

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?"