

## The Wisdom of the American West

(Jim Ozier, Feb 16, 2015)

The local wisdom of the Plains Indians in the American West -- passed on from generation to generation -- says that: "When you discover that you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount."

In mainline churches, however, (as in government, education, and corporate America), more advanced strategies are often employed, such as:

1. Using a stronger whip
2. Changing riders
3. Appointing a committee to study the horse
4. Arranging to visit other Annual Conferences & denominations to see how their cultures ride dead horses
5. Lowering the standards so that dead horses can be seen as more productive
6. Reclassifying the dead horse as living-impaired
7. Hiring outside contractors to lift the dead horse and move its legs
8. Harnessing or merging several dead horses together to increase speed
9. Providing additional funding and/or training to increase the dead horse's performance
10. Doing a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance
11. Declaring that since the dead horse does not have to be fed, is less costly, and carries lower overhead, it is not as much a drag on the Conference as are some other horses
12. Rewriting the expected performance requirements for all horses
13. Promoting the dead horse to a supervisory position

### Luke 13:6-9 (NIV)

<sup>6</sup>Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. <sup>7</sup>So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

<sup>8</sup>"'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. <sup>9</sup>If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

### John 15:2-6

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear **more** fruit.

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[We can figure tough things out, but we must be both confident....and humble!]

Rodeo Code: "There ain't a horse that can't be rode...and there ain't a rider that can't be throwed!"

It's not always us... **it is God!** -- Revelation 21:5 (NASB)

<sup>5</sup>And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new."