

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 personality. 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 difference 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 underneath 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 discerned 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.