

Guarding the Mind, Watching the Tongue

Anger that is not sin, words that are not reckless, and a citizenship that outlasts the republic

SPEAKER	Matt Ryniker
DATE	Sunday, October 5, 2025
PASSAGES	James 3:8-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12; Proverbs 10:19-20; Mark 3:1-5; 1 Samuel 16:7; Romans 3:10-18; Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1-3; Philippians 3:18-20; Daniel 2:44
MESSAGE	Begins at 1:19:32 in the service

THE BIG IDEA

Anger is not a sin and strong words are not automatically a sin — Jesus and Paul used both. But theirs came out of perception we do not have and self-control we rarely practice, which is why the Christian default is a quiet life and a tongue worth hearing.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ♦ Jesus got angry, and Jesus never sinned. Feeling furious does not make you dirty; what you do with it might.
- ♦ Jesus and Paul spoke harshly out of flawless perception, and never reactively — a whip of cords takes time to braid. We speak out of five minutes of Googling.
- ♦ Labels only work if the goal is to attack or widen the distance. If the goal is to win someone, they fail.
- ♦ The base mode is a quiet life, your own affairs, diligent work — then speech that comes out like choice silver. And being a political animal is no sin; where the people hold authority, you are implicated by default.
- ♦ There is no lefty humanity and no righty humanity, only one humanity in Adam — and one prescription, whichever future you expect.

► 1:19:32

This one was preached to a politically mixed room, and Matt said so. We cannot control the country, the news cycle — or, several people agreed out loud, our kids. We can manage our own behavior.

1. It is not a sin to be angry

► 1:20:13

“The Bible doesn’t mandate the disposition of a Precious Moments doll,” Matt said. Three weeks earlier he had used [Matthew 5:22](#) to note how odd it is for America to criticize anybody for harsh language; he came back to correct the impression that being stirred up is itself sin.

The correction runs through Christology. Everything Jesus did, he did as God made man — not divinity on the clock in the morning and humanity on a lunch break. Weeping, eating, sweating, getting angry: all of it the one person, and the single difference is [Hebrews 4:15](#), tempted as we are yet without sin. If Jesus did it, it is not inherently sinful.

► 1:23:28

“Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?’ But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart.”

MARK 3:1–5 ↗

People confess to Matt that their anger makes them feel dirty. Jesus felt it: in [Mark 10:13–15](#) he is indignant when the disciples push the children away.

► 1:25:08

And the detail Matt wanted on the screen: in [John 2:14–15](#), Jesus braids a whip of cords before going into the temple. “This is premeditated.” Whether you want to be bold like Charlie Kirk or to boldly speak to the people who do, the feeling is not contamination.

2. Strong language is allowed. Their perception was not ours.

► 1:26:08

In [Matthew 12:33–34](#) Jesus talks about trees and fruit, then says “you brood of vipers.” You are permitted to make people uncomfortable. “You can’t control the way people respond to you. You answer to your Lord.”

► 1:27:56

How does that square with “you fool” in Matthew 5? Here is the hinge: Jesus’ perception is flawless. Samuel came to anoint a son of Jesse, started at the top of the height chart, and was stopped.

“Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature... For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

1 SAMUEL 16:7 ↗

Jesus never misfired. We assign ourselves godlike perception — *I can just tell he’s being disingenuous* — and follow it with godlike judgment.

► 1:30:14

Paul is no gentler: he wishes the circumcision party would finish the job on themselves (Galatians 5:11–12) and opens with “O foolish Galatians” (Galatians 3:1), the same word as Matthew 5 — but he had been approved by God and entrusted with the gospel. “So I’m basically Paul the Apostle,” Matt said of our posting. “It’s technically fine, but it should be, if our example really is Paul and Jesus, accompanied by deep and perceptive knowledge — not just updated talking points.”

► 1:31:23

His case in point was immigration, and a Mexican church planter in South Texas — a former gang member converted in prison, who would not simplify the wall. Some of the men he ran with needed locking up; he was locked up, and used the second chance. The kid who lands in a gang needs reaching; the frightened abuelita wants more police, not fewer.

Matt wanted both of those minds in one conversation. “Right now our world can’t — we’re not talking, we’re warring.” Which is why he is glad Hope still has all kinds of people in the room: if the world has forgotten how, a church can model it. And to those who stay quiet because the fighting frightens them — silence is not always right.

► 1:35:21

He cautioned against labels in both directions — the slurs he named three weeks ago, the Nazi analogies. “Our labels are effective, but only if our goal is to attack or create more distance.”

3. Their anger was under control

► 1:35:54

Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit, and Jesus never flies off the handle. Hence the whip of cords; hence a letter, which is slow, and which Paul would have rewritten on fresh paper had he gotten it wrong.

“When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver.”

PROVERBS 10:19–20 ↗

Restraint is not permanent silence. The righteous man speaks, and it is silver because it was not rattled off.

▶ 1:36:55

“No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people made in the likeness of God.”

JAMES 3:8–10 ↗

Reacting, labeling, confirmation bias in place of humble inquiry: that is the pattern of the world, and we are told not to be conformed to it but transformed by the renewing of our minds.

4. A base mode of operation

▶ 1:38:02

“Aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands... so that you may walk properly before outsiders.”

1 THESSALONIANS 4:9–12 ↗

“Properly before outsiders” follows from the fact that you no longer belong to yourself. Speak up when you must — but not out of control.

▶ 1:39:32

Esther is the worked example — a political and religious figure who, on learning of Haman’s plot, did not jump in. She asked her people to fast with her for three days first, with lives on the line. Maybe especially because of that.

▶ 1:41:04

None of which is a brake on zeal. “Sometimes I feel like a dragon on the inside and I want to preach the gospel,” Matt admitted. Channel it, and if you are no good at it yet, practice. “If the normies don’t do it, who’s going to do it?” We cannot just heckle — and he was then cheerfully heckled about heckling.

► 1:41:51

Maturity, in [Ephesians 4:14–15](#), is no longer being tossed by every wind of doctrine but speaking the truth in love. The daily talking points are the waves. Establish that you can hold your mouth, pray first, and research deeply.

5. Being a political animal is not a sin

► 1:42:51

Some people are simply into politics, and that some do it in an ugly way is no reason to quit. “We take our marching orders from our Lord, not from the lay of the land.”

► 1:43:51

[Romans 13:1](#) says be subject to the governing authorities, since every authority was instituted by God — and here the authority is we the people, which implicates you by default. [Titus 3:1–3](#) adds the manner: ready for every good work, speaking evil of no one, courteous to all, since we were once foolish ourselves. Avoiding a quarrel is not going quiet; if someone wants a fight, you cannot manage that. You can manage yourself.

6. Loving your country a great deal is not idolatry

► 1:46:21

Evangelicals use “idolatry” loosely, to mean anything you love a lot. You could love America so hard that you would wish yourself cut off from Christ for her sake — not idolatry, but [Paul in Romans 9:3](#). Idolatry is a graven image of Yahweh, serving other gods, or demeaning him to a vending machine. “We shouldn’t be afraid of having hearts full of joy and love and affection for stir fry and kung fu and your fellow man.”

► 1:47:55

He went further, knowing it sounded edgy: God can love a country. [Jonah 4:11](#) — “should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?” Count the cattle in Texas alone.

7. His kingdom endures whether ours does or not

► 1:49:00

Parents instinctively want their nation to last, for the stability of their children and grandchildren, and that instinct is not bad. God's plan is just bigger than a healthy America. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream a stone no human hand cut smashes the statue of the empires:

“And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed... It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.”

DANIEL 2:44 ↗

America is not in that story — Matt said so himself — but the point holds. [Philippians 3:18–20](#) sets enemies of the cross, minds on earthly things, against a citizenship in heaven. Chant USA at a baseball game; he likes baseball and beer. The mixture does not contaminate the higher loyalty — the leper touched Jesus and came away clean.

► 1:52:03

Nor do you lose your background when you belong to Jesus. The throne room in [Revelation 7:9](#) is every tribe and tongue, not one of the Borg — so you may end up beside a 1980s American mullet bro giving glory his way.

► 1:53:02

As for famous people promoting the faith: God can use a [Nebuchadnezzar who lifts his eyes to heaven](#) or a [Darius who decrees that the nations fear the living God](#), and equally a Pharaoh who hates him. [Rejoice as Paul did, whatever the motive](#) — though Matt assumes every politician of every team is manipulating him, while admitting he cannot see a heart.

► 1:54:53

He commended Ralph Winter's essay “The Kingdom Strikes Back” for the trade-off: the empire's endorsement stopped the persecution, and the more Rome was identified with the faith, the harder it got for everyone Rome had abused to convert.

8. One humanity, and one prescription

► 1:55:48

It takes no prophet to see what is wrong with the other party. The trouble is not the fringes or the checkered leaders; it is that pride and laziness let us assume that *they* are the ones with the sin

problem. Outside disease and natural causes, the leading cause of death in the twentieth century was wicked government — a hundred to two hundred million people — displaying impulses our lefties and righties both feel.

► 1:57:34

Matt had been reading an author who split the race into the line of Cain and the line of Abel. That is not what the Bible says. You are in Adam.

“None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside... no one does good, not even one. Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.”

ROMANS 3:10–18 ↗

“You’re thinking about the other team, aren’t you?” he said mid-reading. “Think about your own.” And then, drily: “Hey, that’s strong language, Paul.”

Meanwhile the apostles shake Paul’s hand and say remember the poor, and he answers that it was the very thing he intended to do. One Christian blames inflationary spending; another points to programs that have helped. Matt’s guess about why that fight runs so hot was the sharpest thing he said: “Sometimes we battle really hard when we’re insecure about a conviction of the Spirit for our own inactivity.” We delegated mercy to *them out there*. I voted for a guy who would do that, Lord. You’re welcome.

► 2:02:07

So he closed with four audiences and one set of instructions. Whether you expect the country to go to hell in a handbasket, a renaissance of prosperity, a revival already starting, or a backlash to hide in the closet from: repent and confess your sins to one another, prepare for the Lord’s service, spend less, sell what you do not need, get out of debt, learn to be generous, make room for prayer and obedience, share your faith more boldly, and show more loyalty to your citizenship in heaven. Four futures, one assignment. Our hope is not in dominating America with a Christian message but in the gospel unleashed and the King returning to show us what justice actually is.

FOR FURTHER STUDY**SCRIPTURE IN THIS MESSAGE**

- [Matthew 5:22](#)
- [Hebrews 4:15](#)
- [Mark 3:1–5](#)
- [Mark 10:13–15](#)
- [John 2:14–15](#)
- [Matthew 12:33–34](#)
- [1 Samuel 16:7](#)
- [Galatians 5:11–12](#)
- [Galatians 3:1](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 2:3–4](#)
- [Proverbs 10:19–20](#)
- [James 3:8–10](#)
- [Romans 12:2](#)
- [1 Thessalonians 4:9–12](#)
- [Esther 4:16](#)
- [Ephesians 4:14–15](#)
- [Romans 13:1](#)
- [Titus 3:1–3](#)
- [Romans 9:3](#)
- [Jonah 4:11](#)
- [Daniel 2:44](#)
- [Philippians 3:18–20](#)
- [Revelation 7:9](#)
- [Daniel 4:34](#)
- [Daniel 6:25–26](#)
- [Philippians 1:18](#)
- [Romans 3:10–18](#)
- [Galatians 2:9–10](#)

FOR YOUR HOPE GROUP

1. Matt separated the anger itself from what we do with it. When you are furious about something in the news, where does that anger usually go?
2. Jesus and Paul spoke harshly out of perception we do not have. What would it take for you to know a subject deeply enough to say something hard about it in public?
3. Esther fasted for three days before she spoke to the king, with lives at stake. What would a three-day pause have changed about the last thing you posted or said in anger?
4. Matt suspects we fight hardest where the Spirit has convicted us of our own inactivity — mercy and justice delegated to “them out there.” Where might that be true of you?
5. The same list went to all four futures: repent and confess, spend less, get out of debt, be generous, make room for prayer, share your faith. Which item are you actually taking up this week?

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Matt Ryniker is Hope Chapel's senior pastor — his own description of the job — and reports to the church's governing board, who he cheerfully calls his boss. He and his wife Mandy have been held up from Hope's own pulpit as an example to the congregation. He spent a stretch of his working life as a public school teacher, and he still teaches the parent dedication classes where families commit to raising their children to follow Jesus — a theme that runs straight into this message.

Watch the full message:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0MuwRPX5U&t=4772s>

These notes summarise a message preached at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas. They are a reader's aid, not a transcript — scripture references link to the full passage so you can read it in context.