

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