We are members of the Oak Ridge church of Christ. We call ourselves Christians ([**Acts 11:26**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%2011:26)) and we hold to the Bible as our one and only Truth. Church of Christ is a biblical description of Christians who work together for the cause of Christ ([**Ro. 16:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%2016:16)). We are independent assemblies with no organization beyond our own number as described in [**Phil. 1:1**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Philippians%201:1). There are Christians across the world working with local congregations of God’s people such as described in [**Rev. 2**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Revelation%202)**-3**. Christians are members of Christ’s body, which is also known as His Church ([**Acts 2:47**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Acts%202:47)**,**[**Eph. 5:23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%205:23)). Our mission is to stand for God’s truth (the gospel) and teach it to all people ([**Matt. 28:18-20**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Matthew%2028:18-20)**,**[**Romans 1:16**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Romans%201:16)**,**[**1 Tim. 3:15**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=1%20Timothy%203:15)). We are accountable to our one and only Head Jesus Christ ([**Eph. 1:22-23**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Ephesians%201:22-23)**,**[**Col. 1:18**](http://oakridgechurch.lakesonline.com/passage.asp?v=Colossians%201:18)).

**Our Words Matter! [live call in: (865) 215-4337]**

Recently David was approached to preach on how our words matter. Once they explained this request it made more sense - it was because of an encouraging word David had said to another that was shared with them and they were touched so they went out of their way to let me know. David preached the sermon that is the basis for our study tonight! This was a good reminder of just how our words carry weight and the way we talk to/about people (both believers and non-believers) because our words matter.

Our voices are one of the most powerful tools that we have been given by God to influence others and do His will. Everything from how to structure our words to the tone we use makes a difference so we have a responsibility to be mindful of that - regardless if someone may or may not come up to us to give feedback.

You may ask, what about the mute? Well they too still have a voice it's just communicated differently - through sign language or writing. Sometimes non- verbal can be just as, if not more effective (Remember when Jesus looked at Peter after denying Him 3 times?). It communicated a lot... or what about when one of your parents gave you "the look"? You know "the look". You knew when you got that look it was time to straighten up or else.

Or maybe you're someone who is struggling to find your voice? To put yourself out there and make yourself vulnerable may seem like a very intimidating thing as it opens you up to other people's feedback, thoughts on your personal opinion and their judgements. We want to impress on everyone tonight that the only feedback, opinion, and judgement you need to be mindful of is God's. That goes for all of us! Go to Him and His word for guidance and you'll have the comfort of His promises to reassure you.

Moses and Paul struggled with their speech and yet were able to accomplish great things with God’s help.

* Moses (Exodus 4:10-11, Exodus 18:17-19)
* Paul (2 Cor. 11:5-6)
* Peter was the opposite of quiet and bold in Speech (Mathew 16:13-17)

Example of words that matter is in the case of Job

* Job had everything taken from him and yet was disciplined enough not allow Satan's temptation to overtake him by cursing God. He wasn't perfect as he said some things like "I wish I had never been born" but who hasn't said something they didn't mean in a time of great despair?
* Job's friends - We learn that sometimes its better just to keep our mouths shut especially when we don't know the full story. We should give our friends the benefit of the doubt by taking them at face value and sometimes all they really need from us is to hear I love you, I'm there for you, or I'm praying for you. These words can be some of the most comforting.

Our speech before God

Psalms 19:14 (Goal to shoot for - a high bar)

Unfortunate reality is that not everyone is going to be like that and we need to be careful to not allow that corruption to influence the moral standard which God has set forth.

Practice such things as:

* Not take the Lord's name in vain (Exo.21:7), which would include euphemisms. Very common now a days.
* Not to swear an oath but rather let your yes be yes and your no be no (Mt. 5:37, James. 5:12). Many will say I swear to this or that as a point of emphasis but it's clear that God says not to do this. Rather allow your yes to be yes and your no be no. Be someone that people can take at face value and stand behind what you say.
* Taming the tongue is hard and we're going to mess up! [James 3:1-12 (9-10)] – this reminds us that words can build up or tear down.

Relationships (the way we value them will come across in the way we speak about them)

* Children: To Eli right now my words really matter because he is a sponge (when you think he's not listen - oh yes he is), praising and not provoking.
* Spouse: I need to be mindful of how I speak to her (when she's says "it's fine" - is it really??) and am I taking the time to communicate by listening and responding, admitting faults and forgiving, sharing life, praising and appreciating instead of talking behind her back, and loving and not belittling (again, because words carry weight).
* Stranger: Miss judging, genuine/not deception, dismissive of their input and eliminate the thought as I may never see them again because you never know, and giving of my time to talk about God.
* Brotherly love: the ways we show affection, encouraging them to carry on the good work and acknowledge their efforts, humble and not boasting or prideful, respectful and not gossiping, confiding in one another about our struggles, confessing and confronting sin, forgiving, using wisdom, sharing burdens, and asking for prayer.
* Prayer to God: requests, thankfulness, praise, repentance, trust, dependence, and the list goes on.

Our speech should enhance our ways of life and the lives of others (Col. 4:5-6, Luke 14:34).

* When we speaking let it be done out of love (1 Cor. 13:8-13, Ephesians 4:15-16)
* You never know when the things you say may be just what someone needed to hear as I have been on both ends of that and it has made such a difference. It could have been how it was phrased or the way it came across - it has a way to strike sometimes in ways we don't expect. God's word has done that to me countless times.
* God’s word should cut us to the heart. That's the whole point of Him fashioning and perfecting His ways into our life. God's provisions are truly amazing. It reminds us to be ready and prepared so we don't miss out on an opportunity (Proverbs 15:23, 25:11-12).
* Jesus always stressed the spiritual as we should continually look to Him for answers (John 6:63). A lot of time we resist that, which is the way of the flesh and Satan. People turn away because they want to live the way they want to live. Jesus offers you so much more. You must be willing to humbly submit as it's the only way to have Him. So is that you today? Are you willing to submit to the words in which He shared with you and the Son He sent to take your place as He offers you true life?
* Anytime we see God and Jesus rebuke, what was the purpose behind the words? It was to get them to repent. God's word is meant to cut to the heart, convict us, and call for change (Heb. 4:12). He already knows your heart and He's still willing to take you.

**CLOSE:**

God has the last word (Hebrews 1:1-4)

And may we speak and proclaim His excellent name until He comes again. For Jesus is all deserving of that praise and just like how this sermon was inspired by someone sharing with another may we do the same in the hope it gets people talking as we all need to be reminded that our words matter, especially when it comes to salvation.

Christians all agree that much that motivates us in our lives is the Love of our Father in Heaven. I hope this lesson can increase our appreciation for the Love our Father in Heaven has for us!

We invite all in our audience to our Bible studies on Wednesday at 7pm and Sunday morning at 9am. We would love to study God’s together with you! Please check the scriptures we have covered tonight. We want to help you in any way we can. Contact us for Bible studies by telephone, e-mail, or simply come to one of our assemblies. Contact: We assemble at 225 North Purdue Ave. in Oak Ridge at 9am on Sundays and 7pm on Wednesdays; oakridgechurch.com; david.barry@oakridgechurch.com, murray.wade@oakridgechurch.com; (865) 693-1416.

Our next live program is planned for April 1, 2024 when we plan to study “**When Was Saul Saved?**” and we hope to see you next time on **"Speaking The Truth In Love".**