

- 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 interference 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 commitment, 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,