Sermon Title: Whose Voice Will You Trust?
Series: Seeking God's Kingdom, Part 46
Scripture: 2 Samuel 13 & Psalm 1
Main Takeaway: Let God's Word determine which voices shape the way you live and see the world.

So last week we had an election day…
And no matter where we stand on it…
I bet there's one thing we could agree on…
The political messaging is brutal!

All the spam texts…
The voicemails…
The pamphlets in my mailbox…
The commercials that drag candidates through the mud…

All of it is designed to influence what we think…
And often through fear!
Because, unfortunately, fear is a highly effective motivator…
Especially if it's connected to something we care about.

And so that got me thinking…
How are all these voices shaping us?

How are they shaping what we think…
And influencing the way we act?

Because, just like food…
Whatever we take in…
Affects what comes out.

Like, if I ate a whole pizza…
I'd be tapped out for the rest of the day!
But when I eat my favorite lactose free greek yogurt parfait…
I feel ready to take on whatever the day throws at me.

Again…
What we take in directly affects our ability to function.

And so that brings me to a verse that's stuck with me for a long time…

[SLIDE 1] Romans 12:2 - Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

So in light of all the voices that compete for our attention…
It's important to take a step back and evaluate what we're taking in.

Because if all we take in is garbage…
How will we be able to recognize what God actually desires?

It's like what Jesus said in Mark 4…
Some will hear the word…

[SLIDE 2] Mark 4:19 - but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

This is another verse that's stuck with me for years…

"*Choke* the word"?!

Hebrews 4 says God's Word is alive and active…
It's sharper than any double-edged sword…[1]
So what could possibly hinder the Word?

Jesus said…
The worries of this life…
Our selfish desires…

These are the things that *choke* the fruit God desires to produce in us.

But then add to that the voices calling us to conform to the pattern of this world…
They feed into our worries and desires…

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[1] Hebrews 4:12

And over time…
They start to shape the way we see the world around us.

And so what Paul's saying in Romans 12…
Is that when our perspective of reality is shaped by the world…
It gets harder and harder to see what God actually desires.

That's exactly what I'm seeing in 2 Samuel 13.

I know when we talked about chapter 13 last week…
We mostly focused on Tamar.
But this week I wanted to look at **Jonadab**.

Like Tamar, the only words we hear from Jonadab in the bible…
Are right here in 2 Samuel 13.

Look at verses 3-4…

[SLIDE 3] 2 Samuel 13:3-4 - Now Amnon had an <u>adviser</u> named Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother. Jonadab was <u>a very shrewd man</u>. He asked Amnon, "Why do you, the king's son, look so haggard morning after morning? Won't you tell me?"

I mentioned last week that Jonadab was a friend of Amnon (David's first son)…
The Hebrew behind 'advisor' is the word for *friend…*
But Jonadab also advises Amnon here (hence the translation)…

And as an advisor…
He was known as 'a very shrewd man'...
Meaning **he was crafty in devising schemes**.

He knew what Amnon wanted was wrong…
Yet he still showed him how he could have what was forbidden.

Jonadab fed into Amnon's desire.

He's like…
Just pretend to be sick…
Then ask your dad to have Tamar take care of you.

That was enough to give Amnon the green light.

Jonadab's advice is evil!

As far as I'm concerned…
Jonadab was an accomplice to the crime against Tamar!

He could've advised Amnon to forget it…
He could've even told him to go to the LORD about it…
But instead, he amplified Amnon's temptation.

Jonadab's voice was like putting wind to the flame.

That got me thinking…
Who does Jonadab remind you of?

He's very *shrewd… crafty…* and *deceptive*…

My mind went to Genesis 3…

[SLIDE 4] Genesis 3:1 - Now the serpent was more <u>crafty</u> than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Jonadab is described as being shrewd…
The serpent is crafty…

The Hebrew words behind crafty and shrewd aren't the same…
But their meanings overlap…
They're basically synonyms.

And so, in both cases we've got:
The serpent *and* Jonadab speaking into desires that go against God.

In Genesis 3 and 2 Samuel 13…
We've got a clever voice…
A forbidden desire…
A deceptive suggestion…
And a devastating decision.

That still happens today…
The voices around us are constantly working to shape who we are.

That's why Peter warns us in the New Testament…

[SLIDE 5] 1 Peter 5:8 - Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

I'm not saying Jonadab was Satan.

I'm saying Jonadab's words fed the desires Amnon should've been resisting.

They fanned the flame of evil desire.

But he wasn't the only voice speaking into the situation…
Remember what Tamar said?

We saw the LORD's wisdom in her words.

But Amnon either didn't recognize it…
Or he just didn't care.

He was only focused on following the voice…
That told him what he wanted to hear.

And you know…
This makes me think of when Jesus confronted the religious leaders in John 8…
He said something that reminds me of what we're seeing in Jonadab.

Jesus said…

[SLIDE 6] John 8:44 - "You belong to your father, the devil, and <u>you want to carry out your father's desires</u> … he is a liar and the father of lies."

That's what we're seeing being played out in 2 Samuel 13.

Jonadab's advice was rooted in deception…
And the kind of deception he encouraged…
Reflects the heart of Satan.

Let's keep that in mind as we continue in chapter 13…

So Amnon violated his sister…
King David heard about it and was furious…

But as far as we know…
He didn't do anything about it.

A couple years go by…
And we find out Tamar's brother Absalom was still angry with Amnon.

So Absalom came up with a plan.

During the time of year when sheep were sheared…
Israelites would have a big feast.

I wondered why in the world people had parties to watch their sheep get haircuts — but that's not quite what was happening…

Wool was a valuable resource…
So each year they'd gather to celebrate their wool production…
Just like they would with a successful grain harvest.

So Absalom invited his whole family to come, including David...
But David decided to stay back…
Saying that he and his attendants would be too much of a burden on Absalom.

Still, the goal was to get Amnon to be there.

And so Absalom said to his men…

[SLIDE 7] 2 Samuel 13:28-29 - Absalom ordered his men, "Listen! When Amnon is in high spirits from drinking wine and I say to you, 'Strike Amnon down,' then kill him. Don't be afraid. Haven't I given you this order? Be strong and brave." So Absalom's men did to Amnon what Absalom had ordered. Then all the king's sons got up, mounted their mules and fled.

So now that Amnon's dead…
The scene shifts back to David…

While his sons were on the way back…
David got a false report that all his sons had been killed.

So he's upset…
He's now on the ground, clothes torn…
He mourning his sons…

But then we hear from Jonadab again…

[SLIDE 8] 2 Samuel 13:32-33 - But Jonadab son of Shimeah, David's brother, said, "My lord should not think that they killed all the princes; only Amnon is dead. This has been Absalom's express intention ever since the day Amnon raped his sister Tamar. My lord the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead."

Jonadab was right.

But hold on a second…

How did he know *only* Amnon died?

He wasn't at Absalom's party.

So how could he be so sure?

And did you notice that *he already knew* Absalom's intentions?
He said: Absalom had every intention to kill Amnon…
Ever since Amnon violated Tamar.

That was two years ago.

So how long did Jonadab know?

And if he knew it the whole time…
Why didn't he speak up?
Why didn't he say something to David?

It all seems pretty sus (as the kids say)!

Interestingly…
Some scholars wonder whether or not Jonadab actually helped Absalom…
Like **maybe Jonadab came up with the plan…**
Just like he did for Amnon?

We can't know that for sure…
But either way…

[SLIDE 8A] It was Jonadab's plan that made the first domino fall…
And somehow he knew exactly where the dominos would end up.

This is another awful moment for David…
It's another example of Nathan's prophecy…
The sword would never depart from David's house.

And so, by the end of chapter 13…
David's mourning for days…
His sons were wailing loudly…
Amnon's dead…
And Absalom fled to his grandfather's house…
Well beyond the border of Israel.

And all the while…
Jonadab's standing there…
Emotionless.

At least that's what it seems like…

Jonadab said to David…

[SLIDE 9] 2 Samuel 13:33 - "My lord the king should not be concerned about the report that all the king's sons are dead. Only Amnon is dead."

Oh really?
David shouldn't be concerned?

He could just be saying that David shouldn't take the report seriously.

Either way…
David just lost another son…
And Jonadab's words feed oddly cold to me.

But that's not all he said…

As David's sons neared home…
The watchmen announced their coming…
And…

[SLIDE 9A] 2 Samuel 13:35 - Jonadab said to the king, “See, the king’s sons have come; it has happened just as your servant said.”

Again… to me that feels emotionless.
Regardless, why does Jonadab feel the need to reinforce that he was right?

You know, if we didn’t have Jonadab in the first scene with Amnon…
I might not think anything of this guy.

But because we know how he influenced Amnon in the first scene…
He just seems off to me in the second scene.

Again, we don’t know why Jonadab “helped” Amnon…
We only know it was evil.

And we don’t know how he knew about Amnon’s death…
We only know his voice was trying to gain the attention of the king.

And considering these are his only words in the entire bible…
It reminds me that it’s important to be able to recognize the voices around us…

Deceptive voices are all around…
Competing for our attention…
Feeding into our own desires…

And whatever their purpose…
It’s not good.

So how do we protect ourselves from that?

[SLIDE 10] How can we be intentional about which voices we allow to shape us?

Well, this brings me back to where we started…

Paul told us in Romans 12:2…
Don't conform to the pattern of this world…
But be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

So what does that look like?

Psalm 1 gives us a beautiful picture of that...

Listen to how it begins…

[SLIDE 10A] Psalm 1:1–2 - Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.

It's been a while…
But we've talked about the word "blessed" before…
The Hebrew word is: *ashrê*.

We might think of being blessed as being "happy"…
But *ashrê* is deeper than that.

It's describing someone whose life is genuinely good…
Not because everything is going their way…
But because their life is rooted in the LORD.

There's a deep joy…

There's contentment…

A steadfastness…

It's like the wise man who built his house on the rock instead of the sand…[2]
The storm came…
Yet the house didn't fall…

And, I picture the wise man watching the storm…
Just standing there, steadfast…
Trusting the LORD with whatever comes.

That's what the blessed life looks like.

The blessed life isn't about having control over what happens to us…
It's about trusting the LORD through whatever happens.

And so…
*Blessed is the one who does not **walk in step with** the wicked…*

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[2] Matthew 7:24-27

In other words:
Blessed is the one who does not ***conform to the counsel*** *of a wicked person.*
The opposite example would be Amnon, listening to Jonadab's counsel.

Instead of listening to those voices…
The blessed person **delights** in the **Law** of the LORD…
Meaning: **They value God's instructions.**

And they value God's Word so much that they can't put it down…
They *meditate* on God's Word, *day and night*…
Meaning that they keep returning to it again and again…

Not because it's such a fun read…
They keep coming back to it…
Because they absolutely ***depend*** on the Word of God.

They *need* it to speak truth into their lives…
They *want* God's Word to shape who they are.

And when that happens…
Verse 3 says…

[SLIDE 11] Psalm 1:3 - That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Again, this is a person who's walking in step with the LORD…
They're focused on living according to the desires of the LORD…

And so "whatever they do prospers."

That doesn't mean everything they try will succeed…
This isn't promising health and wealth.

It's saying that **their life is producing the kind of fruit God desires.**

They're 'prosperous' in that way…
Because they're rooted in the LORD and His Word.

But again…
Paul warned us…
He said: ***Do not conform to the pattern of this world.***

Rather than listening to the voices that pull us away from the LORD…
Paul calls us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

He's saying…

[SLIDE 12] Let God's Word determine which voices shape the way we live and see the world.

Because who or what we listen to…
Has a huge influence on our desires, our beliefs, what we say…
And ultimately, our actions.

Again…
Whose voice will we trust?

This reminds me of Ephesians 2…
And I'll wrap up with this…

Paul said…

[SLIDE 13] Ephesians 2:1-2 - As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.

I bring this up as a sober reminder that there is a spirit at work…
Constantly tempting us to follow our own desires…

I'm not saying Satan's whispering in our ear…
He's not omnipresent like God…

But the forces of evil do exist…
They are very real…
And they compete for our attention every day.

And so…

First…

Do we see the *need* for renewing our minds with God's Word?

Second…

Do we recognize the voices that choke the gospel's work in us?

And third…

When the voices of deception are loud…

Will we listen to them?

Or will we recognize them for what they really are…

And **choose to trust the LORD instead?**

Let's Pray