

PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**AN ASSIGNMENT
FOR SESSION 3 ESSAY**

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SESSION - 3

THE ESSENCE OF PENTECOSTAL DISCIPLESHIP

The Essence of Pentecostal Discipleship is following on our Lord Jesus Christ's very first words ever to His disciples were, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). Defining Discipleship the reason you, as a believer are on earth is that you might carry out the plan of Jesus Christ and it was with this understanding that you were called to follow Christ as His "disciple" as per the above verse. The word "disciple" has been used in various ways. Sometimes it is used to mean a "pupil, a learner, or an adherent" that is, one whose life or thinking is patterned after or significantly affected by another person. This is the Latin definition from which we get the English spelling. However, to make it even more confusing, our English spelling is Latin in origin, but the meaning is derived from the Greek language. The Greek word, translated "disciple," is used over 200 times in the first five books of the New Testament. It is the use of this word, as it was used by Jesus, which gives us the basis of our definition, however, it takes in depth study to develop an adequate understanding of what a "disciple". The meaning of 'disciple' is so profound that a failure to comprehend and apply it will mean that you will not be able to be used by God in His fullest desire for your life. Discipleship has to do with sharing Jesus Christ's life with the unsaved. Often, when we hear the word "discipleship" we think of things like (1) Spiritual growth, (2) discipline, or (3) our own daily work with Christ. All of this, of course, is a part of discipleship, but the New Testament concept is much, much more than just this. There is one thing you can do here on earth that you cannot do in heaven. Jesus spent a great deal of time training His followers how to be "His Disciples" He taught them how to bring people to "New Life" in Christ Jesus. Christ's promise was, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit had come upon you; and you will be My witnesses." "Discipleship" is, without doubt, Jesus' highest priority for every believer and a study on discipleship is the most singularly critical and important teaching that can be imagined. God help us

to earnestly pray that he will open our eyes to the truth of His Word concerning these matters. Satan will do everything within his power to keep you away from applying these principles to your life. But you must determine to stand firm for Christ. God wants to use you in His magnificent, divine mission to reach “your world” with His glory and power. To start with this let’s look at the word “disciple” to see just what it means.

Discipleship or Christian formation is a critical facet of the missional work of Pentecostals and Charismatics in the world. Yet it remains for the movement to approach its discipling task with sufficient intentionality and theological integrity.¹

The call to the spirit filled life is also fundamentally a call to a covenant community of the spirit. Participation in the relationships, experiences and disciplines of the spirit filled community, prayer, praise, fellowship, searching the scriptures, communion, foot-washing, witness and so on is essential to personal spirituality. Consequently, communal experience of the spirit is the primary context for development of personal life in the spirit.²

Scripture holds a special place and function in the Pentecostal world view. Pentecostals differ from evangelicals and fundamentalists in approach to the Bible. For Pentecostals the Bible is a living book in which the Holy Spirit is always active. It is the Word of God, and therefore to encounter the scriptures is to encounter God.³ This is the essence of Pentecostal Discipleship.

¹ James P.Bowers – A Wesleyan – Pentecostal Approach to Christian Formation Pg1

² James P.Bowers – A Wesleyan – Pentecostal Approach to Christian Formation Pg1

³ Jackie David Johns - Pentecostalism and the Postmodern Worldview Pg90