

Three Strikes And You're In

- Divine principle of justice – justice had to be established by witnesses, not by rumor; justice that involved human life had to be substantiated by more than one witness (at least two, preferably three)
- **Deuteronomy 17:6** At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.
- **Deuteronomy 19:15** One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.
- ONE STRIKE AGAINST A MAN WAS NOT GOOD ENOUGH!
- In the New Testament, this principle applies even in situations which do not involve capital punishment.
- **1 Timothy 5:19** Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.
- JUSTICE: There could be no judgment resulting in condemnation or punishment without two or three witnesses.
- God also used this principle in matters of judgment involving JUSTIFICATION, which is an exemption from punishment.
- **Exodus 12:7** And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.
- God said, “I want it struck in three places!” – ONE STRIKE WAS NOT GOOD ENOUGH – THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE IN!
- **Exodus 12:12-13** ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. ¹³And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.
- In this life-or-death situation, God emphasizes His command by repeating it twice:
- **Exodus 12:22-23** ²²And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. ²³For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.
- Hyssop was a common plant, accessible to anyone! It was EASY to obey, but you still had to obey!
- **THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE IN!**
- What would have been the fate of someone who put the blood only on the lintel? ONE STRIKE AND YOU'RE OUT! God was precise in His instructions – He meant exactly what He said!
- “You don't really have to do all that – just a little blood will be okay!” What would have been the fate of someone who put the blood only on the two doorposts? TWO STRIKES AND YOU'RE OUT!
- **GOD DOESN'T PLAY “WORD GAMES” IN THE BIBLE!** He says exactly what He means, and He means exactly what He says!
- If I had been living then, I wouldn't have taken a chance with just partial obedience, NO MATTER WHAT MY NEIGHBOUR SAID!
- EVERY WORD OF GOD IS SURE! (Every word of a parent, etc. is not always sure!) If someone tells you something contrary to the Word of God, stick with the Bible!
- **2 Peter 1:19-21** ¹⁹We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: ²⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. ²¹For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
- **2 Timothy 2:19** Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

- THREE WITNESSES WERE NOT ONLY NECESSARY FOR DEATH, THEY WERE ALSO NECESSARY FOR LIFE!
- Oh, the security that comes with obedience to the Word of God!
- **Why does man need his sin covered by a blood sacrifice anyway? To answer that questions, let's go back even further in history than the Exodus, all the way back to Eden. Here we find THREE STRIKES against Adam and Eve:**
- **1 John 2:15-17** ¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

OUR TEMPTATIONS	WHERE THEY STRIKE	ADAM & EVE (GENESIS 3)	JESUS CHRIST (LUKE 4)
Lust of the flesh	BODY	“the woman saw that the tree was good for food”	“command this stone that it be made bread”
Lust of the eyes	MIND	“and that it was pleasant to the eyes”	“If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine”
Pride of life	SPIRIT	“and a tree to be desired to make one wise”	“If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence”

- There were THREE STRIKES against Adam and Eve, because they failed in every temptation. But Jesus Christ hit a home run every time; He was totally victorious over the same three temptations!
- **PERSONAL SALVATION according to the Bible includes THREE STRIKES against the old man, which reverse the curse brought on us by our disobedience.**

- **1 Corinthians 15:1-4** ¹Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; ²By which also ye are saved (**WE ARE SAVED BY THE GOSPEL – WHAT IS IT?**), if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. ³For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died (**DEATH – STRIKE ONE**) for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴And that he was buried (**BURIAL – STRIKE TWO**), and that he rose again (**RESURRECTION – STRIKE THREE**) the third day according to the scriptures:
- With any of these steps left out, the gospel would have been incomplete and ineffective – THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE IN!

STRIKE ONE – REPENTANCE

- **Repentance happens in my MIND, and it applies the DEATH of Christ to my life. It strikes back against the “lust of the eyes” (the illusion that sin is good).**
- **Galatians 5:24 (NLT)** Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there.
- **Romans 6:6-7 (NLT)** Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.

STRIKE TWO – BAPTISM

- **Baptism happens in my BODY, and it applies the BURIAL of Christ to my life. It strikes back against the “lust of the flesh” (the appetites of the flesh).**
- **Romans 6:4 (JER)** In other words, when we were baptized we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.
- **Colossians 2:12 (LB)** For in baptism you see how your old, evil nature died with him and was buried with him; and then you came up out of death with him into a new life because you trusted the Word of the mighty God who raised Christ from the dead.

- BAPTISM is a funeral for the old man, and a funeral isn't over until there is a burial – REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED!

STRIKE THREE – HOLY GHOST

- **The Holy Ghost happens in my SPIRIT, and it applies the RESURRECTION of Christ to my life. It strikes back against the “pride of life” (our tendency for self-rule).**
- **Romans 8:6-9 (NLT)** ⁶ If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. ⁷ For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸ That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. ⁹ But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them are not Christians at all.)
- **Romans 8:16 (GN)** God's Spirit joins himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children.
- I'm not taking any chances with one or two strikes! I'm not risking my eternity on partial obedience! THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE IN!
- **Acts 2:38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent (**REPENTANCE – STRIKE ONE**), and be baptized (**BAPTISM – STRIKE TWO**) every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (**HOLY GHOST – STRIKE THREE**).
- It's as easy as “1 – 2 – 3” ... **THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE IN!**