

### **THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE OUT! Rom 3:1-20**

Int. Paul backed every man into a corner from which he cannot escape. Panicked Jewish opponents objected. 1) Does a Jew have any advantage (3:1-2)? 2) If God is faithful to his promises, won't he have to save all Jews (3:3-4)? 3) If dark sin makes God's glory brighter, why does he punish it (3:5-8)? The replies show men trying to be bravely optimistic about their standing before God. But Paul said they have three strikes against them.

#### *STRIKE ONE: ALL MEN ARE CONDEMNED RACIALLY 3:9*

That all men are "under sin" means that by divine decree God put every member of the human race into the category of sinners! When Lord Adam and Lady Eve sinned they pulled down deep heaven's condemnation on the whole human race.

All men belong to a condemned race. And that is strike one!

#### *STRIKE TWO: EACH MAN IS CONDEMNED PERSONALLY 3:10-18*

Paul stated his theme in 3:10. No one stands right with God.

The apostle hammered it further in 3:11-12. "No one understands. No one truly seeks God. No one sticks to the road. To a man the race has gone bad. No one habitually does good."

In 3:13-14 Paul pointed out how men sin in word by mentioning the organs of speech, i.e. throat, tongue, lip and mouth.

In 3:14-17 he highlighted sins of violence. Wherever men go they leave behind a trail of distress and ruin and death.

In 3:18 Paul hit the root sin spot on! Eyes direct the feet. To say there is no fear of God before a man's eyes is to say that God plays no role in directing that man's life. Men have conquered their fear of God!

Each man is condemned personally. And that is strike two!

#### *STRIKE THREE: EVERY MAN IS CONDEMNED LEGALLY 3:19-20*

Before the law every mouth is "stopped." "Stopping the mouth" was legal language that described a defendant who had nothing more to say in his defense.

Why? Law can give full and exact knowledge of sin but it cannot help a man obey. All law can do is tell him what to do or not to do and condemn him when he does wrong. It can never forgive or save him!

Having broken even one law, every man is condemned legally. And that is strike three!

Con. In anybody's league, with three strikes a man is out!!