



The above picture is not very clear, but it gives you an idea of the view from our house the previous Friday. Unfortunately, I knew there were people that had a much closer view of the Lakota Point fire, either because it was close to their home, or they were a part of the crews called out to slow it down and stop it. When an unexpected situation happens that you have no control over, such as a fire caused by a lightning strike, what do you do? I immediately began to pray for the safety of people. Even though I didn't want someone to lose their property, I *really* didn't want someone to lose their life in this way. Fire is a dangerous thing that can do unexpected things and can spread quickly.

The same thing can be said about what we say to one another. The things we say, whether good or bad, can spread like wildfire. It can be painful if what is spoken is hurtful or an untruth. But there is another side to it. If what is said is a word spoken in order to reach out to another person, it can be a word of hope, healing and new beginnings; it can be the word that puts out a fire and brings new life. We cannot always control what someone else may say, the same way we cannot control the start of a wildfire. However, we can control how we react to it and how we move forward with that word.

As I've said before, we never find ourselves alone in situations, good or bad. We take with us a Word that is more powerful than any other. The Word of Christ is a word of forgiveness and hope – a Word of healing and new beginnings. As we watch the healing begin on the hillside of the Lakota Point fire, we can also watch the healing that comes in our own lives through the hope of the One who created all.

Let us pray. Lord God, we pray for continued safety during the fire season for those who fight fires and those who find themselves in its path. We also thank you for giving us the Word of hope and forgiveness in Jesus Christ that can bring healing to our lives. Amen