

Study Guide: Matthew Lesson 87-Divorce and Remarriage

Sunday AM-October 25, 2026

This study guide reviews the sermon and church service recorded on October 25, 2026, at New Life Family Worship Center (NewLifeBenson). The service featured a special time of congregational prayer led by the church elders, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, personal testimonies, a presentation on Operation Christmas Child, music by the youth praise team, and a lesson on Matthew 5:31–32 focusing on divorce, remarriage, and biblical obedience.

Overview and Key Themes

1. **Spiritual Awakening and Congregational Prayer:** The church elders expressed a deep concern for the spiritual welfare of the congregation, national leadership, and families. Rather than running a routine service, they called for a season of dedicated prayer to seek the tangible presence of God and awaken believers from spiritual slumber.
2. **The Lord's Supper (Communion):** The congregation celebrated Communion to remember the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ. Leaders urged attendees to reflect on the high price paid for their salvation and to turn away from superficial faith ("easy believism").
3. **Personal Testimonies and Community Needs:** Members shared real-life challenges and answers to prayer. Maggie testified how God provided a ride to church and comfort regarding her nephew Ezra in the ICU. Brother Will spoke about moral decline in modern culture, highlighting news from Colorado and Sweden to stress the urgency of spiritual vigilance.
4. **Operation Christmas Child (OCC):** Brittney Crawford presented details on Samaritan's Purse OCC project, encouraging the church to donate items by November 11th and help the youth pack a target of 100 shoe boxes on November 18th to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children globally.
5. **Youth Worship and Scripture Integration:** The New Life Kids Praise Team led songs grounded in key scripture passages:
 - **Acts 17:28a:** Recognizing God's omnipresence in every step and breath.
 - **Ephesians 1:18–19:** Praying for enlightened spiritual eyes to understand the power and inheritance given through Jesus Christ.
 - **Psalms 97 & Philippians 2:9–11:** Exalting the name of Jesus Christ above every other name.
6. **Sermon on Matthew 5:31–32 (Divorce and Remarriage):** Pastor Steve taught Lesson 87 in his series on Matthew. He emphasized that God hates divorce and that

the Pharisees misinterpreted Deuteronomy 24 to excuse self-indulgent separations. Jesus Christ corrected this by teaching that divorcing a spouse for any reason other than sexual immorality causes adultery to multiply.

Short-Answer Quiz

Directions: Read each question carefully and write a concise answer consisting of two to three complete sentences based on the source text. Do not include answers in this section.

1. Why did the church elders alter the standard service schedule to begin with an extended time of congregational prayer?
 2. What details did Maggie share in her testimony regarding her journey to church and her family's medical situation?
 3. What two specific news items did Brother Will mention to illustrate his point that secular culture is winning the battle against the church?
 4. What are the key collection dates and goals outlined by Britney Crawford for the Operation Christmas Child ministry?
 5. What central theological truth does the first youth praise song emphasize, and what verse in Acts supports it?
 6. How does the passage in Ephesians 1:18–19 relate to the message of the second song performed by the children's praise team?
 7. What joke did the pastor tell about oil being discovered on church property before beginning his sermon text?
 8. According to the sermon, how did the Pharisees misuse Deuteronomy 24 to justify their actions regarding divorce?
 9. Why did the pastor state that many modern Christians struggle to experience true spiritual joy and victory?
 10. How did the congregation recognize Pastor Appreciation Month during the service?
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Quiz Answer Key

1. **Answer 1:** The elders felt deeply burdened by the spiritual condition of the church, national leaders, and suffering families. They believed Christians were spiritually asleep and needed a dedicated time of prayer to seek God's presence before proceeding with the rest of the service.
2. **Answer 2:** Maggie explained that her husband was at the hospital and she had to walk to church while feeling anxious about her nephew Ezra, who was in the ICU. Ten minutes before arriving, a neighbor unexpectedly offered her a ride, allowing her to arrive just as the church began praying.
3. **Answer 3:** Brother Will cited a tragic incident in Colorado where a 16-year-old boy from a fatherless home shot three children and a teacher. He also noted a Swedish law permitting the euthanasia of children born with serious diseases to argue that culture is overwhelming biblical values.
4. **Answer 4:** Donations for the shoeboxes must be brought to the church foyer by November 11th. The New Life Kids plan to pack a target goal of 100 boxes on November 18th, with final church collection occurring on November 19th.
5. **Answer 5:** The first song stresses that God is actively present in every motion, step, and breath a believer takes throughout daily life. This concept of divine omnipresence is explicitly rooted in Acts 17:28a, which states that in Him we live and move and exist.
6. **Answer 6:** In Ephesians 1:18–19, the Apostle Paul prays for believers to have the eyes of their heart enlightened to know God's power and hope. The second song uses this scripture as a direct prayer asking God to open spiritual eyes so the church can see His glory.
7. **Answer 7:** The pastor joked that after oil was found on church land, Elder Van Ward moved to divide the money among current members and close church membership to newcomers. He used this lighthearted story to transition the congregation while the praise team was getting set up.
8. **Answer 8:** The pastor noted that Pharisees believed giving a written certificate of divorce made them legalistic and righteous, allowing them to end marriages for trivial reasons. Jesus Christ exposed this error by showing that divorcing without biblically valid grounds causes a cycle of adultery.
9. **Answer 9:** The pastor explained that many believers cannot rejoice because they lack daily victory and remain in bondage to the surrounding world. This worldly compromise creates a barrier that prevents Christians from maintaining close obedience and fellowship with Jesus Christ.
10. **Answer 10:** The church showed a humorous video from The Skit Guys that compared pastors to bacon and bacon bits because they make life savory. The

video closed by thanking pastors for shepherding their congregations and jokingly offering a free year of bacon bits.

Essay Questions

Directions: Answer the following essay prompts in detail using the information provided in the text. Answers are not provided.

1. **Analysis of Church Leadership and Revival:** Analyze how the elders defined spiritual sleeping versus true revival. Discuss the steps they took to lead the congregation into a season of prayer and Communion, and explain why they warned against "easy believism."
 2. **Biblical Exegesis of Matthew 5:31–32:** Examine Pastor Steve's teaching on divorce and remarriage. Compare the Pharisaical interpretation of Deuteronomy 24 with the clear instruction given by Jesus Christ regarding marriage, certificates of divorce, and adultery.
 3. **Scriptural Integration in Worship:** Explain how the youth praise team used Acts 17:28a, Ephesians 1:18–19, Psalm 97, and Philippians 2:9–11 to construct their worship set. How do these scriptures collectively present the character, power, and exaltation of God?
 4. **Cultural Engagement and Christian Responsibility:** Discuss the societal concerns raised by church members, including family fatherlessness, moral decay, and global evangelism. How do ministries like Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child aim to address these issues?
 5. **The Relationship Between Sin, Bondage, and Christian Joy:** Explore the sermon's argument regarding why Christians often fail to experience spiritual victory. How does worldly influence lead to spiritual bondage, and what remedy does the sermon prescribe?
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Comprehensive Glossary

Term	Definition
Adultery	The sin of marital unfaithfulness; as taught by Jesus Christ in Matthew 5:32, divorcing a spouse for reasons other than sexual immorality causes parties involved to commit this sin upon remarriage.

Certificate of Divorce	A legal paper issued under Deuteronomy 24 that the Pharisees used to justify ending marriages for any reason while falsely claiming personal righteousness.
Easy Believism	A superficial claim of Christian faith that lacks true repentance, biblical obedience, or life transformation under the lordship of Jesus Christ.
Elders	Spiritual leaders in the local church tasked with shepherding the congregation, offering prayer support, and overseeing spiritual welfare.
Exaltation	The act of highly elevating, praising, and honoring God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, above all earthly powers and titles (Philippians 2:9–11).
Lord's Supper (Communion)	A church ordinance commemorating the broken body and shed blood of Jesus Christ during His last Passover meal with His disciples.
Omnipresence	The attribute of God being continuously present and active in all details, steps, and moments of a believer's life (Acts 17:28a).
Operation Christmas Child (OCC)	A global evangelical project organized by Samaritan's Purse that collects gift-filled shoeboxes to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with children worldwide.
Sermon on the Mount	The extended teaching discourse delivered by Jesus Christ in Matthew 5–7 addressing Kingdom righteousness, heart motives, and God's moral law.

Greek Language Analysis

The provided source transcript relies entirely on English translations and standard biblical text references (e.g., "sexual immorality" in Matthew 5:32, "live and move and exist" in Acts 17:28a, and "exalted" in Philippians 2:9). No explicit Greek words or transliterated Greek terms (such as *porneia*, *agape*, or *koinonia*) appear directly in the provided text.^[^1]

[^1]: Verified against the transcript of the video sermon "Sermon on the Mount - 'Divorce and Remarriage'-Lesson Number 87 - 10/25/2026" from the NewLifeBenson channel.