



## WHY NCFE MATTERS

(MINISTRY VISION FOR 2023)

One of the easiest ways to tell if a husband genuinely values his wife is to listen to how he speaks of her; how he describes her; how he portrays her when he talks about her. Along those same lines, there is something very special about the way God talks about His people, the Church. In the Bible, God uses all kinds of poetic and picturesque metaphors to help us see the great passion He has for His Church as well as the glorious purpose He has for His Church. Now every year around this time, on the Sunday when NCFE votes to approve our annual fiscal budget and new elders to our elder leadership board, I teach a reminder of what it means for NCFE to be a church within the Church. Today is that day. We're going to look at some of God's metaphors to be reminded why this church matters to God, why it matters to you and your family, and why NCFE matters to the broader community that the Holy Spirit has placed us in. Bottom line ...

*God wants NCFE to evangelize those who don't know Jesus to come to faith in Christ, and to disciple those who do know Jesus to grow in faithfulness to Christ.*

## WHO NCFE IS

1. (Matthew 12:49-50)
2. (Revelation 21:9)
3. (Romans 12:5)
4. (Hebrews 3:6)
5. (1 Corinthians 3:16)
6. (1 Peter 2:5)
7. (John 10:14-30)
8. (Ephesians 6:11-18)
9. (Matthew 5:14)

10. (Matthew 5:13)
11. (Ephesians 2:10)
12. (1 Timothy 3:15)

## WHY NCFE IS NEEDED

1. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)
2. (2 Peter 3:3; 1 Timothy 4:1)
3. (Acts 2:17, 20-21)

## WHAT NCFE HAS TO DO NOW

1. (John 13:35)
2. (James 5:16)
3. (1 Peter 4:10)
4. (Malachi 3:10)
5. (Matthew 16:18)

## FOR THOUGHT & TALK

Take no more than 5 minutes to quickly review the main points from Pastor John's message. As you discuss the questions, don't expect to answer all of them. Just discuss the ones your group would most like to explore together. Remember, the goal of your small group is to grow together relationally, to **apply** God's Word to our daily living, and to pray for one another and our church.

1. Pastor John's message was built around the three connecting concepts of ... (1) Realizing **who** God says NCFE is; (2) Realizing **the times** in which we're living; (3) Realizing what God has in mind for NCFE **to do** in light of who God says we are and the times in which we're living. As you listened to today's teaching, what most stood out to you personally. In other words, what did you hear the Holy Spirit saying from the Word about the church and each Christian's role in it? Did the message raise any questions that you'd like to discuss with the group?
2. Wow, PJ shared 12 (count 'em, 12! 😊) metaphors that God Himself came up with to help us picture what Jesus wants His Church (our church included) to be all about. How have you experienced the church in the ways these metaphors picture? For example, how have you experienced the church as a *family*, or as a *flock*, or as a *body*, or as a *lamp post*, or as a *soldier*, etc.?
3. The time period in which we're living is clearly depicted in the Bible as *last times*, *lost times*, and *loved* (by God) *times*. If we only focus on the last and lost parts, what is that going to do to our outlook on life for ourselves, our kids, and our grandkids? But what is the opposite affect if we ignore those parts? Why then it is so important that we never lose sight of the fact that God also tells us these are "loved times?" In other words, that His love for humanity and desire to save people is as strong as ever!
4. PJ wrapped up by teaching five commitments God is asking the people of NCFE to make? Do you understand the commitments? Do you see why they matter to NCFE's viability today and NCFE's impact on tomorrow? Are there some areas where you know the Holy Spirit is asking you to ... *Forsake* and *Focus*?
5. Where are you going to put the magnet? :-)