

# 10-Minute Time Outs FOR **You &** **Your Kids**

*Stories, Scriptures, and Prayers You Can Share Together*



**GRACE FOX**

*Author of 10-Minute Time Outs for Moms*

# Strike Out Temper Tantrums

## Read the Clue

Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Your anger can never make things right in God's sight (James 1:19-20).

## Discover the Treasure

"Batter up!" shouted the ump.

Keith marched to home plate swinging his favorite bat. The other team was ahead by one run. With two runners out in the bottom of the ninth inning and no one on base, his team needed a home run. And he was determined to deliver.

The pitcher rubbed the ball, put on his glove, started his windup, and let 'er rip.

"Stee---rike!"

"Strike? Are you kidding me?" said Keith. "That was way outside the plate."

"No back talk," warned the ump.

The pitcher glared at Keith as he wound up and threw the ball a second time. A split second later it whizzed past him.

"Strike TWO!"

Keith moaned. "What's wrong with your eyes?" he said to the ump. "You need glasses!"

"One more comment like that and you're out of the game," said the ump.

Once again the pitcher wound up. The ball streaked across the plate before Keith saw it coming.

"Strike THREE! You're out!"

"You don't know what you're talking about!" yelled Keith. He heaved the bat. It hit the ground with a thud and bounced on the dirt as he stormed off the field.

"Wait a minute," shouted the ump. "Come back here."

Keith retraced his steps, hands on hips. He looked at the ump and cocked his head. "What? I didn't do anything wrong," he snorted. "Am I in trouble?"

"Yeah, you're in trouble—in more ways than one," said the ump. "First, throwing temper tantrums isn't acceptable here or anywhere else. I'm the ump and I make the calls. You can disagree with me but not by yelling. And heaving the bat is never appropriate behavior. That bat might have hit someone and caused serious damage. Sorry, Bud, but you won't be playing the next game in this tournament."

Keith scowled. "But I..." he began.

"Stop," said the ump. He held up his hand to silence the boy. "Your baseball tantrum landed you in trouble with the game, but you're headed for more serious trouble unless you learn to deal with your anger."

Keith fell silent when he heard the ump's words. He'd heard similar warnings—from his dad and his coach. He'd brushed them off before. But this time, they stuck to his conscience. And this time he decided to listen.

Whew! I'm glad Keith decided to pay attention to the wise warning. His angry outburst deserved the ump's discipline. If he continued throwing tantrums in other parts of his life, he would likely fall into

major trouble someday.

Today's clue warns us about anger: "Your anger can never make things right in God's sight." In fact, anger usually makes things all wrong. For instance, what happens if you explode at a younger sibling who enters your room uninvited? What happens if you throw a fit when your folks tell you to do something you don't feel like doing? I promise you one thing—whatever happens, it isn't pretty.

Feeling angry isn't wrong, but if we let it control us and our behavior, it often leads to sin. The Bible says that it gives a foothold to the devil (Ephesians 4:27). God doesn't want His children to suffer the consequences of sin, so He warns us to control our temper. "Be slow to anger," He says (James 1:19).

When you feel angry about something, send God a quick prayer. Say, "God, help! Show me what to do, and keep me from doing something wrong!" He might tell you to walk away from the situation. He might tell you to sit down and cool off for a while. If an idea comes to your mind that will help you not lose your temper, do it. You'll be glad you did.

## Share the Wealth

Dear God, thank You that You can help us control our temper. Please make us quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry (James 1:19). Amen.

When your family members feel angry, how do they act? Talk about ways to handle anger. For example, leaving the room for a few minutes often helps an angry person cool down. It also helps to talk about the reasons for feeling angry. "I feel angry because..."

## Hide a Jewel

Don't sin by letting anger gain control over you (Ephesians 4:26).