

50-03-01-Empowered for Worship

Pentecost, Holy Spirit, worship, praise, loving God

Phil 3:3

The Holy Spirit welcomes us into the Trinity's eternal love affair.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

–**Phil 3:3**, *For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh—*

–[When Isaiah trembled in God's awesome presence (Isa 6:1ff), only fire from off the altar (symbolizing the Holy Spirit) could transform and enable him to participate with the worshiping seraphs, who were burning in their love for God.]

–[**AHD defines the verb worship** in two ways: *v. tr.* 1. To honor and love as a deity. 2. To regard with ardent or adoring esteem or devotion. *v. intr.* 1. To participate in religious rites of worship. 2. To perform an act of worship.] [**French word** for worship is *adorer*. “*Je t'adore*” means “*I adore you . . . I love you supremely*” — this is how we are to love God—how we are to worship God.]

–**Title**: *How does the Holy Spirit empower our worship of God?*

–*Jehovah*, the triune God, is Love, and they (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) have the most intimate, loving relationship in the universe! One dimension of the empowerment of Pentecost is that **HOM.idea**.

### **I. Other Loves Are the Biggest Obstacle to True Worship**

- A. God puts His relationship with His people in marital terms— Jer 3:8, I gave faithless Israel her certificate of divorce and sent her away because of all her adulteries. Yet I saw that her unfaithful sister Judah had no fear; she also went out and committed adultery. [**marital infidelity** can lead to *divorce*.]
- B. Jesus also drew the line in Luke 16:13, “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” [In **my bivocational job** of nursing and pastoring, I must have only one Master: Jesus.]
- C. 1 John 2:15, Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the **love of the Father is not in him**. The human heart was not made for loves that compete with the love we owe to God.

**TRANS**: Our love for God must fill up our heart's whole territory.

[There's an **oft repeated line in “westerns”**: “*This town ain't big enough for both of us!*”]. If our love for God isn't big enough to fill up the whole town—the whole of our lives—we need Holy Spirit empowerment. The temporary loves in this life are very human, but the worshipful adoration we owe to our Maker must be **powered by love from the Triune Godhead**.

## II. Human Love Is Limited in Worshipping God

- A. Outward acts of worship alone (*circumcision*) fail to bring us into a proper love-relationship with God (The context of Phil 3:3 is the contrast between *fleshly* and *spiritual* worship.)
1. True “circumcision,” explains Paul, is a *spiritual one*— Rom 2:29a (Amp.), But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and [true] circumcision is of the heart, a spiritual and not a literal [matter]...
  2. True Christians don’t rely on outward acts of worship— Phil 3:3, *For it is we who are the circumcision ... and who put no confidence in the flesh* [Some do put trust in baptism, church attendance, offerings, volunteer work, etc., to get themselves on God’s good side, but these are worthless forms of worship if a real relationship with God is missing!]
- B. Experiencing a truly worshipful relationship with God comes only through the Holy Spirit— v.3b, “*we who worship by the Spirit of God.*”
1. [R.A. Torrey, in *What the Bible Teaches*, says, “To worship aright we must ‘*have no confidence in the flesh,*’ we must recognize the utter inability of the flesh—i.e., our natural self—to worship acceptably. We must realize also the danger there is that the self may intrude into our worship. In utter self-distrust and self-abnegation we must cast ourselves upon the Holy Spirit to lead us aright in our worship.”] The *divine love within the Trinity* is called “agape love” in the NT. It’s our Creator’s kind of love.
  2. This divine Trinitarian love is freely ours— Rom 5:5, God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

TRANS: How *awesome* this is! Not a love *similar to God’s*, BUT truly God’s kind of love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. *Does this mean we have as much divine love as God does?* NO! [In a bucket of sand, you don’t get the *whole beach*; in a bucket of salt water you don’t get the *whole ocean*. BUT it’s the *same sand* as on the beach and the *same water* as in the ocean!] So, why does God want to empower us with this divine kind of love?...

## III. Our Spirit-filled Worship Is Important to God

- A. Jesus told the woman at the well how to get “*living water,*” but when He mentioned her problems with personal sin, she attempted to side-track Him with a discussion about the right way to worship....
- B. Jesus told her the truth— John 4:23-24 [the Gk. en can be *by* or *through*] Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in [*by* or *through*] spirit and truth, **for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks**. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in [*by*] spirit and in [*through*] truth.”

1. God is *Spirit* and we are spirits—*spirit beings*. *Mere outward worship* is unacceptable, especially when He’s made Himself available through the Holy Spirit to *enable our worship*.
2. God is seeking for Spirit-enabled, Spirit-empowered *worshippers* (John 4:34b), for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. That’s why His Holy Spirit wants to welcome us into the Trinity’s eternal love affair.... It’s the only way to be empowered for truly *spiritual worship*.

### CONCLUSION:

–Do we like appreciation? Do we like *hearing it from those we love?* Does it make us *happy?* Do we get *blessed?* This is how God feels! We have these emotions because we’re created in the image of a God Who has these emotions. Yet, He experiences such feelings infinitely more deeply than we can know!

–[There’s a worship song we sometimes sing at camp: “Come bless the Lord”]. We come together for worship to bless the Lord, because He loves us and blesses us. However, we can’t love Him back fully, until He fills us with His own kind of love—Trinitarian love. That *love* is like a divine glue that binds the Trinity together, and it’s the glue that binds us to our Triune Creator. That *divine love* transforms us into those who worship by the Spirit of God, having *no confidence* in our own selves or in our outward acts, but trusting Him to empower us for worship. Let’s pray for that Holy Spirit empowerment!