

Pk's Perspectives ... Can These Bones Live?

Ezekiel explains his vision in this way: *The hand of the Lord was on me, and He brought me out by His Spirit and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them. There were a great many of them on the surface of the valley, and they were very dry. Then He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"* Ezekiel 37:1-3

The vision of the prophet deals with dry bones that come alive; bones that have no life becoming lively. Ezekiel's vision got me thinking in a bunch of different directions...one being the local church. I wonder sometimes if the local church is dealing with a somewhat different scenario: live bones that need a new life.

For example, most churches are brimming with wishbones. They spend their time wishing that somebody else would get the job done. Wishbones notice a need or ministry opportunity, fail to see a corresponding response anywhere on the church ministry landscape and proclaim with a fair measure of emotion, "I wish someone would start a ministry to/for _____." If wishing would make it so, wishbones would enjoy uncommon success.

Another group of live bones in need of a new life are the funnybones. Now funnybones can be pleasant, courteous, and friendly...until you rub them the wrong way. Bump into a funnybone and all pleasantness is lost in the fusillade of verbal bullets. You'll know you've bumped a funnybone when you're being castigated for walking past that individual (even though you didn't see them!) and not speaking.

Church membership rolls are sprinkled with knucklebones. Knucklebones are all about knocking something...everything...anything! Knucklebones usually seek appointment to the church's Cold Water Committee. The Knucklebone dictum is simple and straightforward: "I've already made-up my mind – don't confuse me with the facts." No matter what it is, there is no point in discussing it. They are most definitely against it.

The next collection could best be described as the jawbones. Jawbones are more than happy to do all the talking and very little else. Jawbones possess an abundance of opinions while also displaying a penchant for voicing said opinions in a brassy, and often disruptive, way. Jawbones are most easily identified in a captive audience setting: small group, church conference, etc. They are certainly willing to express themselves – but mostly unwilling to exert themselves.

But, fortunately, for the good of the church and the advancement of the Gospel, God has placed an abundance of backbones within the Body of Christ. Backbones are the ones who carry the load. Backbones are servant leaders, faithful tithers, and tireless volunteers who are experiencing a deep intimacy in their relationship with Jesus. Backbones are the ones that can be counted on not only to answer the call for commitment but also to actually follow through on their commitment. While others are wishing for something to happen or knocking what is already happening or being offended by lack of recognition or expressing their opinion on the matter, the backbones are pulling on their work boots and getting on with the mandate to make disciples of all the nations. Here's the amazing thing: God will receive any bone that freely and unconditionally surrenders to His authority and astoundingly transform it into an authentic backbone! How cool is that? Cya in Sunday School & Worship, Pk.