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CEDARCREEKCHURCH

Looking Ahead - Preach Off 2026

February 8, 2026

As we step into Preach Off, you may be asking yourself, "Competitive Preaching: How does this help me grow closer to Jesus?"

It's easy to think of competition as something that divides us or pulls us away from what really matters, but that's not always true. The real challenge is keeping our hearts in the right place, whether we're in the classroom, on the field, at work, or even in church. When we see competition through God's eyes, it becomes less about proving ourselves and more about helping each other grow. We can glorify God by lifting others up and encouraging them to do their best.

Proverbs 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

This verse suggests that relational challenges and mutual striving strengthen character. Competition focused on sharpening our friends invites individuals and teams to bring out the best in each other. When intensity comes from a place of fun, camaraderie, and a desire to share Jesus with the world, it can truly refine our character.

Competition offers us an opportunity to learn and grow in humility, cementing our desire to honor God. Each encounter becomes an opportunity for growth - not just in skill, but in grace, patience, and love. Our aim shifts from "beating" others to building them up, and from winning applause to winning hearts for Christ.

As you look ahead into this week, consider how you can use your gifts to encourage and sharpen those around you. Ask God to help you compete in a way that points others to him, remembering that every challenge is also a chance for transformation.

May your pursuit this week be not just victory, but Christlikeness - so that through friendly rivalry, we all move closer to the character of Jesus.

Discussion Questions:

Ice Breaker: What was your favorite Super Bowl commercial of all time? What made it so memorable?

What makes a church or Group feel like a place where people can truly grow together, not just attend together?

Read Proverbs 27:17: What do you think it means to “sharpen” one another spiritually? Why do you think God values relationships so much in our growth?

In what ways are you currently being encouraged, challenged, or supported in your faith?

Reflect and Respond: Is there an area of your life where you've been trying to grow alone instead of in community? Take a moment to pray and ask God to help you both receive and offer sharpening in love and humility.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, I am so thankful for my church and its mission to do everything short of sin to point people to you. You keep reminding us that there is nothing in this world that doesn't come from you and that can't be used to lead others toward you. This week, I humbly ask you to show me any places in my relationships where I need to be sharpened. I love you, I trust you, and I worship you. Amen.

This post was written by Lori Tuckerman, Director of Content for the Daily LivingItOut.

Small Moments Matter - Preach Off 2026

February 9, 2026

Bible in a Year: Psalm 21-23 | Acts 10

I'm often reminded that faith isn't found in grand gestures or public declarations. Rather, it is shaped by the small moments of our lives.

The other day, I glanced at my phone and saw a message that caught me off guard - a semi-snarky question about a project close to my heart. I was already mentally stuck in the next steps of this project, so that quick text sent my mind spiraling.

Without thinking, I started firing off a reply. But, midway through, I felt a nudge: *“Hold on ... how is this helpful?”*

The way we respond to text messages, decide what we say about someone who isn't present, or act when no one else will ever know are small moments of our lives that can cause us to slip off the path God has for us.

Micah 6:8

No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

This verse is a reminder that God's desire for us is simple, yet transformative. It's not about religious performance or outward appearances, but about the posture of our hearts and the small choices we make each day.

Micah calls us to *do what is right, love mercy, and walk humbly*. He's pointing us toward daily, practical obedience that infuses purpose and integrity into even the smallest actions.

Doing what is right could look like telling the truth when it's uncomfortable or defending someone who is being misrepresented.

Loving mercy might mean choosing grace over criticism, forgiving someone who has hurt you, or reaching out when it would be easier to pull away.

Walking humbly could be as simple as admitting you don't have all the answers, being willing to listen, or quietly serving without recognition.

I believe these small moments are the crossroads where faith becomes real and authentic, not just something we profess, but something we practice.

Today, before you react, decide, or speak, pause for a moment. Ask yourself: Is this the right thing to do? Am I showing mercy? Am I walking humbly?

As we say yes to God in small moments, seeking his will for us rather than our own, we can discover the ways these become the building blocks of a good life that honors him and blesses others.

Questions:

What does “doing right” look like in everyday, unseen moments?

Where is God inviting you to choose mercy over judgment?

How does walking humbly change the way you respond to others?

Next Steps:

Today, before you speak, send, or decide - pause and ask:

- Is this right?
- Is this merciful?
- Is this humble?

Prayer:

Father, thank you for the small moments that shape who we are becoming. Thank you for meeting us there, not just in the big milestones, but in the everyday rhythms of our lives. When we need a nudge in the right direction, help us to notice your presence in those moments. Remind us that every interaction, every decision, every response is an opportunity to walk closely with you. I love you, I trust you, and I worship you. Amen.

This post was written by Lori Tuckerman, Director of Content for the Daily LivingItOut.

Is It Worth The Fight? - Preach Off 2026

February 10, 2026

Bible in a Year: Psalms 24-26 | Acts 11

There's a picture on my wall of a relationship that was once strong. It's an inescapable hurt.

We're supposed to pray for our enemies, but honestly, I've never looked at anyone as my enemy. Sure, there have been those whom I didn't like or care for, but the feeling was, and still is, more unfortunate than hate. I can't help but think about the public feud between hip-hop artists, Nas and Jay-Z. Through separate songs and later collaborations, they told the story of two brothers who never imagined a time when the actions of life could end their bond.

I probably keep the picture on my wall because I never want unfortunate feelings to fester into hate. Admittedly, I have come close to reaching that point, but that one picture reminds me of the person whom I loved enough to

make the best man at my wedding. Although that relationship will never be the same again in this life, I pray that the past gets erased in the eternal.

Proverbs 10:12

Hatred stirs up quarrels, but love makes up for all offenses.

How much hate can a person hold in their heart? A lot, if it goes unchecked. You see it on the news, in social media, and in your personal surroundings. Old hurts build into agitation, scratching at the walls of your heart until they spew out in venomous words and harsh actions. You run out of patience. You keep score because winning matters more than living.

Love keeps you from allowing agitation to scratch away your mental stability. It doesn't mean you forget, ignore, or cover up the wrongdoing. You're not giving power to the abuser. Instead, love offers a way to protect the past relationship. Love shows mercy and grace, which is something God does for the undeserved each day, and that includes you.

Are you tired of looking for reasons to fight?

If you're here today, then something inside of you believes that you are worth more than your mistakes. God doesn't hold you at the single worst moments in your life. No, he loves you through them, allowing you to grow.

The compassion you show your offender lets you move forward and offers them a chance to see how love should be. It's not easy, so start small.

Perhaps it's time to rest your unrest ... to forgive so you can live again.

Questions:

Do you find it difficult to let go of hate? Can you recall a time when someone chose to show you love instead of matching your hate?

Next Steps:

Seek peace and forgiveness by focusing on Scripture ([1 Peter 4:8](#) and [Ephesians 4:32](#)) and praying about the situation. If you can, talk to the person about the hurt you're feeling or vice versa. Bring in an unbiased mediator if possible.

Are you ready to finally find freedom from the hurt, habit, or hang-up you're struggling with? Join us for Celebrate Recovery at the Oregon, West Toledo, or

Whitehouse campuses. Search for recovery Groups for more details, times, and locations.

Prayer:

God, I want to stop keeping score and start healing my heart. I want to love as you have loved me. Please teach me to use my words as a gift rather than a sword. Help me replace bitterness with understanding and reflection. I always want you to guide my head and hold my heart. Amen.

This post was written by Jaron Camp, a Findlay attendee and regular contributor to the Daily LivingItOut.

A New Command- Preach Off 2026

February 11, 2026

Bible in a Year: Psalms 27-29 | Acts 12

I am currently knee-deep into my second semester of college. After attending a Christian school and then being homeschooled for several years, my classes have already left me with many interesting stories. The other English majors live in a vastly different way than I do, and it has been an eye-opening experience to glimpse the world from their perspectives.

This can be difficult when their viewpoints challenge my faith. However, when I feel confused about my role in all of this, I keep reminding myself of the way Jesus loved others while he walked on the earth.

Jesus had a reputation for spending time with people frowned upon by the religious leaders - people who did not live according to the model God set out in the Jewish law. Jesus didn't condone their choices - but that didn't stop him from showing up to their parties, stopping for them in the street, or calling them by name. He met them in the middle of their sin and brokenness and loved them through it.

He instructed his disciples to love people in the same way:

John 13:34

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other."

Jesus said this immediately after Judas left to betray him. Judas was a friend whom Jesus had chosen and loved, even knowing that he would turn on him eventually. Despite the intense suffering Judas' choice would soon cause, Jesus welcomed him into his closest followers.

Jesus calls us to love people in the same way, despite the differences in their lifestyle or the ways they disrespect or hurt us. All of God's children have the potential to become representatives of his love for the world.

This doesn't mean we need to agree with everything someone says. This doesn't mean we should participate in sin. And this certainly doesn't mean we should stay in situations that are harmful or abusive.

However, we can show up and be fully present, rather than distracted. We can choose to listen instead of getting defensive. We can care about the issues others are facing and the victories they are achieving.

This is the kind of love Jesus is inviting us to experience - a love that we receive from him and then have the honor of pouring out for others.

Questions:

Do you have any relationships that are challenging? Who is God encouraging you to love this week?

Next Steps:

Keep on the lookout for people who are different from you throughout your day. Allow yourself to humbly listen to their perspective.

Make space in your schedule for loving others sometime this week. This could mean leaving your phone in a different room to have a focused conversation, asking someone questions about something they are passionate about, offering to finish a task when they are stressed, or simply praying for them.

Prayer:

Father, you love me in a way that I cannot comprehend. Please give me the grace and the compassion I need to love the people you've placed in my life. I can't do this on my own. Continue to pour into me and remind me of your example. I love you. Amen.

This post was written by Lydia Snyder, a South attendee and regular contributor to the Daily LivingItOut.

The “Love” App - Preach Off 2026

February 12, 2026

Bible in a Year: Psalms 30-32 | Acts 13

Seems to me that a useful tool to living out the Christian faith would be an app that provides on-the-spot guidance for all relational situations. For all I know - maybe there is such an app! However, I am going to pretend there isn't - AND - that I'm tasked with developing it.

Ideally the app will let us know when we are being **reactive** and not responsive, when we engage in **scorekeeping**, and when we are resting on **good intentions** instead of actions.

Whew! That's a lot. Thankfully, there is a great resource to find the input that would drive this Love app.

1 Corinthians 13:4–5

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.

These often-quoted verses capture love from every dimension and address how we should be intentional with our actions rather than driven by feelings - in relationships and everyday challenges.

Even though most of us would find it hard to disagree with any of these principles of love, they aren't easy. The first challenge is to respond - *not react*. It's difficult to provide a thoughtful response when we're irritable or not getting our way. This is a good time to pause.

The second obstacle is to not keep score. But how are we supposed to win an argument if we can't bring up past wrongs? When we realize we've hurt someone we love, our nature is to feel remorse and to want to make it right. Love invites us to let go of winning.

Lastly, we need to show our love through action. Far too often, we coast on our

good intentions and hold back on deliberate acts of love, which never produces good results in our relationships or our daily faith walk among our brothers and sisters.

James 2:16 NIV

If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?

Are you always ready to pause and show love to a stranger in need ... even when you are already behind schedule?

As Christ followers, we are called to be imitators of Jesus. Ask him to come into your heart and guide you to thoughtful responses and not instinctive reactions.

Who needs a Love app?

Questions:

When is it most difficult for you to respond with deliberate acts of love - in relationships or with strangers?

When are you most tempted to trust your feelings over Scripture?

Have you been keeping records of those who have wronged you?

Next Steps:

Spend a couple of days journaling when/where you saw an invitation to love and how you responded ... or reacted.

Write down 1-2 actionable things you can do - at home and in public - when you see someone in need.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for being the almighty and all-loving God whom I can always count on. Help me to look inward and see how to best imitate our Lord Jesus at home and in public. I pray that everyone I encounter will see the light of your love shining through me and know it is you. In Jesus' holy name, amen.

This post was written by Nick Thomas, a Findlay attendee and a regular contributor to the Daily LivingItOut.

Enjoy the Gifts - Preach Off 2026

February 13, 2026

Bible in a Year: Psalms 33-35 | Acts 14

After a week of powerful devotions, meaningful conversations, and moments that stirred our hearts, it can be tempting to think that spiritual growth only happens in big, unforgettable moments - the kinds that leave us inspired, emotional, and ready to "do better."

But Ecclesiastes gently reminds us that faith isn't sustained by mountaintop experiences alone. It's lived out in ordinary days.

Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.

Solomon tells us that joy, goodness, and contentment in our daily work are gifts from God. They're not rewards for getting everything right or signs that life is perfect.

This means our adventure with Jesus doesn't pause when we leave a fun weekend of competitive preaching services, or when the schedule returns to normal. It continues in carpools and meetings, in laundry piles, in late nights, in conversations with others, and in quiet prayers.

Preach Off week highlights the beauty of different voices, stories, and perspectives - all pointing us back to the same faithful God. Each message we heard or have read this week reminds us that God meets us right where we are and invites us to follow him right where we live.

So what does that look like now?

It looks like choosing joy in the middle of responsibility, doing good when no one is applauding, and trusting God with both our purpose and our calendar.

Today, I hope you find joy in the journey and peace in knowing that every faithful step matters. The excitement of Preach Off may be over, but the story God is writing in you is still unfolding.

Questions:

Where do you need to choose joy in the middle of your responsibilities?

In what way do you need to receive the gifts God offers you, trusting him with your calendar, and schedule some time to enjoy yourself?

Next Steps:

Each day, pause once - maybe in the morning, at lunch, or before bed - and name three things from your day that were gifts from God.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for meeting us in ordinary moments and faithful routines. Help us see your goodness in the small things, and open our eyes to the ways you are present, even when life feels repetitive or overwhelming. Teach us to choose joy, not because everything is easy, but because you are with us. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

This post was written by Lori Tuckerman, Director of Content for the Daily LivingItOut.

Reflections - Preach Off 2026

February 14, 2026

It's easy to think "church" is something we attend. Same place, same time, same routine each week.

But Scripture reminds us it's so much more than that. It's people walking together, listening for God's voice, and making space for him to move.

That's why our prayer this year matters so much: "God, my answer is "yes." What is your invitation?"

Saying yes to God is about showing up with an open heart and a willingness to follow, even when his direction stretches us.

Psalm 40:8

I take joy in doing your will, my God, for your instructions are written on my heart.

Notice the word joy. Obedience isn't meant to feel heavy. When God's ways are written on our hearts, following him becomes something we want to do, not something we feel forced to do.

When you keep saying yes in small moments, God begins to shape your whole life.

As you reflect today, take a moment to ask: “God, where are you inviting me to say yes today?” Then listen, and take a step in that direction.

Prayer:

God, I want my life to say “yes” to you. Write your ways on my heart, and help me hear your voice. I desire to follow you with joy, so please give me the courage to respond, even when it feels uncomfortable. I trust you with my next step. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.

This post was written by Lori Tuckerman, Director of Content for the Daily LivingItOut.

