

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 sovereignty.

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