was put in orange because that was discipleship as opposed to
    evangelism. Then on the back of the sheet, we listed the last
    name of every single family or person that we called on during the
    week, and put a little two or three line description of how that
    call went. There was a list of about five totals on the back;
    how many people had made professions of faith; how many had been

baptized; (the emphasis was to baptize a person immediately
as soon as they received Christ because there was a precedent
for that in the Book of Acts). Also, there was a place there
for how many people ultimately did make it out to church through
getting saved and how many had been brought to church who were
Christians before. This was a weekly thing. These reports
were due in on Sunday evening. Then between Sunday evening
and Monday morning staff meetings, the senior pastor would get
up very early and he would pray over these and study them. He
almost invariably spent 10-20 minutes with each individual guy
during the staff meeting in front of the others, evaluating them,
and many of these evaluations were very negative. Going back
to the last question, I think that was often another source of
discouragement for the fellows. They felt like they were being
reamed out in front of everybody else.

JG: What was the purpose of that?

P: The motive for the whole thing was goal orientation. The whole
situation in church was very goal oriented. There were goals
for everything; most of them were numerical goals. We had an
every year goal, and a five year goal, and a ten year goal, etc.
The whole purpose of talking to a fellow about what he was doing
wrong was to get him to do better so he could keep moving toward
this goal. It was almost like having quotas, a giant quota, and
then breaking down that giant quota into parts. If a guy wasn't
doing his part, then he wasn't contributing to the giant quota
and so therefore, the overall goal wasn't being met.

JG: Was it a lot like a sales meeting?

P: Very much. It was identical. Most everything in the church had
a sales orientation on account of the senior pastor himself who
had worked with a sales-oriented company for about eight years
and had worked himself up to an organizational manager of the
company. This was a company where he would recruit Christian
students while he was going through Bible college and seminary.
During the time of his education, he was recruiting fellows each
summer for selling, and he would lead these teams out in the field.
I myself was one of the fellows that was recruited. That's how I
met the man in the first place, when I was a freshman. I sold for
four years and fortunately for me, I did very, very well. A lot
of fellows didn't do so well; other fellows failed miserably. The
whole program was a sink or swim situation. After you got a week
of training in Nashville, you were sent to a territory. You had
to find your own place to stay, preferrably as cheap as possible
and if you didn't sell, you didn't eat. That's the way the thing
was set up. Sometimes fellows would stay out for two or three
weeks, and they didn't have any money and they weren't selling,
and so they would just come home and then, of course, they were

ridiculed as a total failure for that. That was a very devasta-
ting thing for me to see. I always felt a lot of compassion
for these fellows, but the mentality was that if you make it
you are a man, and if you don't make it, you are kind of a
weeny; that was the word that was used. The whole thing was
brought right on over into the ministry.

JG: Perhaps there was the idea that if there was success in sales,
why not bring the whole program, kit and kaboodle, over into a
church and use that same program to spread the Gospel. What's
wrong with that sort of idea since it does work in selling books,
why doesn't it work in preaching the Gospel?

P: Well, I'd say that's primarily because of the sovereignity of
God and basically my own more Calvinistic view point about
election and so forth, would indicate to me that people aren't
brought into the kingdom of God that way. Paul said, "I did not
come to you with words of wisdom but I determined to know nothing
among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The kinds of
things you do in the typical sales program to twist peoples arms,
to put pressure on them, to answer their objections, to close them
out to get a decision, typical kinds of things that you do to sell
a product, you can do all that and even bring a person to a pro-
fession or decision, but as we know the Spirit of God is the one
that needs to regenerate the soul, and a decision is certainly not
equal to a disciple. So I think that the biggest problem of all
is when you have an emphasis on goals and when you are setting
your sights upon numbers, and upon results, you are tending to
take the work of God into your own hands, and you are bringing
about those results in a very Arminian way. Whereas, if your
goal is to faithfully preach the Word of God, with a burden for
souls, with a desire to see souls saved, and let God expand the
ministry, let God take care of the numbers, and if a quota, by
hook or by crook, has got to be met, you will begin to get into
the arm of the flesh and therefore, the work of God cannot be
done that way. That to me is the big drawback.

JG: What was done within the team for mutual edification and nuture?
Did you pray together, did you share one another's burdens, did
you have Bible study together?

P: Well, I remember a couple of different times; first of all to
answer your question, not on a consistent basis.

JG: So most of the staff meetings were pretty much evaluating whether
a man was doing his task and meeting his quotas?

P: Yes. Most of the exhortations or "encouragements" were always
given in that context. A fellow would usually not be just told
what he had done wrong, but the Word would be broken open and he

was encouraged from the Word. Some "exhortation" as to what he could do to be a more fruitful "Christian" was given. It was always connected with that. There were a few times when we got away for like a day or two retreat. I think we had a day of prayer and fasting a number of times. We went to the Pocono Mountains for a day here and there. He would also select certain books that all of us would read, and then we would come together and discuss them for mutual edification. We went through, for instance, Schaeffer's Major Bible Themes at one time just to get more sound in doctrine. We did pray together; always prayed together after these staff meetings. For me personally, and for a lot of the other fellows, it was such a pressuresome atmosphere that even in the prayer meetings you almost sensed that you were being heavily evaluated while you were praying, and so you tended to not be praying to the Lord as much as praying to put across a pretty good image. There were those times of building up when it seemed as though it was just purely for the sake of spiritual up-building and not anything related with the goals of the church, and those were the most enjoyable times to me.

JG: Was there ever any time that you had conflict within the team?

P: Well, conflicts would arise, I think, because there was a degree of jealousy at times among team members, since in this case there was so much emphasis upon quotas. If one guy was succeeding very, very well, one of the things that was done was that he was set up as a great example, and I think at times guys would tend to feel a little proud about that. They would feel a little resentful. Then too, at times fellows would, if the pressure would start to get to them of the responsibilities that were dumped on them that they couldn't really take, really attempt to share their hearts; that they were struggling and thinking. A lot of times this was done in private, but sometimes in the group, and often-times because there was not really a good empathy on the part of the senior pastor to really get down and be understanding, but rather just to try to push them to snap themselves out of it. The frustration would build to the point where they would actually become bitter towards him, and then a rift would start and it would just get wider and wider and before you know it the fellow would not only leave the internship, or the staff, but also the whole ministry. He would just totally split. So, yes, I've lived through seeing many, many, problems. The primary problems were between the different members of the staff, or internship, and the senior minister; not so much among themselves.

JG: Was there ever an attempt to bring about reconciliation in one of these cases where a man was bitter or upset because of the evaluation of his work? Was there ever an attempt to resolve the conflict and work it out, and have the man go on as before?

P: Yes, many, many times. Many times a man would be persuaded, as I personally saw it, to reconsider and it would be worked out seemingly on the surface.

JG: What was below the surface?

P: I think below the surface was still men being pushed to perform. The whole thing was performance orientation, and if the man became bitter as a result of that, he would be ministered to about how that bitterness was wrong, and indeed it was. But he would still be on the same performance basis, and if he couldn't come up to it, he would sometimes fall back into his bitterness. Sometimes they would attempt to leave, not with bitterness, but with reconciliation as much as possible, but there was always pressure to stay. The idea of it being in the will of God for a fellow to leave, was never even considered. It was never the will of God to leave. So it was the performance orientation that was the problem. That was the reason why conflicts would arise.

JG: Was there an attempt to provide an atmosphere that was conducive to open and honest communication on the part of the senior pastor?

P: For the first six years, absolutely not. Guys would never feel at liberty to really share their heart. I know I did not. Because I got so into the thing, I know what happened to me. I almost lost touch with my own feelings many times in my own heart. It was so totally devoid of atmosphere like that, that I myself just very easily put aside my own feelings. As a result, I have only really in the last couple of years, two or three years, really learned how to share my heart with people because it was totally the opposite of that.

JG: Just to clarify, what do you mean by your feelings? Do you mean certain ideas, certain thoughts that you had in mind that you couldn't share, or do you mean emotions, such as anger, or fear?

P: I would say I had in mind primarily emotions; not necessarily anger and fear as much as just reservations about certain projects that we were going to enter into. Perhaps reservations about whether I was going to be able to perform what I was asked to perform. I know many times I would just really be pressured into doing things that I just didn't want to do, or I just didn't feel I could do them; I didn't even feel that God wanted me to do them.

JG: There was not the freedom to say, "This is something that I don't feel God would have me to do?"

P: No, there really wasn't. Guys would attempt to say it, and there would be a semblance or token receptivity of that, but the bottom line was that he would always end up doing what he was asked to do anyway. His concerns that would be brought out would be taken more as objections to be answered, and then they would be answered and he would still have to do it. What happened over a period of time was that guys would see this happening, and they would say, "What's the sense of me even bringing it up because I know I'm going to end up doing it any-way." So guys would then clam up; they really wouldn't share. Now toward the end, there was a major change in the senior pastor. He actually went out of his way to encourage everybody to share not only their emotions, but also their ideas and everything. The atmosphere really opened up and a lot of us just really grew. However, and unfortunately, as it turned out in the long run, most of their ideas were still not really taken, and most of their feelings or thoughts were just heard. I believe most of it was still just token receptivity, and after they would see this developing maybe a year or two years later, they would see that nothing had essentially changed, and it was just a semblance of openness. Again they would just get a little bit discouraged about that and sometimes lost heart and just said, "I'm just being given the opportunity to speak, but what good is it doing."

JG: Their input really didn't effect, or wasn't a part of the decision making process. It was merely a matter of giving people a chance to air their thoughts, and then going ahead and doing what was going to be done anyway. Is that right?

P: Yes, that was basically it. I'm sure there were times when a person's contribution genuinely affected the decision, but that would be the exception more than the rule.

JG: What have you learned from this experience? For example, if in the future you become a team leader, what changes would you make; what ideas would you incorporate in your team leadership that were missing in your past experience?

P: That's really a big question. Well, the first thing that comes to my mind would be the idea that I would really, genuinely try to emphasize the aspect of team. That doesn't sound too profound, but I can honestly say that what I was involved in was not really a team.

JG: Why wasn't it?

P: Primarily because I think in a team, each member has a very definite sense of how he personally fits into the whole picture; there is a sense of fulfillment that he has. He feels that his contributions, his ideas, and his leadership are absolutely essential for the smooth functioning of the team.

JG: In other words, individual members would have a sense that their work has worth, and that they have worth within the team?

P: And this isn't just something that you do to make him feel good, but this must be the way that it is in reality. I would very prayerfully attempt to determine, on the basis of the person or persons that I was working with, just why God had brought these people together. I would start out on the assumption that, in the province of God, these people are together because God Himself had brought them together; the Lord Himself had a special way for that group of people to fit together and function. The first thing I would do, if I were starting from scratch, is I would just get together with everybody and share that with them. We would try to determine what God's blueprint for our particular situation is as we walk by faith. We would determine very specific areas and roles of ministry and how they fit into the overall church pattern. Then I would also want to build in flexibility enough to re-evaluate and change the situation if necessary. I would try to steer away from guys being too pigeonholed. I think that's another aspect in which what I was involved in, was not so much a team. Each person had an area, and did not care what the other fellow was doing. Every person was thinking about himself. Whereas a team, hopefully, is thinking about the whole ministry. In keeping with Philippians 2, there should be concern about the interests of others. If you don't have that in the leadership of the church, you won't have it in the church. Then you've got a really bad church. If you have that in the leadership, on the other hand, you will see that begin to permeate down into the church by example.

JG: Would you have a goal oriented team ministry if you were leading a team? Would you try to define goals and objectives, and if so, how would you do that in a way that would be different from the way it was done in the team in which you were active?

P: I'm not sure exactly what goal oriented is, because I've never thought of myself as a goal oriented person, so in the sense of what I was through, it would not seem goal oriented compared to that. I do think it is very important to define objectives. I think the place to start is the Scriptures. A lot of times people say, for instance, one of our goals is that everything we do is to be done to the glory of God. Some people say that's too general. That kind of a goal isn't going to do you any good. I think a set of general goals, what the Scriptures say the goals of the ministry

are, should be clearly defined and set down, and everybody
should understand them, and should meditate on them and really
attempt to evaluate everything by those and then I think the
Lord will lead in terms of specific goals as well. I think
that it is important to have them. The way that I would try
to arrive at those is instead of having my goals imposed upon
the other people, I would attempt to, no less than twice a
year, get together for the express purpose of re-evaluating
goals and setting down goals with everybody contributing. I
would have a brain-storming session where everybody could
have the opportunity to really share what they would love to
see take place. Then pray over those for a week, and then come
together again, and set down specific things, and then deter-
mine how we are going to reach them. Then I would delegate to
each individual member what his particular part in reaching that
goal would be. I think that there is not anything wrong in put-
ting a target date to each goal. The whole thing is done in
kind of a more spiritual atmosphere, more than a fleshly atmosphere.
If we don't reach the goal, it's not a failure, and I think that
needs to be understood. On the other hand, God is able to do over
and above everything we ask or think, so He may well cause the
goal to be way more than reached. I think there needs to be a
constant reminder that God is the one who is going to bring that
goal about. God is the one who will allow us and enable us to
reach that goal. I know again, that sounds general, but I know
that what I was involved in was not really frought with that kind
of a feeling, that kind of a sense. I would continually want to
convey that to the staff.

JG: Thank you very much.

Discussion questions for interview #2

1. What are the right and wrong ways to use goals to motivate a team
    toward productivity?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using management
    techniques used in industry or business in leading a ministerial
    team?

3. To what extent should each team member's sense of personal worth
    be important to the team leader and the other team members? Is there
    Scriptural evidence to support your answer?

A Church that had a Team Approach
from the Start

The following interview is with a senior pastor of a suburban church that has enjoyed phenomenal growth. In seven years this church grew from fourteen people to over twelve hundred.

JG: What is your position in the church?

P: Well, on paper, I'm the senior pastor. I guess that's because I'm older, I don't know. There are four men on the pastoral staff, plus one woman who is the children's co-ordinator. There is a youth pastor, a pastor of adult ministries, and an executive pastor. The executive pastor does a lot of administrative work. He works with the deacons, with the building committee, and all that stuff, which frees my time up to do teaching, counseling, and/or directorial responsibilities.

JG: So you would function then as the leader of the team. Is that correct?

P: Yes, basically.

JG: What is your style of leadership?

P: Well, it's pretty low-key. Actually we have a board of elders, and pretty much like a Presbyterian church, our authority is vested in that board. The executive pastor and I are elders, and so we have equal authority at least technically, equal authority with the other ten elders. There are twelve counting the two of us. The other two men on the pastoral staff sit in on the elders meetings and participate, but they don't have a vote. So my style of leadership is pretty low-key, and I seek input from the other pastors and all of the other elders and we seek to arrive at a consensus on things.

JG: Do you preside over the meeting of the elders?

P: Well, the executive pastor and I both do. It sort of depends on what's coming up. Right now he has been teaching them some things from the Bible on leadership, and so he has been leading the meetings.

JG: Where is the major planning done? Is it done meeting with the elders or is it done in staff meetings?

P: Most of the planning initiatives come from the staff meetings, often with prior input from the interested elders. But we learned a long time ago, that it is a mistake to go into an elders meeting and say, "Men, here is a problem. What do you think we should do

about it?" We could spend months discussing it. Sometimes we will do that with a limited discussion just to get an expression. But somebody, a smaller group, with more time, and I suppose with some training, generally has to sit down and formulate at least a proposal so that we have some concrete thing to offer. That's pretty much the four of us. The pastors just had a three day planning retreat. We went to a motel not far from here, and spent three days just planning out the year, and most of that was just determining calendar dates and things like that. But there were a few things we discussed that requires changes in the way we've done things or the kinds of meetings we are having. So now, we are having an elders planning retreat, a whole day thing on Saturday, September 8th to share with them the thinking of what came about from the pastor's retreat. They may reject it or they may modify it, or they may accept it. They are pretty free to participate in changing these initiatives.

JG: So, as far as a team, would you say that the team would be comprised of the church staff and the elders, or are there two different teams, two separate teams, or do you really form one team and sometimes function separately as you just described?

P: Well, we like to think of ourselves as one big team and in terms of authority, votes and all that, we are all even. But in terms of time, a lot of our men are professional men, and they don't have great amounts of time, so for the sake of efficiency, it's just not possible for that whole team to function equally. In essence we have an "A" team and "B" team, or a "phase one" and "phase two" team, or I don't know what you want to call it. We have two teams that try to work together.

JG: How would you go about delegating responsibilities to different members of the staff? Is that already worked out according to a man's job description when he comes?

P: Yes, we have job descriptions. We have a small sub-committee of the elders that we call the staff relations committee, and they work with each staff member to establish the details of his job description. They do other things as well, but related to the question, they establish the details. The broad strokes of that job description are something that we have evolved over time with the thinking of all the elders. For example, I think I mentioned this earlier, that right now we have things broken down into children's ministry, youth ministry, which is junior high through college, and adult ministry, which is everything beyond college age. The broad divisions of that were established by all of us together as to the direction in which we were going to move. The details of what those three people are responsible for was worked out primarily by the staff relations committee.

JG: Are the job descriptions reworked occasionally and changed according to need?

P: The whole structure of things has evolved to where we are now. It has changed quite a bit since the beginning, and the structure that I just mentioned to you is something that's new this year. The staff relations committee is supposed to go over the job descriptions annually with each staff person to make sure that if there are changes needed, to make them, or if the staff member is not fulfilling his job description, they may talk to him about that.

JG: So there is a system of accountability. Would that be on an informal basis where if the committee thought a man was not performing his responsibility he would be called in to talk it over, or is it sort of an annual review?

P: Well, it's both. Their responsibility is to do it at least annually. They also talk to the various people in between times to deal with either inadequacy of performance or an area that might have been overlooked in writing up the job description and that we now are aware that no one is handling it properly or at all. Then they would bring somebody in and say, "We need to add this."

JG: Is there any provision in that description for every man on the team to minister to the whole congregation?

P: Well, there is some opportunity. Just this next month, as a matter of fact, we are each taking a turn preaching in the evening service. So there is that level. And then also, we have a Tuesday morning mens fellowship breakfast which we all four attend which is an opportunity to let the men of the church know all the pastors and we take turns leading that. The youth pastor, for example, may speak for a few weeks on how to be a better father. He is talking about his area of specialized ministry, but he is doing it with adults. So there are those opportunities. It is not equal, of course. I don't spend much time myself speaking to children unless it is a special thing, and I seldom speak to the youth unless it is special or unless they are in the service.

JG: Recently you made some staff changes. I was wondering when you add to the staff, are there special considerations for adding a man to a team type ministry?

P; Well, we look at where he has been, what he has done, what kind of situations he has been in, and how the people he has worked with in other places speak of him. We just hired two new men this summer, the youth director and the adult ministries director,

both of them were on the staff of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Washington, and then from there to Western Baptist Seminary in Portland, and both from the church and from the seminary, we got positive reports from people who had worked with them through their ministry. And when they came here to be interviewed, every staff member had at least one in-depth opportunity to talk to them privately. They were also interviewed by the board of elders, with other staff present, in an open meeting. So as much as possible, we try to discern how they had related to others where they had been and how comfortable we, as individuals, felt when they came here.

JG: Do you make any effort to choose someone whose spiritual gifts would complement the gifts of other men on the staff so that there would be a total ministry represented by the team?

P: I'm sure we are not doing as good a job of discussing that as we might. We've talked more about a person's qualifications for the job we are calling him to do and the age group we are calling him to work with than we have about spiritual gifts as they are delineated in the Scriptures. We haven't looked for somebody with the gift or exhortation, or the gift of giving, but we have looked for somebody who has a heart for young people. I guess that could be debatable as to whether or not that is a spiritual gift.

JG: I think in many ways it is. It seems that way.

P: Yes, but it depends on which writer you are looking at.

JG: What provision is there in team relations for keeping communications flowing? How important would communications be so far as the interteam relations?

P: Let me take the second half of that first. Communication is vital. We went through a period of time a couple of years ago where we did too little of that and there were some misunderstandings as a result of it. Communications is as important in a team relationship as it is in a marriage. In a sense, there are other parallels, too. We have a staff meeting every Tuesday for two and a half hours, and then lots of informal contact in between. I try to have at least one opportunity every other week, breakfast or lunch, or to have a special meeting in someone's office, at least once every two weeks with each of the staff members. Even that's pretty minimal. We do a lot of things socially together, with our families, or our spouses. It's very important that you understand how each other member of the team thinks, and you can't do that without adequate communication.

JG: Would you say that would be the single most important factor in preventing conflicts? You mentioned that there were some conflicts in the past. Would you say that this is the most important factor in preventing that kind of thing?

P: Yes, I think it is. If it's not the most important factor, it is certainly such an important factor that nothing else can be solved unless this is working. So, in that sense, it is fundamental.

JG: What provision has been made to avoid overlapping and inter-ference in another man's work or area?

P: Well, that's really not been much of a problem. There has been a lot of give and take. Yesterday, I had to counsel with a woman here, and I had to go to the hospital and I couldn't get back in time, so I called and one of my fellows handled that appointment for me. Three weeks ago, I had a fellow call who wanted me to conduct a funeral, and I couldn't get away at the time he was there, so the youth man and the adult ministries man handled the funeral. There is a lot of give and take, and deliberate overlapping, helpful overlapping, in those small ways. Three of the four men also have small discipleship groups or Bible study groups for men in the church so that we all know pretty much who the other guys are working with and there's been no problem with overlapping.

JG: In your experience, both as an assistant pastor, and here as a senior pastor, what would be the most frequent cause of conflict in this type of work?

P: I'm not sure. Let me just talk about my own experience. I don't know how representative that is. I was an assistant pastor in two different churches for a total of about six years. The mentality that I had, and the mentality of the people that hired me, was quite different than what we have here. They hired me as an assistant pastor knowing that it was a stepping-stone to something other; so, I was a trainee or intern. I didn't have any great authority; I didn't have any vote in the elder's meetings; I was there for a short period of time, and everybody understood that. It turned out to be three years in each case, and therefore, I was given primarily youth work to handle and occasionally other things to help the senior pastor out in areas like preaching when he was on vacation and things like that. So there was never any real conflict. At the same time, there was a lack of a heart relationship that I think we have developed here, where four men who are pretty much equal in authority, equal in committment, and all four feel called here by God, not as a stepping-stone to something else, but to be here till the Lord leads us elsewhere, maybe even for life. It's unpredictable,

of course. So I always felt like I was the number two man, and I understood that and they understood that, and I was treated like that, and I was going to move on someday. That's not conflict exactly, but it tends to develop a more professional relationship rather than a personal relationship. I don't know if that's clear.

JG: That's clear and very helpful. It's interesting that the average time that an assistant pastor stays in one place is usually three years, it is usually one to three years. I think the reason for this short period of time is that assistant pastors tend to view their position as a stepping-stone.

P: Most definitely. I don't know of very many men who remain assistant pastors for very many years. I think that's why here we don't call anybody an assistant pastor. He has a major area of responsibility that he feels, at least in this point in his life, is his calling, and he has an equal vote and a full voice with all the rest of us.

JG: Obviously, you see advantages in this as over against the other arrangement where you have a senior pastor and all the other staff members are really there to help extend his ministry. What advantages are there in this type of set-up?

P: Well, I think there is an advantage to the team member first of all, in a man saying, "This is my area, I'm responsible for it, I don't pass the buck to somebody else, and the Lord and I, and of course, the people that work with us have a major thing to do here." An assistant pastor, I think generally has, and in fact, this is deliberately taught by some people, everything he does, is in a sense, an extension of the senior pastor's ministry. The youth director is carrying out what the senior pastor would do and his job is to continually make that man look good. Whereas, here, a guy could say, "Hey, my area is youth. I am the pastor to the youth. I'm responsible not only to those youth, but for their family relationships, to the extent that I can minister in their homes, or minister to their parents." He feels a great deal of freedom, latitude, and obligation. I think that's of value to him. It allows him to exercise his gifts more widely. I think that the church does not think of, at least most of the church members, don't think of the youth minister as some young kid who is going to be here for two or three years and then move on. They look at him as the man they go to if they have a problem with their teenage son. They feel like we have something that approaches experts in those various divisions. I think it gives the people a greater sense of security.

JG: So there is not the problem that is so often feared of polarization where certain people from the congregation favor one man and they sort of revolve around him, and another group revolves around another man on the team.

P: We haven't sensed that here, but I can see how that can
    happen if you got into a situation where there was some
    tension between the staff members. But obviously each one
    is going to know some people more intimately than the other
    guy knows him, then there could be the development of that
    sort of party spirit, but we haven't faced that here. At
    least if we have, its been so minimal that it is not worth
    including here.

JG: So the real key to making it work then has to do with main-
    taining the harmony of the team itself.

P: I think so, yes.

JG: Do you attribute, at least partially, the success, the rapid
    growth of the church, to this fact that you do have a team
    ministry?

P: Well, yes I think partially, or to a great extent, that is true.
    I think there are other factors, but that is an important one.
    I'll give you an example. We became aware of, that in this area,
    there are a great number of single people, single adults; divor-
    ced, never married. There are very few churches that try to
    reach that segment of the population and meet their peculiar
    needs. When we began to feel the Lord leading us to do some-
    thing about that area, we had a man on staff at that time,
    who is now gone, who felt he would like to devote the major
    part of his attention to developing a ministry for singles.
    We had a man with maturity, and some training, and we freed
    him up to give most of his time to the singles. So now, we
    have 150 single adults most of whom we would not have had in
    the church, if he had not been able to give his special atten-
    tion to that ministry. The same thing is true with the youth
    ministry. The first staff man that we hired, after myself,
    was a youth man. About two or three years ago, we hired a new
    fellow who worked here about a year and a half. He came to
    the elders one day and said, "What we have is good. We have
    70 kids that are committed, but there is a lot more we could
    do and I don't know how to do it. I would like to ask you to
    send me around the country to visit the most effective church
    related youth ministries I can discover." Which we did. We
    hired a guy in Chicago as a result of the exploration, to be a
    consultant, and within six months time, the 70 had become 250.
    But, we were able to take one man and say your whole time is
    going to be spent with high school kids. Now one of the reasons
    we can have a large staff, and we have had a pretty large staff
    almost from the beginning, is that we put the money that we had
    into people, rather than build buildings, too, but I think if
    we had built the building first, and been saddled with that
    mortgage, it would have been much harder to develop a multiple
    staff afterwards. So we started with the staff.

JG: Could you make any suggestions for training seminarians for team ministry?

P: We had a man on staff here for several years who is now the president of Campus Crusade's new seminary. Are you familiar with that?

JG: Yes.

P: Part of their basic philosophy is that a man should spend half his time in the classroom and half his time working in a church. So they have several model churches in southern California, and each student in the seminary is assigned to work 16 hours a week with one of those churches. It remains to be seen how effective that will be. I bring this up because that guy got his doctor of ministry at Western Baptist Seminary and his project was to travel for a year around the country. He visited over a hundred churches that were doing something significant in the area of discipleship. Out of that grew a conviction that most men were not trained for what they really were going to be doing when they get into a pastorate. Not just in team relationships, but in interpersonal relationships with people. The training was too heavy in academic subjects and not sufficient in counseling, how to put together a Christian education program, and that sort of thing. So it was that lack that motivated him to get involved with this new seminary where he heard men talking about meeting that deficiency. So I think there is a need for the seminary to train men for pastoral areas and relational areas, but when you pin that down to team relationships, I don't really know how great the demand is, how great the interest is across the country, to know whether a seminary is justified in making that a major thrust. I'm sold on it, because of my experience here. I was sold on it before I came here. I spent almost six years as an assistant pastor as I said, and then I spent seven years with Campus Crusade for Christ. Campus Crusade's whole philosophy is built around team relationships. I was at the University of Minnesota and we had seven people on our team. There was a dynamic, supportive fellowship there that was so valuable to me that I never wanted to be in a ministry where I didn't have something like that.

JG: I appreciate very much your time and the helpful answers.

Discussion questions for interview #3

1. What is the leadership style of this team leader?

2. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having a personnel committee within the official church board that would be responsible for overseeing the team's cohesion and function.

3. What are the advantages of instituting a team approach while the church is small and young rather than waiting until it is larger and well established?

Senior Pastor Adapting to
a Team Approach

JG: How large a church do you pastor?

P: Right now we are approaching the 600 membership mark probably by the end of the year.

JG: How long have you been in the pastoral ministry?

P: I've been in the ministry for approximately 30-33 years in the church ministry. I was a chaplain for two years and then did have a position as a part-time pastoral minister for two years while in seminary.

JG: Have you ever been involved in a team ministry?

P: No, the only team type ministry experience I had was as a part-time youth minister. It really wasn't a team. The only area we worked in together was one particular segment of the ministry. He had his duties, his responsibilities, and I had mine. It wasn't until this past two years that we have been operating under a greater team concept with a full time associate. Each man has his own areas of responsibility, and yet we have to consider one another and one isn't under the other, but we are each having our ministries working side by side.

JG: What brought about the decision to go to a team type ministry?

P: It largely came about by some very honest appraisal of my own ministry. I think it's a very common understanding that, as a church grows, if the base of leadership doesn't grow with it, there are going to be areas which just are not being covered. If the base of leadership stays the same, it can only accomplish so much. It can't accomplish all that should be accomplished. This point came at this church when we had about 500 members. We had just one main staff member and one part-time secretary, basically, and a part-time youth pastor, and there were areas that were just not being covered. This always opens a congregation to criticisms, and we had a very good talking together with my council because they approached me with some of these criticisms. I gave them, frankly, a study of my own responsibilities, and over a three month period of time, how many hours I put in the ministry. I broke it down into segments proportions of whether it was administrative; whether it was my public pulpit ministry; in teaching ministry; visitation and so on down the line, so that they knew percentage-wise just where

I was spending my time. This became a real eye opener to them. The result of that meeting was that they felt that no one man could really accomplish all that was expected of him, but that additional help had to be brought into the ministry. This matter was brought to the congregation and there was some reluctance about the whole thing. I said that I was willing to go on if they were satisfied with what was going on now. Some, however, had the idea that the pastor needs help so he doesn't have to work so hard. I wasn't interested in that. The only reason to get a new man in was so that there would be a greater accomplishment of things being done; that the ministry would be broadened.

We had the council kind of evaluate what they thought my strong points were on a private basis. I asked them to do this. They came up in agreement with my own evaluation of myself of the gifts that I was not particularly strong in. So in looking for an extra man, we began to look in that direction; a man that would fulfill the weak points of my own ministry so that we would begin to complement each other. Out of that background, there developed the concept of a team ministry.

JG: What particular things have you built into your team arrangement to try to prevent any conflicts from occurring?

P: We have set job descriptions for the associate pastor, for the pastor, for the youth pastor, the secretaries, etc. We each have our areas of emphasis there, but fortunately I have a man in my associate pastor who is very considerate of my position as senior pastor. This was made clear to him when he first came. I was to be considered the senior pastor, and he has always been very gracious in trying to share with me any of his programs. We try to work very closely. I give him a lot of freedom because I know he has a lot of initiative, and a lot of creativeness and I think a person like that needs room to work. You have to be flexible and let him carry the ball even though he may not do it just the way you would do it. You can't expect another man, especially if he is different than you, to do it the same way you do it. So many times you just have to put your own ideas behind or frankly talk with him and ask questions why he is doing it this way, and sometimes he does have to change, and other times I've seen his point of view. We try to have a staff meeting once a week which includes our secretaries and youth pastor. In this staff meeting, I emphasize prayer myself. I think this is the biggest, most important thing, and we share the church requests for prayer, some private requests that come in, and some of our needs. We pray for one another, and there is something about when you pray as a group that draws you closer together as a group. I'm convinced of this. So I put emphasis on that rather than study. Then after our prayer

usually the secretaries leave unless they have any problems
they want to discuss or anything that they need to talk
about. After they leave, we discuss our plans, how things
are going among us, the youth pastor, the associate pastor
and myself. If we have any problems that have come up we
discuss them and any programs that we are working on. At
that point I try to have each man fill me in on specific
things that he is doing. I think they each know that my
office is open almost any time, and quite frequently they
will come in here with questions, to discuss things, or will
just sit down separately, maybe two of us, and discuss speci-
fic problem areas.

JG: You mentioned job descriptions. Is that something that is open
to a constant re-working? If you wanted to change a man's job
description, would that be possible?

P: Yes, it is really recently that we went into job descriptions,
about three years ago, before Pastor _____ came. We had
a council that made it a project to come up with precise job
descriptions, both for council members, mission board members,
trustees, the organist, the choir director, and all the major
leaders and boards of the church. So that was for a whole year.
We emphasized drawing up job descriptions. Now that can be
changed. There is no restriction on that. Anytime we need to
update them, we go over them and update them again. We have
no schedule, and perhaps we should, but we have no schedule
on which we review them periodically. I guess we react to a
problem so that if a problem comes up, we look at a job des-
cription and find that it is not practical so we change it.

JG: How would you describe your particular style of leadership?

P: Well, I took a test in this once, and it definitely showed my
leadership style to be working with a group of men. I've
always tried to do this deliberately, and I think my personality
is such that I do better that way because I don't have a strong
personality in that sense of being a strong leader of individuals
or men or motivating them to that great extent. So my ministry
has always been geared about the idea of working closely with my
men and not telling them how things should be done, but suggesting,
and always remaining open for their approval or frank disapproval.
I guess you might call it passive in that regard. Here I think...
I have also given my men this test, my leaders the same test,
and interestingly enough, the majority of them were similar to
myself, so that we never really had problems because we naturally
mesh together. Pastor _____ comes from a church where the
staff did most of the programming, and rather than the elders and
deacons, or council, or whatever, and the leadership was strong
from the top, very strong. Probably, he had to make some adjust-
ment in coming into this situation and having to lean so much on
the laymen and get approval from the laymen.

JG: So here you would actually have a wider team than the church staff in that the council would be very much a part of the team so far as the direction of the ministry.

P: To a degree. We have shifted somewhat in the last year. As the staff grows, I don't think you can help get more emphasis on stronger leadership from the staff. I have noticed in just the couple of years that we have had the multiple staff, that we are exercising more forceful leadership from the staff point of view. We work together and we come to the boards with almost a consolidative point of view to present to them. In other areas we are trying to involve laymen more in the ministry. They are still involved in this decision making process. We have not taken any basic decisions from our board. We try to set up all the programs and then take everything to them for their approval, but more of the leg work is being done by our staff than it used to be.

Pastor _____ gives us evangelism training on home evangelism, and he is superb in what he is doing in this ministry and has just been blessed in this through his past ministry and also here. I take the aspect of trying to deal with the people who are in the church and I am trying to train our elders and some of our deacons to become involved in the shepherding kind of ministry, a caring kind of ministry. So we have drawn them more into the ministry than they were ever drawn into before. These board members are given about 25 families to serve and watch over; visit them when there is need, and try to get them together for fellowship opportunities. This area draws the men into the ministry a little bit more.

JG: Do you see real advantages, even though there are some difficulties in making a transition in a team situation for a larger church?

P: Yes, I feel it has to be that. I really do. Now there are churches that have just one man at the head, and everybody is his assistant, and that is a completely different type of leadership than I want to have. That person has to be a strong leader, and almost to the degree of being dictatorial. I've seen men like this and they accomplish much. There is no doubt about it, but I personally am convinced that the other style of leadership is better for the church. If the senior pastor bows out because of sickness or moves along, that church is going to be healthier to carry on its ministry when there has been a broad team cooperation. We have found definitely, just with a couple of years with a multiple staff, more is being accomplished, and the impact of two or three men working together in harmony and with Christian understanding one of the other,

is having a much greater impact on the congregation and on the growth of the church and the effectiveness of the church. I'm strongly in favor of it. I have seen it work and I believe it is working and in spite of the conflicts you can have as a person, which are basically spiritual you might say, or personality, in spite of these, it just has been superb what we have seen...the fruit of it.

JG: Thank you very much.

Discussion questions for interview #4

1. What are the difficulties that an experienced minister, who has not had team experience, encounters in the initial stages of making the transition to a team ministry?

2. What are some of the things that a man who is new to team leadership can do to equip himself for such a task?

An Experienced Associate Minister

JG: We are talking to the associate minister at a large suburban church. Pastor, how long have you been involved in team ministries?

AM: This is about my eighth year. I had been involved with two churches, and previously, with a mission board, in what I would consider a team ministry.

JG: Could you briefly describe what those different situations were?

AM: The first five years of my ministry I was with Bible Club Movement, and the aspect of the team ministry there was in working with high school young people in Bible studies, and working with a team in developing a youth program for Bible Club. Also, it flowed over into the camp ministry, where as a team, we operated youth camps, as well as boys camp. In my previous church experience, I was Minister of Youth and Evangelism. There I was the second man on the staff which has eventually grown to about ten. So that was a different kind of experience in a growing relationship. At this church, I was the first full time staff member apart from the pastor, which is also kind of a bridging-the-gap experience.

JG: How long have you been here at this church?

AM: I've been here two years.

JG: In this particular team arrangement, how are the different duties in the ministry delegated? How do you work out who does what, and what your particular area of work is to be?

AM: Before I came, they had determined the major area they wanted to add to the ministry that Pastor _____ had already provided, so my major area is outreach and evangelism. That means that I handle anything that has to do with those two areas; whether it's the programming of special events; whether it has to do with church growth input; running our evangelism program, which is based on Evangelism Explosion; or with discipleship ministries or follow-up ministries. In addition to that, I sit on the Christian Education board, or the Sunday School board, and counsel those boards. The senior pastor sits on the Missions board and council. So we have divided the duties that way, rather than two of us sitting on all the same boards.

JG: Do you both sit on the church board?

AM: Yes, we are both on the church council, which would be our official board. We are both on a smaller board of elders, also, which determines spiritual decisions of the ministry. We have elders and deacons. The deacons make up the church council, which are the nitty-gritty decisions so far as the work of the ministry.

JG: Do you have staff meetings fairly frequently?

AM: We have them scheduled once a week, and we meet on Tuesday mornings. That's a growing kind of thing, so we are working on that.

JG: Is that where the major planning for your ministries goes on, or do you work with the church council in planning?

AM: At this point, most of the planning is done in our individual areas of ministry. We air them at staff meetings. We meet with all the staff, secretaries, etc., and then, after a time of prayer and devotions, the secretarial staff goes back to work, and we stay together. That's when we determine any additions, or subtractions, or changes in what we have come up with as far as a plan for our part of the ministry. So, basically, at that point we determine the ministry and then share it with council for their approval. If there is any question, they can turn anything down. In most cases, they have given us quite a bit of freedom.

JG: You have another man on the staff beside the two of you, don't you?

AM: Yes, we have a part-time youth pastor, which really is not fair nomenclature, because he has to put in 40 hours a week, and I really believe that by our new budget year, we will be proposing a full time man.

JG: What's the importance of spiritual gifts in putting a team together, either here or in your past experience? How do you put together people with different gifts to make a full-orbed ministry?

AM: Well, I don't think any one person can do it all. Therefore, I think it's crucial that we recognize our own strengths and weaknesses, and complement that with men who are capable to carry on major areas of ministry that we cannot devote our full time to, whether that's layman or full time staff. In the case of a growing church, it would be full time staff. I think that also lends to a strong training ministry, where the person who has strength, can equip others, which I feel is the weakness that is in the local church. We are most of the time, hired guns, to do it all, rather than taking the strength that God has given us and not being to overwhelmed with multiple responsibilities, that we have a few areas that we can really equip others in those gifts and develop gifts in other believers. I think that in putting together a team, it is crucial that we look at the overall needs of the church, and then strive to find men who will meet those particular needs which may vary in different areas.

JG: Have you given any thought as a team to the possibility of conflicts or tensions, and have you built anything into your team structure or relationships to prevent that kind of thing?

AM: I don't know that we have built anything into it at this point in time. It's just really a very new experience here and I would have to say it was a new and growing experience in my previous church because being the second man there, and then evolving into a much larger staff, there were things that we did not prepare for. That's all there was to it. At this point in time, I think personally, we have a great freedom to discuss things very openly and honestly, to differ on things, and as much as possible, to dissolve our differences before we get to a board meeting, between the staff itself. It doesn't come into a great conflict in front of the board. I don't know of anything other than that, in a preventative way, that we have done at this point.

JG: From what you have said, it sounds like there is a healthy flow of communication, and there is an open door to talk about any-thing and everything.

AM: Yes, I would say so, John, I think there is. I have never sensed in my ministry here, a hindrance to going to the pastor and really sharing my heart about something if I disagree with it, if I felt that we needed to look at it from a different perspective, even though he may not agree with me. I have had freedom to have an input, and he being the pastor may make the final decision which I can live with, but I feel good about the fact that he may at least be considering a new approach to it. Having come from all larger churches, I feel that my experience in team ministries has benefited us together, so therefore, I don't hesitate. Of course, being a very agressive guy, I do that anyway, but I hope I do it in the right kind of way. I have felt good about it. There has been a good loyalty, good devotion between us, and good freedom to really share our hearts.

JG: Would you say that you minister to one another? Do you pastor one another in a sense?

AM: I think so.

JG: There is a problem when you are a minister in that you don't have a pastor, and sometimes in multiple staffs, staff members can minister to one another. You said that is the case here?

AM: I know it's been the case in my life. I can go to my senior pastor with maybe a particular need and I wouldn't share it with anyone else, and I know that I have his confidence and that he would really be able to minister to me, to give me counsel, give me wisdom as far as what to do about it, or maybe just share my burden in prayer, whatever it is. So I've felt there has been a time at which I have felt that kind of ministry to me. I hope that I have provided that somewhat in our ministry together. I don't know that I have sensed that on my part toward him in that way. I don't know that I have had the need to do that, except in maybe affirming or something of that nature, and upholding him in his decision in some particular area.

JG: Speaking of past experience, did you ever go through a time in a team ministry when there was tension or conflict?

AM: Yes, I would say so.

JG: Would you mind taking one or two of those situations and describing them?

AM: Well, there were two in particular that I think of. One had to do with having worked eleven and one-half years with Burroughs Corporation. I was in a lay ministry with young people. We had a youth pastor who came right out of seminary. Being involved

with the life of our kids over a longer period of time, I
had had an intimate relationship with many of them. We had
a basketball game in which he used an ineligible player in
order to win. In the process of watching that game, and
seeing this player come in, I approached the youth pastor
on it, and he just brushed me aside, so I cheered for the
other team, which eventually lost. It was a poor thing to
do. I confronted him about it later, and he really was man
enough to go to the whole league and confess that and made it
right at the league banquet which was not an easy thing to do.
So that was my greatest conflict as a lay person having to
confront a youth pastor about that kind of thing. But it
cemented our relationship. I felt being older, not necessarily
wiser, but older, I had an ability to do that where a younger
fellow may not have.

The other was in a previous team experience in a very fast
growing church, where the pastor was a very dominant person-
ality. The more popular he became, because of a church growth
factor, it was noticed within our ranks, he was away much more
often. This created a real gap in our relationship which I
felt tremendously being left at home with the work load not
only of my responsibility but also his. It became an increasing
source of conflict. He was not ready to accept my suggestions
of what was happening. So as a result, we had a growing dif-
ference of philosophy of ministry which caused me to look for
another ministry rather than create a problem on the staff.
The church was doing well in spite of what was happening under-
neath at the staff level which many people never really knew.

JG: Did the situation ever come to a head?

AM: No, there was never a public incident. It was a very private
thing between the two of us. I'm sure that at the end it
became a board matter in which he shared his position, and I
chose not to because of the conflict it may create. I dis-
cerned in my heart that the best thing to do was leave quietly
and leave the ministry as it was. I have been back there numerous
times for weddings, for other kinds of ministries among the young
people that I worked with. I have a great deal of freedom even
being on the platform to pray or something like this. There's
no bitterness or something to hinder our public relationship
although I'm confident that it has caused me to be sensitive to
the fact that I couldn't work with that kind of person again.
Although I have to say, that probably I'm that way. Sometimes
in others we see our own weaknesses.

JG: You made a strategic withdrawal?

AM: Yes, that's a good way to put it.

JG: I suppose that is an effective way to handle a conflict if you see that opening it up will cause more trouble than what it would be worth.

AM: Well, it was not an easy thing to do, and I think the withdrawal took place over a two year period. It was not something that was a snap judgment, but trying to work through, there was no answer to it from my perspective, except a very subversive assistant's role that just was not what I was interested in.

JG: What could have been done in that situation that could have helped to avoid that kind of problem?

AM: Well, I think in my own study of church growth at this point, being in a church that is growing, and recognizing we're at a place where we are going to have to add staff, one of the things we needed to do is, even though they evaluated growth numerically, they did not expand the base fast enough to keep up with the growing congregation and therefore, the staff was overloaded. That created a hardship and a bitterness for a time period of just carrying too much of the load.

JG: So conflict would be more likely to be created when people are overworked?

AM: I think so. The demands, if you have that kind of a leader, are overwhelming on other people who are working under him, using that term strongly, "under him." I have not sensed that at all here. We have more of a co-working relationship, and therefore, we carry the bulk of the load together and we are looking at the first time in the church's history at a long range planning program which I hope would alleviate some of that kind of conflict.

JG: What would you say would be the most important quality in a man for working in a team situation?

AM: I don't know how you can measure the intangible spiritual quality of necessarily finding out if the guy is consistant in his own time with the Lord, but if there was something that you could really put a handle on, that would be number one. Whether a guy really walks with the Lord, is controlled by the Lord in that sense so that he is capable of working in a team ministry. There come times of conflict, and they can be resolved easily, or else they can boil and stew into something that really can be harmful to the whole ministry. So I personally would look for a guy who really is committed to the Lord regardless of what his gifts would be. Then somebody who really has some goals in his own heart and mind as far as his ministry; what brought him there, where he wants to go, what he wants to accomplish. Also, he should be a guy who is going to be loyal and committed to the others on the team. That doesn't mean necessarily that all of

your social life is together. Pastor _____ and I differ in age quite a bit and we have differences of approach to the ministry. We may not socialize a great deal, but we do have time together where we do feel good about that, and it has solidified our working relationship. So I think there needs to be social times together where we have a freedom to be with one another. There needs to be a kind of compatibility for our families in the sense that they are part of the ministry, although I don't believe in the church hiring two for one, that is a wife and a husband necessarily. But there is a sense in which they have to be behind one another, in the deep sense of the word, as far as a modelling effect before the people. If we can't work it on that level, it can never be worked out in the congregation. I don't know if that has a handle on it, but his spiritual life, his loyalty to the team, his love for other team members, his areas of gifts in which he is willing to work at industriously. Coming out of a business background, I find that the ministry is the greatest area where a guy could really slough off if he wants to because its a very self-motivated kind of thing. I've been disheartened at times watching that take place, and I think in a team ministry it's something in which you encourage one another to really keep at it and be willing to accept one another where you are, but at the same time everybody carrying their part of the load, which is really crucial.

JG: I really appreciate your time, in answering these questions.

Discussion questions for interview #5

1. What are the options open to an associate minister who is working under a leader who is dictatorial and refuses to deal with certain problems?

2. Is it important for people working in a team situation to be good friends and share social times together or should it be enough to achieve a good professional relationship?

3. What are some of the ways team members could minister to one another?

A Senior Pastor in the Midst of a
Transition to a Team Ministry

JG: Pastor, could you tell us something about your experience
in working with a multiple staff?

SP: I would say our first experience was several pastorates ago,
and it involved a man whom we brought in to be our Christian
Education Director, who was better educated theologically than
I was as far as degrees are concerned. We brought him in
because of his experience as a pastor and presumed maturity.

JG: Was he older than you?

SP: No, he was younger by...well, he wouldn't have been that much
younger probably; I was in my early 40's and as I recall, he
was in his late 30's. We soon found out that he lacked real
initiative, and perhaps this was the reason that he left the
pastorate in the first place. He didn't have initiative and
ingenuity on his own. I think one area we failed in was not
having the board involved sufficiently all the way through in
laying down ground rules, a job description, etc. and so it
did pose a problem. He wasn't one who would visit; he spent
his hours in his office in the basement, either studying or
rolling out reams of paper for suggestions to Sunday School
teachers, and youth workers, but he never could get his feet
dirty in the situation. Well, the conflict really came when
he was teaching a young married couples class. As pastor,
along with the board, I had to take a position against a man
who was apparently a zealous missionary. I read him like a
book, and some of the other men read him like a book. He was
sort of a semi con-artist. His contact was with this young
married couples class. Some of them in the class looked at him
as being a real man of faith, how the Lord provided this, that,
and the other thing. He had a way of getting his need across
subtly so that they weren't even aware of it. The fellow ulti-
mately went back to Alaska because his mission board wasn't
sound according to him. He went back with an airplane, a bus,
a truck, and a car, so you see how capable he was. We refused
to take him on as a missionary, and we also refused to allow
money to be channelled through the church to him. Well of
course, this worked out in the young married couples gravitating
toward this second man, our Christian Ed. man. So it posed a
real problem. They ultimately, after we left the church, had to
let him go because they found that he was carrying a full doc-
torate load at Michigan State University and had not informed
them of that. That was where we perhaps were not thorough enough;
we took him on the basis of his outward appearance instead of on
his pastoral background, and his theological background, and all

of these things. We missed something in analyzing the man. The big problem seems to be the short term contact you have with the man that you call. So many come in and appear very capable and present very good programs, but particularly, if you don't have any work experience to go back on in a previous ministry and really check them out, what appears on the surface may not be real.

JG: Do you have any thoughts on how to evaluate a man more accurately, or how to overcome some of these problems that are created by not really knowing the capabilities or the personality of the man who is hired by the church?

SP: I think that there are several things that we are doing now after the recent problems we've had. One, I believe we are going to do a much more thorough job of checking into the background of the individual. I think the elders are going to be much more involved than they were in that check. It isn't necessary for me to confront the hireree at all. The board, says, "It's one of the first things we want you to understand, Pastor _____ is the senior pastor, and you will have to work with him and under him. Ultimately, the final answer on any question, he will make the decision." So I appreciate that kind of a board, but that is very necessary I feel, for any kind of a team operation. But I'm more convinced that a good job description is essential; very complete and very detailed. I think the board has to be in on that. In fact, our board has been working on that independent of me now with the idea of calling an associate pastor. I don't know what they've come up with, but of course, I hope to find out today. When we confront a man that we feel is the Lord's man we are going to have to go over the job description with him.

One of the biggest problems I have had is getting reports from the members of the team. Even in the hearing of the board, my telling them that one part of the job will be to have a work report on my desk every Monday morning. It just doesn't happen that way. They seem to be very careless. If you assign somebody something, you have to know the end result of it. That is naturally the reason for a weekly report. I have found that most that I have had to deal with are very careless in this, and you can even remind them time after time, and you'll still have to remind them again. I think another major problem in teamwork, is that men need to complement one another in the various ministries. There is also the problem of hiring men where the pastor and the other man have the same philosophy or the same drive. It sounds conceited to say dedication, but I find most of the men want an eight hour a day job and go home, and my makeup has not been that. If it takes 18 hours a day you go ahead and do it. I guess this is personally where I have a problem in my emotional relationship with the person. I wouldn't demand everything that I do of myself

but I demand a lot more, or expect a lot more than many of them are willing to give. I find it hard sometimes to deal with them and get that across. Then there is always the danger of building up a bad attitude toward them. They just don't see it and get with it. So, men with initiative are hard to find.

JG: You mentioned also, spiritual gifts. How can you evaluate a person's gifts? Do you ask the person in interviewing someone as a prospect for a position, "What are your spiritual gifts?" Or would you assess a persons spiritual gifts from their former positions and talking to people who knew them in that position? How could you really find out what a man's gifts were?

SP: Well, all you can do is do your best through a combination of several things, and then you may not come up with reality. Definitely, I always question them as to what they feel their gifts are, and as far as we can, we try to get references on them from whatever past ministry they have been involved in. This matter of writing to people whose names they have given for references is really almost a waste of time. Anyone of us are only going to give names of those who are going to give us a break. And so, I just don't have much faith in most of those references. It's really hard to determine unless a person does have some background, and you can go back and see where they did produce in a given area. This particular case of a youth leader that we had to let go; he came with exceptionally high recommendations from his school where he did his under graduate work, and they wrote a special letter saying that if we hadn't hired anyone, be sure and hear this man before you go a step further. He hadn't had a great background in working directly with youth, but was involved in a national youth program as a field representative, lecturer for them, writer, and all of these things. He came in with a fantastic program. This is what he was going to do, and it was ideal; it was a perfect concept of ministering both to parents and to the young people with whom he would be working. He was enthusiastic in his presentation; he seemed to know where he was going; he sold the committee; he sold the board; he sold me, and then when he got in he just didn't produce in any direction. Immediately you have a problem because they have been here a few months, and there are certain people who rally around them immediately, and then you have to let them go. Then you have problems. So, it is really very difficult to tell. I marvel at churches and pastors who are able to match a new man with the existing team.

JG: How important is good communication to you and how can it be maintained?

SP: It's vitally important. If a team is not playing together, it's playing apart, and tearing apart. I think really at the beginning there has to be that understanding that we can openly communicate, and that we should be totally honest in that communication. I do try to meet once a week with the staff. Sometimes something intervenes and it doesn't always happen, but I think it is very important that we meet and discuss any problems. I think, too, that it's very important not only to have a job description broad enough and at the same time detailed, but of such a nature that, if there are other needed tasks they can be assigned. This is sometimes where the problem arises if a person is not dedicated. I don't think I'm a dictator at all, but some people find it difficult to take a second position, and somebody has to do this even in a team ministry, unless I'm missing something somewhere.

JG: Have you ever been in a situation where you felt that the second man was envious of your position, that there was tension because of that envy?

SP: No, I can't say in any of the experiences that we have had that type of situation. I don't know of any man that was aspiring to the pastorate or anything of that nature. It was more, my feeling, a lack of initiative on their part or maybe sometimes my lack of communicating that I felt this way about their ministry. So, I haven't faced that particular challenge.

JG: What provisions have you made in the teams that you've worked with for shepherding your team members?

SP: Not as much organized perhaps as it should be in the weekly meetings, especially with the seminarians we have had. We tried to deal both from the spiritual standpoint and from the practical. Of course, it is not a true test because with their schedule, and with the schedule here at the church, it is difficult, particularly for them, more than for me, to find a time to really do this. I've always let them know that I'm open and even in a group situation, particularly since we have this relation with the seminary, that if they ever had a group of fellows that they would want to meet and get together and, say bi-monthly or monthly, to learn the problems of the pastorate and the interworkings, that I'd be willing to do it. I think probably that is an area where there would need to be more work. Up to this point, it has been the younger men. If we were to have an older man, there wouldn't be, I hope, the necessity of having to make a strong emphasis on discipling spiritually. With younger men, I think it is.

JG: What do you think the seminaries and Bible colleges could do to better prepare men for teamwork in the ministry?

SP: My associations have been more with Bible colleges and schools than seminaries, with the exception of our relationship to Biblical and here I see you doing a lot of things that I think are good, such as bringing pastors in to lecture in some of your classes. Of course, my under graduate work goes back quite a few years now, but this is where I felt Bob Jones, at that time, was lacking in preparing preachers. We had, I think, two days a week of what was called "preacher boys" and a stream of the best preachers coming through, but when I got into the pastorate I found out how little I really knew about the areas of ministry and how you minister at deaths, and weddings, and a lot of things like this. It was just learning by hard knocks. I see you folks accomplishing some things in that area now. The thing that I'm disappointed in with some of the schools, is I've found that they do not insist on an ongoing practical ministry while they are taking their formal education. This bothers me very much. I almost feel to the point, and this was true with the school which I was associated with for under graduate work, that every Bible major and every missions major should be required to do practical work. I offered to see that the program was totally set up at this particular school, and I don't know whether they are afraid of the students or what, but they just wouldn't go along with it. So they went through their four years there, as a Bible major or missions major, presumably preparing for full time Christian work, and not getting any practical training. I feel that should go hand in hand with school study. My own personal feeling is that any school that is organized with the intent of preparing people for Christian work should insist that all of their students be engaged in practical work and be accountable for that to somebody in the school. If they are not able to do that, then they should not be considered a candidate for a degree. I don't think you can start preparing that way after you get out of school. I think it should be concurrent with your classroom education.

JG: In that practical work, I suppose, there would be opportunity for learning how to work with, and under the leadership of, men of God, which seems to be a real need. Some schools do prepare men to make hospital visits, and do all these different things, but these men still fail because they can't get along with the other people. So, I was thinking principally along the line of what you would think a seminary could do to help people to be able to work with others; to work under the direction of another man effectively.

SP: Well, I think it would be a real help if they could; if there could be some kind of a structured course in seminary. It would be a little harder in a Bible school, or Bible college, perhaps, than in a seminary. I would think peer relations, a course on that, some kind of a structured course, would be of great help and maybe

would solve a lot of problems. This personality thing, is not only something we face here, but also on the mission field. A lot of missionary casualities happen because of the inability to relate. A missionary goest out on the field, and he wants to be independent, and yet most boards are structured where there is a hierarchy. They don't want to respond to that. I think another thing, and this indirectly, maybe directly, relates to it; I think that somehow in the course of the educational process the Bible schools and seminaries should be responsible, and I know they try, but make a very special effort,. to emphasize the fact that this is indeed a call of God to a ministry. Today, I'm afraid, even in our fundamentally evangelical circles, with some, it is just a job. Therefore, and I've known this to be true in a number of cases, when they are interviewed for jobs, they ask, "What kind of a parsonage am I going to have; I expect this kind of a wage; what about my benefits?"; that seems to be first in the minds of many and I've found this is true in our relations with seminaries in the south. That was more important than whether or not God wanted them in that particular place. "Are you goind to take care of me?" I feel that if we are in God's place He will take care of us. We went through that experience in our own ministry, and I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. It was poverty level, but I thank God for it because we learned to trust the Lord, and today it has become sort of a profession, and I think somehow we need to get across to our folks preparing that it is a call of God, and the first thing is the importance of God's will, not salary, and if there is not that kind of a dedication when a person goes into whatever kind of ministry, they are going to lack a total dedication, I feel, to the job that they are doing.

JG: Often the salary structure in a team situation is such that the second man, an associate or assistant, may be paid about 60% of what your pastor's pay is, and if his motivation is for being taken care of, as you put it, that would mean an increase in salary. Is there anyway that can be overcome? Isn't that presenting a temptation that should not be presented?

SP: Well I suppose it is, but I have not sensed that with the men that we have had assisting in the ministry; it may have been there, and I just have not been aware of it. I am very keenly aware of the difference myself. Of course, when you're talking of a younger man, just going into the ministry, and comparing what he makes in relation to a senior pastor, who went through a lot of lean years, while on the other hand you're talking of a man with previous experience, that makes for different grounds of comparison. I think if the man is qualified, he ought to be paid according to his qualifications. I'm anxious to see what our board has done here, because now, we are projecting a man who is 35-45 years of age, with experience, and we can't offer him half of what I'm

getting. So I'm anxious to find out what they are projecting
for his salary because I would think a man, if he has that
kind of qualification and experience, it should be at least
3/4 of what I'm getting. Now, if it is a younger man just
coming out of school, that's another thing. I think another
thing; there should be a real good understanding with the
individual and the church board initially too, that good work
will be rewarded. In other words, I'm not sure, let's say that
a man should be started at $15,000 just for a figure, but let's
say $12,000 or somewhere there on up with the understanding ·
that we will see how things are going to operate. This parti-
cular church is very fair in thinking along those lines.

JG: So, it gives him some incentive for working hard in the position.

SP: Yes, and to realize that we will work with him in his needs
and will be fair toward him. So I think there has to be some
incentive along that line. This church, of course, is very
fair. I came in at a figure; I just told them what I felt
I had to have, and I had never done that before, but in light
of my age, certain amount of my experience, the fact that I had
about three other offers that even at the price that I said I
had to have, which they gave me, I could have had several thousand
dollars more if I had gone to the others. I didn't feel that I
was out of line just purely from a practical standpoint of say-
ing I need this amount. Of course, the church has been very
generous since then on their own without my taking the initiative
at all. I think the same thing would be true of another man
coming in.

JG: Just one other question. In a team ministry do you see it as
a situation where each man should have an area within the church
in which to work, or with all the ministers on the team minister-
ing to the whole congregation?

SP: I would say a combination of the two. I think the man that we
are looking for now, although I have not talked with the board
in detail about this, would be a man with the gift of an evan-
gelistic thrust, but on the other hand, I would surely expect
him to visit in the congregation. I don't think he can minister
in any area unless he is out in the field. So I would expect
him to, within a couple of years, try to make the rounds of our
congregation. Obviously, if he were involved in evangelism, he
would be involved in a visitation program of the church. I think
this would be one of his ministries in relation to it. This means
he would have to be out working with new people who come into the
church. I see that as a team ministry. Now, not having been con-
fronted with it, and really not even knowing how some other churches
handle it, I don't know what the answer is on weddings and funerals,
as to where a second man would fit into that, and I do think that

is something an associate will have to face here. I think, by and large, by virtue of the longer ministry of the senior pastor, it would take a long time for a new man to catch up with him, especially if the man has had any kind of a good relationship to his people, by and large, they are going to look to him for those things. Now I have no idea what other churches do. I presume that if somebody came to the associate pastor and wanted him to marry them, that's the way it would go, but that's an area that will need to be clarified here, and those type areas I think need to be clarified in hiring an assistant or an associate. There should be an understanding before the call, that this is the way it will be, whatever it is. I think those could be problems if they were not defined.

JG: I thank you very much for your time and the helpful answers to the questions.

SP: The pleasure was mine.

Discussion questions for interview #6

1. Work out the procedure for adding a man to a church staff. In what ways could a team leader and the church board be sure that they have accurate information about the man?

2. Does a team leader who works long hours have the right to demand that his team members put in the same amount of time?

3. What are some of the problems associated with a graduated salary scale for a multiple staff?

4. What is the relationship between the educational background of team members and team harmony?

A Man With Considerable Experience
as a Team Leader

JG: What was your pastoral experience before coming here?

TL: I came here directly from California. I was at the Community Church of Palm Springs, but I've been pastoring since I was 17 which is some 37 years at various pastorates. Generally, although I was ordained as a Southern Baptist, I have been mainly in independent type churches.

JG: How much experience have you had in multiple staff ministries, or team ministries?

TL: I would say about seven or eight years. It started in California.

JG: Was that a good experience comparing it with your experience as the sole pastor of a church?

TL: Yes, I liked it. I think some of the problems with the team concept is a matter of cultural influence. In California, where things were open, it was a little different. It was a little easier to implement the team idea then in the traditional framework that we have here in the east where things are a little more static.

JG: In California then, there are a number of churches that would have multiple staffs; not just multiple staffs, but would have a team concept of ministry?

TL: I think Ray Stedman's body-life emphasis on the coast had something to do with it. There have been several churches, the Mariner's Church, and I think McArthur has an interesting way that he goes about things in his place.

JG: How would that be?

TL: Well, he maximizes the role of the elder. In his church, the staff would be the ministering elders and the board members would be the ruling elders. He has an interesting concept.

JG: Approximately how many teaching elders would he have?

TL: I'm not familiar with that. We are in the process now of studying his format, and I hope to implement some of the things. I've also been to Getz's church in Richardson and taken Gene's seminar, and I'm impressed with what's being done there.

JG: So what would be your philosophy then of team ministry? Could you just sketch out your concept?

TL: It goes back so much to my view of spiritual gifts. Not everyone has all the gifts, and I think some members bring to the staff perhaps unique talents or abilities. The senior pastor doesn't have them all. That's the problem that we have to come to where we realize our own limitations. That's one reason the team concept is difficult for those of us who have been in the ministry for a while. Sometimes you are threatened by it, and there is a competitive factor among the staff members which should not be. So, if you come to the point of having the spiritual rapport with your staff, and you know that you are comfortable with one another, then I think there is a comfortable relationship as you each function in the body of Christ. In

order to get any job done there has to be a delegation of duties and a division of duties in order to fully serve the body of Christ. No one person can possibly do it all.

JG: If you were going out to look for a man to add to your staff, how would you judge that he had the spiritual gifts to fit into your particular situation?

TL: I think by the way the Lord has been using him. For instance, we have a man who works in visitation who is very comfortable in that situation. He likes to minister especially to the shut-ins and the older saints. He has had a real blessing of God upon that area of ministry, if you want to call it the gift of helps and things of that sort, it's been very evident that he has been very useful in that area. So he fits into that niche. One of the difficulties, I think, in the team ministry is that sometimes because of the limitation of funds, or because of the very nature of things, the multiple staff becomes a training ground, and a lot of the young men who come on staff are aiming to be the senior pastor and therefore, they are not really content in what they are doing. It is a matter of stepping-stones to something else. I think that is just an inherent problem that we have to live with, but I would like to have someone who is called and is content in that area in which he is working at that time, who feels a fulfillment in the body of Christ even though later the Lord may lead him to something else. There should be that settled idea that he feels what he is doing is very important in the name of Christ and has a sense of fulfillment in that area.

JG: How would you, as a leader of a team, delegate work to your staff?

TL: We have a job description, and I would encourage all aspiring people on church staffs, or in Christian organizations, to have job descriptions. I think it is very important to have one. I think the job description provides guidelines, but we don't chisel them on stone. I feel we should constantly be stretching our staff; giving them new things to do; new challenges; give them room to grow. We gain feedback from then and there should be an openness. I hope my staff, and maybe you should ask my staff this, but I hope they feel open to any exchange of ideas. And that's not necessarily in the framework of staff meetings, although they are important, but I think it's just a natural life-style. The Lord chose the twelve first to be with Him, and I think there should be the idea of having time spent together where you fellowship together as brethren.

JG: I wanted to ask that very question. What provision do you make for keeping the lines of communication open with your staff?

TL: Unfortunately, in my tenure in my present pastorate, two of our staff or three really, have been committed to outside committments, and finishing schooling. When you have three staff members, and you are trying to have definite hours each week to meet together as a staff, it's been less than ideal, especially when one has to commute a hundred and some miles round trip and the other one maybe 300 miles because of out-side duties. We are hoping to remedy this situation. We think the staff meeting is important, but we think being together is also important; to do things together as a staff, where you just share life together. Right now my door is always open if they want to come in and talk. I try to be a pastor to them as well, and I also seek their counsel when I have a difficult problem, or if I'm exegeting a certain passage, and I think they're fresher in what they are doing at school, many times I will ask their opinion about something. I hope that we not only labor together for the Lord, but I hope that we are friends, as well as brothers in Christ. I think that is maybe an intangible thing, but I think that it is important.

JG: Does that include social times with the families of the staff?

TL: Yes, I think that is very important. Mrs. _____ and I, on two rare occasions, have had them to our home, to just be together; play some records; talk together, things of that sort. I think it creates a good atmosphere. We try to be considerate of each other in personal needs that we have and praying for each other. My staff has been very con-siderate of us and has been of great encouragement to me. I value their counsel.

JG: What would be the process say, if one of your staff members had a new idea for a ministry and he wanted to run that by you. How would that work?

TL: They would just come in and talk about it.

JG: Your door would just be open?

TL: Yes, my door is open, and they would just come in and chat. I have to work quite often on appointment because we have a heavy counseling load, so they either contact my secretary or come down and say we want to chat a while, and we block off some time and we talk it out.

JG: It's not just a regular staff meeting, but it's a lot of informal meetings?

TL: Yes, a lot of informal meetings and talking, and a lot of availability. I prefer personally working in that way. Too often the staff member is trying to impress the other staff members, and I think if they can get together just where they have a particular burden, we can concentrate on their need, their idea, it's a very valuable time for me, and I want the staff to feel that way, that they can come any time.

JG: Would the same be true if a staff member had a disagreement or if there were some situation where there was a problem, or something that he was troubled about, would the same situation be true?

TL: Yes, they come as brethren if I'm involved in it, and we try to straighten it out as brethren. We also have a personnel committee from our Board of Elders, and they are to take care of any staff disputes, and also to arrange vacations and things of that sort; so if anything does arise between the personnel, or staff members, and they cannot be handled on a personal level, the next appeal is to the Board of Elders.

JG: That's very interesting. They would mediate any disputes?

TL: Yes. So far we have not had to use that, but it's there, and it's built in if we need it. I think that is rather helpful. We call it our Personnel Committee. They have other duties, but that's one of the duties that they have.

JG: So say if two men on the staff have a dispute, if it went that far, they would sit before the committee and the committee would see both sides and then make a recommendation?

TL: Yes, they would make recommendations on how to solve the problems.

JG: In your past experience, have you observed many conflict situations, so far as interpersonal conflict among people who are involved in working closely together?

TL: Well, yes. In my earlier years I had one case where we put a man on staff who was a student helper. In those days I was not wise enough to have a job description. But he had made some statements that I had promised him a pay raise at a certain time which I had no recollection of. I went to the Board of Elders and they sent two elders with me to the individual, and we got it straightened out immediately. I always appreciated the wisdom and counsel of the elders in that situation to get the thing cleared. Also, as chaplain of an organization, I have found a lot of interpersonal

problems, and Paul and Barnabas had them. But I think we have to come back and apply Matthew. If your brother has ought against you, go to your brother. We have to remember that along with the ministry we are brothers in Christ, and we ought to deal with a lot of these things on the basis of New Testament principles for interpersonal relationship. First of all, taking care of our own problems, the splinter that is in our own eye and then in love admonishing one another, and being open with one another in the things of Christ. I think if we would live together as brethren, we would minister together as brethren. That should solve a lot of our problems. The ego gets in the way many times. People feel threatened, and I think we have to be willing to be servants which is a constant challenge with all of us.

JG: Do you spend very much time actually training your staff and imparting to them your philosophy of ministry, and seeking to unify the staff in that way?

TL: Subtly so. I recommend books for them to read. Right now we are reading How Christ Trained the Twelve by Carl Wilson of the Worldwide Discipleship Association. I recommend Getz type books to them, and we've talked together not in a structured environment we haven't although I did have a retreat recently with our elders. And we invited in a Christian psychologist to speak on communication. I spoke on delegation. We had Lombardy's secular film on motivation, and I invited the staff and the elders and there I did talk to them about where we are going; the difference between ministry that is managed by objective rather than just mere activity. The staff happened to be present and interacted and we found it most helpful. I would highly recommend that to anyone; we took a Saturday, but it could be longer, but it was very helpful to the elders and also to the staff. So, that was a start in the more formal type of structured setting.

JG: What could be done in the seminary situation to prepare men for the teamwork in the ministry?

TL: I think it comes back to the basic philosophy of where we are going in the body of Christ. I think some input as to their own personal development. I'm a great believer in the brethren in the body of Christ who are Christian psychologists. We have used them with our staff; we make them available to our staff. We have used some testing for all of our teachers in our school coming on board, and we will be using it for our staff members in the future. I think just to know ourselves a little better, and how we relate to other people, and we do have to grow in that type of situation. We cannot, and the difficulty many times in team ministry, is that everybody becomes an empire builder. They

get tunnel vision, and they see their particular ministry, and that's the only ministry of the church. We do not see the relationship with the other staff members; how we all fit together, and one thing we are set upon is building people, but discouraging empire builders; helping them see that we are moving together in the body of Christ to make disciples and each ministry is important and we each have a contribution to make, and to value each others ministry. As Paul said, "Without your mind I would not do anything." He asked Philemon first how he should treat Onesimus. I think that is what we should do by communication to see where we fit together.

JG: Thank you.

Discussion questions for interview #7

1. What are the merits of a multiple staff structure in which the staff is made up of teaching elders and the church board made up of ruling elders? How would these two groups relate to each other so far as planning, fellowship, and function?

2. What are the advantages in having a job description? What are the limitations of their effectiveness?

An Associate Facing Conflict

JG: In your situation, what is the senior pastor's style of leadership? There are three basic styles: authoritarian-dictator type, democratic-participatory type, and the laissez-faire approach.

AP: That's basically the approach. Just stand off and let things go.

JG: I see.

AP: But yet comments and statements come if things don't go right, so it's sort of like, I don't know. . .

JG: Does this mean that the staff is floundering so far as direction and so on?

AP: Yes, we'll have programs planned out and there will be three or four contradictions in a month over planned programs. People at the last minute have to cancel, and always turmoil coming up because nothing is really planned. Everybody is sort of walking on eggs, not knowing what program is going to be cancelled next because it conflicts with something that is more important than that, yet there is no priority set up for anything.

JG: From your view point, what could be done in this situation to normalize things and to get things moving in the right direction?

AP: I think communication. One of the things we are going to do is, and the staff has been planning this for the last two weeks, to get together with the pastor though it has been impossible. We haven't really talked to him in two weeks, and we want to get with him and talk to him personally bringing out Matthew 18. We feel that would be a good approach--personal confrontation · and we do not know how it will go because of a dislike for confrontation and conflict.

JG: You mean he has a dislike for confrontation and conflict?

AP: Yes, and also criticism, so we don't know how it is going to go. We prayed about it, but it is getting to the point where we just have to meet, and we are going to bring up certain things like church discipline matters, and communication matters, assignment matters, job description matters and try to get them resolved and depending on what happens in the meeting, will depend on what will happen. But after a few events today, the staff wasn't necessarily united, but the staff is all united now and would all like to meet. Before, it was only the assistant and the youth pastor; now everybody would like to meet and hopefully resolve this. We are interested in resolving now because we know that there is basically no reason for it; just getting together and talking and planning together and praying together would work it out.

JG: So it's basically a neglect of interstaff communication that has led to the problem?

AP: I think that's basically it, yes. There are a few other things going on, but we are not too sure if we are making proper judgments in those areas or not--like pitting people against each other so that there is no conspiracy and things like that. You have to be careful with that, and so we are just going to wait and see what happens when we meet and bring up these contradictions and things that have happened. One party is told one thing at one time, and another party another thing at another time, so they are pitted against each other. When we get together we find out there is really no conflict. We will be trying to bring up those types of things.

JG: You worked formerly under another pastor. Could you comment on his style of leadership?

AP: His style was basically dictator type. The board basically did what he said, and everybody had to toe the line, and the orders

came down and you did them. As long as you were carrying out the orders as assigned, that was fine. There was lee-way given for individual. . . At times you thought you were working with a hands-off approach, but often you would find out that every move was known and watched and so you really didn't go too far at all.

JG: All the time that you have been in the ministry so far, you have worked at what we would call a subordinate working under a senior pastor. What have you found in regard to communica-tion problems with men who were in the top leadership position?

AP: Under both, the authoritative and the hands-off approach, I've found the same type of insecurity; inability to open up and trust. Among the fellow workers that isn't there; the insecurity, the inability to communicate, being able to trust people and to feel confident in them, and to open up and share.

JG: Are you saying that the staff members then get along very well, or communicate with each other very well, but when it comes to communication between the staff members and the senior pastor, either on a one to one basis, or in a staff meeting, that it is a little stiff?

AP: I found that with both pastors with completely different styles that this was the case. The staff usually gets along really well, but there seems to be a breach between the rest of the staff and the senior pastor.

JG: Wouldn't that factor cause a deepening of that breach? For instance, if the senior pastor somehow sensed that the staff were very friendly to one another, getting along very well, and yet in his presence they were somewhat reticent? Wouldn't that deepen the differences between the two parties?

AP: I've seen things happen where one pastor in particular tried to split the staff. Sometimes doing that and taking one aside and cutting down other people on the staff or causing suspicion among them, or coming in and breaking up the meeting and saying, "We don't need that type of thing, and we are wasting time, and we ought to get along with the ministry." Then looking in sus-picion at the staff and trying to take ways to break up that kind of block, that unity, that fellowshipping that goes on; I've seen action taken to break it up.

JG: Would you say there was jealousy of close relationships that the senior pastor wanted to have but he couldn't seem to. . .

AP: I sort of attribute it to insecurity a lot of times.

JG: What are some of the other important elements in communication?

AP: Time is very important.

JG: Making time?

AP: Yes, quality time, making time for quality time, and not just formal time. I think if you just meet formally you get a lot done, but the informal times together, just a lunch or getting together that wasn't expected, not just to talk about anything, but just to get to know each other more, I think that is another important element. Honesty, I think, is important and that's what may be keeping a lot of people from getting close; an inability to open up and be honest.

JG: Certainly someone in the ministry ought to be able to be honest. Now, what do you mean by honesty?

AP: I hate to say this, but I haven't seen much of it. Maybe that's a harsh statement, but all sorts of innuendos and half-truths and wanting to carry out the program that they want, and doing half-truths just to make sure it gets done depending on who was being talked to.

JG: You mean in order to manipulate someone?

AP: Yes, that type of thing. I've seen that. Manipulation of parties and people and things, and not communicating in an openness to get it done, and pray about it, and sense the direction, but to manipulate and get the person going in a certain direction and these types of methods. It's almost scarry to think of this in evangelical churches. Being in the pastorate myself, I just wonder where I'm going to be if this is a common practice. At least I've seen it in the churches that I've been in. I know of one case where there is a pastor who meets with his board every Friday morning. They meet at 6:00 or 7:00 a.m.; they have breakfast together; they go over Scriptures; they pray and they make decisions together concerning the church. That's what I would like to see once. I've never seen it.

JG: He meets with the board or with the staff?

AP: With the board. He doesn't have any staff, and therefore, he probably would do that if he had a staff. I know another church in our area from what the staff members said, that meets every morning at 7:00 a.m. with the senior pastor. They have devotions, somebody on the staff brings devotions, and they plan out the day, and communicate and this is the time they are to bring up things.

JG: Are there any other elements in good communication that you have noticed either operating effectively or. . .

AP: Yes, humility helps. An ability to not be rough. In Proverbs it says that "a soft answer turns away wrath" and "he who gives an answer before he listens is a foolishness and a folly." There are a few ways to approach most things, and usually the softer approach works. Sometimes we need to be rough, if the soft approach keeps maybe being ignored. That type of going in and giving the person the benefit of the doubt and encouraging them, instead of going in and saying I think that this is wrong with your ministry. This is the quickest way to get fired. I think people get fired on the spot doing this.

JG: You mean going to a senior pastor like that?

AP: Yes, but not so much telling him it is wrong, but the way that it is done, the harsh way versus the humility, "I know I'm not perfect," approach. There is a problem I need to work through and this is the problem I'm having and maybe you can help me with it. That type of approach is better than coming in and saying I know it all. That type of approach, which the senior pastor, and I don't think anybody in authority would appreciate much from those who are under him. Prayer is an area. I think often we carry out the work of the church in a worldly way instead of praying about it before you go. This is a very big thing, and also, trying to pray during the situation which I've seen situations where there was absolutely no prayer which would have helped quite a bit.

JG: You mean where there is conflict?

AP: Yes, no prayer either before or during the conflict or anything which among spiritual leaders you think would be done because it is so important. You must start communicating with the Lord so the Lord can start communicating with the other person before you even get there. Sometimes the Lord can straighten out things before you even get to them. I've tried to carry out that as much as I can, and sometimes it gets hard to do depending on how the other party is.

JG: What would you say would be the importance of spiritual gifts in organizing and structuring a staff and in putting people into positions?

AP: Very important. It's amazing you should ask that. The former pastor had a great gift of administration to the point that it became his weakness and his downfall. He admitted that to me at one point. He said the thing that would destroy him would be his ability to organize. Where the present one has absolutely

no organizing ability at all that I can see, yet he has a good heart, but is lacking the means to do it. In both, there are problems. I can see how things are turning out and how they relate though a lot of it is the same in both. With somebody who can organize and get people to do it, there is a lot less conflict than in one where there isn't that ability to organize and carry it out. Somebody may not communicate as much, (now this might sound like a contradiction,) but when he knows how to organize and get the key people to help and motivate them, a lot of the conflicts don't arise because through his delegation, they are resolved.

JG: As far as the church organization as a whole, not just in the churches that you have been working in, but it seems that a real problem is that the senior pastor is the man that has been there the longest, or he is the man who does most of the preaching and teaching. So what if that man, either the man who has been there for a long time and has added to his staff, or the man who does the principle preaching, what if that man doesn't have the gift of administration? How could you straighten out this problem? Would it be appropriate to have someone else on the staff administrating?

AP: Could be that would be one approach. Some churches are going into the hiring of professional administrators to administrate what the pastor wants done, but again there needs to be communication with whoever the person is, whether it is a board member or a staff member, there has got to be communication between the senior pastor who wants it done and the person who is doing it. So, yes, it can be done. I have never seen it, but I would think that a person who knows he has the gift of preaching, and knows that he doesn't have the gift of administration, would try to pull those around him who do have the gift of administrating and then try to communicate closely with them. It seems in a lot of churches, especially big churches, and ours is almost 800 members, the person who administrates controls the church, not the person who preaches. It seems like the person who controls the program, is involved with the people personally and the workers, does more controlling than the person who just comes in and preaches in getting things done. Now he may have more influence over the individual peoples lives but when it comes to the workers and those who have dedicated themselves to the church and are involved, the one who administrates seems to have more of the power in the church. It's a dangerous thing. A strong administrator under a strong preacher and the two don't mix. This can often pull out loyalty from the preacher in certain ways because he has closer contacts with the staff. The one who works personally with them in carrying out the ministry does and they gain more loyalty there. This can be a problem.

JG: Well, you have had some good and bad experiences in teamwork. So far as your own future, would you desire to minister in the future in a team situation or would you prefer to work alone?

AP: At this point, I wouldn't mind working with a team depending on who the team was. I have worked very well with a lot of the associates we have had. Even when I had less position than they did, I've worked well with them on assignments and things. It depends on the team, it really does. I don't find myself being against teamwork at all just because I have had conflicts with senior pastors or that teamwork is down the drain and I want to go independent, but it does come to a time that, if you consider yourself called to the ministry and to be a pastor, that a smaller church with you carrying out the assignments could be a valid option. Other people may have the gift just to be a right hand man and to carry out all those assignments so I think it depends. I don't think there is any law. I think it depends on you and the situation as to whether that would be so, and for me I think it would depend on the situation. I'm looking for a pastorate myself where I would be the pastor, and I wouldn't mind having people under me of course. I don't think I would look for another assistant pastor position unless I really looked into it well, because of the conflicts that can and do develop between assistants and pastors. I've heard that from other assistants. Often that is a common thing. Unless you've got a good situation where you know that you are not meant to be the head pastor, and I've run into some people who do, they are the right hand support man to carry out the ministry, but unless you've got that there are going to be conflicts. Sometimes I've seen retired men take an assistant position, do the visitation, do a lot of the other assignments and there is no conflict, but I don't know if that is the situation or if that is just because they consider themselves that this is their God given position.

JG: Could it be that an older man whose ministry more or less is in the past, but still could have some good years left, that a man like that would not be a threat at all to the senior pastor, whereas a young man coming up with lots of energy and ideas, may be more threatening. Is that a possible reason for that?

AP: It could be.

JG: Is there some other reason?

AP: No, I guess that could be it. There could be a conflict depending on how people handle that. I found that in business quite a bit. People promising people under them. They don't want their position threatened. That could be a problem. I would have to think about it more to see if that was a common thing in these situations or not.

JG: What would you say would be a way in which someone moving into an associate pastorate or assistant pastorate could do to avoid the conflicts that so often come in these arrangements? What preventative measures could a person like that take?

AP: Find out what's going on before you get there in order to know whether to take the position or not. When you come into the position, once you're there, to meet the conflict?

JG: Suppost you are considering the position, you're candidating for an associate pastorate or assistant pastorate, or Director of Christian Education or whatever, what things would you. . .

AP: Well, one thing I think I would require would be talking to the staff members individually.

JG: To see if they were happy with their positions?

AP: Yes, to see what's going on. If one complained and four were happy, that would be a pretty good indication. If all of them had grumblings or you could pick out things, it could be something to stay away from. I think you should be direct, just like candidating with a church, just putting everything on the table with the pastor to begin with. I'm not interested in this position unless these things are going on. Now that may sound demanding but I think going into a situation if you don't lay the cards out on the table having complete open and truthful communication to begin with, that from the assistant's position already has put himself on bad footing because he might not say something that might ruin the interview and he might not get the job, well already your doing deceitful things. And already you are getting into that position by maneuvering. You've got to be honest and open to begin with or else you might as well. . . From the first step that's the way it's got to be and if the person knows the type of person he is getting, if he doesn't want it, then that's good and he should say no. But if he does want that type of person and he appreciates that and he likes the exchange of ideas and he is not threatened by it, and lets that be known, depending on how the reaction would be. This would determine whether or not I would want that position. Let's say there wasn't a staff, just that direct approach. Now I know in an interview, when you are interviewing for a job, often humility is given as being the best way to approach it, and not being demanding and saying, "this is what I expect," but being very direct may be a way to figure out what kind of conflicts could come in the future.

Discussion questions for interview #8

1. What is the source of this associate pastor's frustration?

2. In what specific ways can openness and honesty be practiced
   by a team leader? Discuss the examples of dishonesty mentioned
   in the interview.

3. How can ministers be better prepared to handle the responsibilities
   of administrating a multiple staff or a team of some other kind?

4. What are some methods for getting the channels of communication
   unclogged in a situation like the one described in the interview?

TEAM MINISTRIES SURVEY

How many people are there on your ministerial staff or team? (Please check.)

_____ 2   _____ 3   _____ 4   _____ 5

_____ 6   _____ 7   _____ 8   _____ 9 or more

How often do you meet together?

_____ not at all   _____ several times a year   _____ monthly

_____ bi-weekly   _____ weekly   _____ more than once
                                                                a week

_____ daily

How would you describe the level of communication between members of your team?

_____ excellent   _____ good   _____ adequate   _____ inadequate

_____ poor

Do you function as the leader of the team?

Yes _____   No _____

How would you describe your relationship to the other members of the team? Please give a ranking to the following quotations, 1 representing the closest description of your situation and 7 being the least descriptive.

_____ "My associates are my closest friends."

_____ "This is a good professional arrangement."

_____ "Ours is an honest, open, satisfying relationship."

_____ "Things are a bit tense and uncomfortable at times but functional."

_____ "We seem to be working against rather than with each other."

_____ "There are certain members that do not seem to fit in with the rest of us."

_____ "The situation is becoming unbearable."

Have you ever experienced open conflict in your team relationships?

Yes _____   No _____

If yes, please explain the nature of the conflict. _____

_____

_____

Have you ever experienced a situation in your team relationships when, though there was no outward conflict, there was tension because of unexpressed irritation?

Yes _____   No _____

If yes, please explain. _____

_____

_____

How would you rank the following causes of conflict in order of their importance, using a scale of 1 to 15? (1=most frequent cause, 15=least frequent cause)

_____ lack of communication

_____ misunderstood communication

_____ lack of openness and honesty

_____ financial pressure

_____ dissatisfaction with work

_____ spiritual immaturity

_____ style of leadership

_____ fear of failure

_____ personality clashes

_____ lack of preparation for
        position

_____ not keeping within the limits of
        one's responsibilities

_____ not fulfilling one's responsibilitie

_____ envy of another's gifts, position,
        or success

_____ lack of recognition of one's work

_____ lack of opportunity to exercise
        gifts

In your view, what is the most important quality needed for team leadership?

_____

_____

, What is the most important quality needed in one who is functioning in a non-leade:
  position within the team structure?

_____

_____

, How does your team resolve conflicts when they arise? _____

_____

_____

What preventive measures have you built into your rel.tionship as a team to prev.:
conflicts from occurring?

_____

_____

_____

What is the highest level of education you have attained?

_____ high school   _____ Bible institute   _____ B.A., B.S.
                                   certificate

_____ M.A.   _____ M.Div.   _____ Th.M., S.T.M.

_____ D.Min.   _____ Th.D.   _____ Ph.D.

_____ other

What is your sex?   Male _____   Female _____

How old were you on your last birthday? _____

What is your :ital status? _____

How many years have you been involved in full-time christian work? _____

Thank you very much.

AVER.   59 M

me _____ Age 24 .47   Sex 2 F Date   9-12-79

WORKING GIFTS PROFILE

Please answer each question to the best of your knowledge.

1. What do you think your greatest abilities for Christian service are. Number the following items from 1 to 12 in order of your understanding of your abilities. (1=Your strongest spiritual asset; 12=Your weakest

2 3 spiritual asset.)

      10 CHOSE THIS AS ③ AND 10 AS ④

5 | 10 a. Insight into God's truth and applying insights to specific situations.

      10 CHOSE THIS AS ⑥

6 | 4 b. Investigating and systematizing facts in relation to spiritual matters.

      9 — ④

6 | 4 c. The ability to see what needs to be done and courage to attempt going ahead in spite of difficulties.

      12 — ⑥

6 | 2 d. Speaking to people on God's behalf.

      13 — ⑤

4 | 5 e. The ability to distinguish between truth and error, genuineness and hypocrisy.

      13 — ①

6 | 7 f. Lending a hand wherever help is needed.

      8 — ③   8 — ⑤

4 | 8 g. Instructing people in God's truth in a systematic way.

      9 — ⑬

8 | 3 h. Leading a service, chairing a committee, being an up-front person.

      9 — ⑨ (3-5-2-6-3-7-5-4-9-5-5-7-0-0-0)

5 | 2 i. Overseeing the work of others, offering guidance and help in getting the work accomplished.

      12 — ⑨   ↑

2 | 2 j. Protecting young Christians from harmful influences.   COMPLETE READ OUT

      8 — ⑦   ↓

4 | 5 k. Sharing assets (material) with those in need.

      13 — ⑧ (5-6-5-5-4-4- 4-13-5-2-4-5-0-0-0)

5 | 5 l. Motivating people to work, to try harder, not to give up.

2. What have others said concerning your abilities? (State who said it, e.g. pastor, etc.)

(verbal answers not given)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What abilities would you desire to have in order to better serve Jesus Christ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What abilities have you attempted to develop but found that these are not God's design for you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Indicate your preference for each of the items in each question on a scale of 1-5 with 1=highest, most preferred and 5=least preferred.

1. If given a choice of doing the following, which would you prefer?

	1	2	3	4	5
a. Being the Sunday School superintendent.	8	11	(17)	8	15
b. Teaching a Sunday School class.	(42)	14	4	0	1
c. Visiting Sunday School students who are very ill.	4	(29)	18	6	2
d. Being the Sunday School treasurer.	0	2	6	19	(32)
e. Arranging the chairs and cleaning the Sunday School rooms.	5	4	13	(21)	16

* YELLOW INDICATES THE HIGHEST NUMBER CHOOSING THE INDICATED RANK FOR EACH CATEGORY

2. Which would you prefer:

_____ a. Being on a committee to plan for Vacation Bible School.

_____ b. Buy the materials for crafts for VBS.

_____ c. Give to support the VBS program.

_____ d. Give flannelgraph lessons during VBS.

_____ e. Visit the community to interest children in VBS.

3. Which would you most like to do:

_____ a. Lead in prayer in the morning worship service.

_____ b. Be an usher in the morning worship service.

_____ c. Pick up senior citizens at a nursing home to bring them to a worship service.

_____ d. Preach the sermon at the worship service.

_____ e. Count the offering following the worship service.

4. Which office do you think would be most fitting for you:

_____ a. To be an elder.

_____ b. To be a deacon.

_____ c. To be a pastor.

_____ d. To be a Sunday School teacher.

_____ e. To be none of the above.

5. Which would you most like to do:

_____ a. Investigate a local cult group.

_____ b. Advise a family in regard to their financial problems.

_____ c. Put the church vehicles into top mechanical condition.

_____ d. Instruct new converts in the basic steps of Christianity.

_____ e. Talk to an unsaved person concerning their need of Christ.

1	2	3	4	5
(19)	14	12	6	3
1	4	2	15	(26)
4	5	9	(18)	13
(19)	11	13	4	4
(16)	13	12	5	6
6	(24)	9	6	2
1	3	15	(23)	6
3	10	(19)	12	4
(48)	8	2	0	1
0	3	2	6	(37)
6	13	(16)	3	1
5	8	11	(19)	0
(37)	10	1	6	1
(15)	9	11	9	1
3	0	1	1	(27)
0	6	16	(17)	7
3	5	16	(17)	6
1	1	5	7	(22)
(38)	(6)	2	0	0
(19)	8	7	5	1

6. What would your preference be:

_____ a. To manage the details of the Brigade or Pioneer Girl program.

_____ b. To drive the bus to pick up children for this program.

_____ c. To give a devotional talk to the children.

_____ d. To motivate men or women to get involved in the program.

_____ e. To oversee the program to make sure everything is going well.

1	2	3	4	5
2	4	8	15	(4)
7	3	7	9	2
28	16	6	5	1
14	(5)	10	5	5
8	9	(14)	11	2

7. Which would you prefer:

_____ a. To be the chairman of the Missions Committee.

_____ b. To give a portion of your income to support a missionary.

_____ c. To be a missionary.

_____ d. To organize a group to make bandages for poor people on a mission field.

_____ e. To make bandages.

1	2	3	4	5
6	(16)	7	4	13
(20)	11	19	3	0
(32)	10	2	3	3
2	5	9	(29)	9
2	2	8	14	(5)

8. Which is most attractive to you:

_____ a. Training counselors for an evangelistic meeting.

_____ b. Being an evangelist.

_____ c. Organizing a car pool to bring people to an evangelistic meeting.

_____ d. Being a counselor to inquirers at an evangelistic meeting.

_____ e. Being the song leader for an evangelistic meeting.

1	2	3	4	5
11	(5)	(15)	7	0
(18)	7	10	10	7
2	3	13	11	(16)
(23)	15	9	4	0
4	5	2	15	(2)

9. If you were on a worship committee, what role would you prefer:

_____ a. Detailman, making sure all the facts are available, etc.

_____ b. Motivator, keeping things moving in the right direction.

_____ c. Committee chairman, leading the meetings.

_____ d. Trouble shooter, calling attention to problems and proposing solutions.

_____ e. Doing the jobs no one else wants to do.

1	2	3	4	5
8	7	11	(12)	9
(19)	7	13	7	4
(12)	8	9	10	9
15	(19)	4	7	6
9	3	10	10	(6)

10. If you were going on a trip with your Sunday School class, which would you prefer:

		1	2	3	4
a.	To take the responsibility to help a blind class member.	8	10	(11)	10
b.	To be responsible for planning the trip.	11	10	(13)	8
c.	To be responsible for giving a devotional message during the trip.	(32)	13	6	1
d.	To collect information about the places that will be visited.	5	5	11	(17)
e.	To drive the bus.	7	8	5	8

11. If you were involved in a visitation program, what would your preference be:

		1	2	3	4
a.	Encouraging people to join the program.	12	(23)	8	1
b.	Taking the lead when entering homes and doing most of the talking.	(34)	10	3	2
c.	Being responsible for bringing the literature.	1	4	8	(22)
d.	Assigning people to various homes.	5	8	15	(16)
e.	Going along with someone but not saying very much.	7	3	12	4

12. If you were a member of a church staff, would you most prefer to be:

		1	2	3	4
a.	The Director of Christian Education.	6	8	3	(22)
b.	The Senior Pastor.	4	15	(17)	5
c.	An Associate Pastor.	(20)	9	15	4
d.	The Business Administrator.	1	1	3	9
e.	The Minister of the Word - expository preacher.	(37)	4	5	3

13. Which would you most like to do:

		1	2	3	4
a.	Visit a person in the hospital.	(37)	14	1	2
b.	Organize a card shower for a person in the hospital.	1	2	15	(13)
c.	Take meals to the home of a housewife who is in the hospital.	8	(13)	(13)	4
d.	Teach a course on hospital visitation.	(15)	12	6	11
e.	Advise believers on how to handle their health insurance needs.	5	12	6	4
		1	4	11	6

14. Which would you most like to do:

_____a. Be a youth sponsor.

_____b. Be a youth director.

_____c. Counsel young people about their problems.

_____d. Teach a high school Sunday School class.

_____e. Help with the details of a youth retreat.

15. Which would you prefer:

_____a. Remaining in the background helping where I can.

_____b. Being in leadership whenever possible.

_____c. Being one of the most responsible people, but not the leader.

_____d. Having an opportunity to learn to handle greater responsibility by being in a leadership training program.

_____e. To first learn to be a better Christian before taking any responsibility.

1	4	10	14
13	5	10	13
12	17	13	1
15	10	6	6
3	9	8	10

7	4	9	10
16	7	11	5
13	15	7	13
20	11	11	7
9	9	9	8

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EVALUATION OF TEAM CONFLICT MANUAL

Name:_____   Position:_____

Church:_____

1. Did you find the material in the manual to be appropriate and realistic as a guide for conflict management? _____Yes _____No

    Comment:_____

    _____

2. What in your opinion is the strength of this manual?_____

    _____

    What is its greatest weakness?_____

    _____

3. If followed, would the section on preventing conflicts be effective in helping a ministerial team avoid destructive conflict? _____Yes _____No _____Not Certain

    Comment:_____

    _____

4. If followed, would the section on conflict resolution be an effective tool in resolving team conflicts? _____Yes _____No _____Not Certain

    Comment:_____

    _____

5. In your opinion should this manual be made widely available to ministerial teams?

    Yes, as it is_____   or   Yes, with minor revision_____
    Yes, with major revision_____   Yes, in shorter form_____
    No_____

6. Is there a need for such a manual? _____Yes _____No

    Comment:_____

    _____

7. Would you use this manual if it was made available to your team?

    _____Yes _____No _____Perhaps