

# YOU

Bible Study

**Sermon Series: Essentials of Christianity**

**To be used with:** The Nature of God

**Sermon Title Possibilities:** The Characteristics  
of the Trinity

**Scripture:** Mark 1:9-12

**Connection with Unit Theme:** To complement the small group session “The Nature of God,” this sermon will explore the characteristics of the Trinity. While the finite mind of man is unable to fully grasp the Trinity, we can learn about God’s nature in a study of the Trinity.

**Introduction:** If you study the characteristics of someone or something, you are actually studying that person or thing. If you say that something is rigid and long, you learn more about that object. If you say that someone is kind and compassionate, you are learning more about the nature of the person you are studying. This sermon is going to look at a familiar passage in which all three members of the Trinity are present. The goal is to look at the characteristics on display in order to learn more about God’s nature.

## **1. God’s Trinity lives in obedience (v. 9)**

To obey means to reside in submissive compliance. When someone obeys another, he puts the will of the other ahead of self. This is embodied and lived out within the Trinity. Jesus gives evidence to this in His baptism. In Matthew’s account John the Baptist acknowledges that he should be the one being baptized and yet Jesus is living in obedience to God the Father.

This is not the only account of Jesus being obedient. Paul told the church at Philippi that Jesus “humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross” (2:8). Obedience to the will of God the Father was not a one-time event at the baptism of Jesus. Instead, it characterizes the nature of God.

If someone claims to follow the teachings found in the Bible, then this person should seek to live in obedience to God in a similar manner as Jesus did. This can mean that someone in the congregation needs to live in submissive compliance and follow through with believer’s baptism. It can also mean that someone needs to repent of a sin that he or she knows is against God’s plan and will. The Trinity lives in obedience and we would be wise to follow this pattern.

## **2. God’s Trinity expresses love (v. 11)**

The word love has various meanings in today’s culture. We tell a family member that we love them enough to die for them. When can also say that we would love a good, juicy steak. While we are using the same word, they have completely

different meanings. The love that is the very nature of God and expressed within this passage is not a love of desire or even a brotherly love. Instead, it is a love of self-sacrifice. It is the kind of love that is shared between a husband and wife or between a parent and child. It is the greatest form of love and the Trinity is the greatest example of self-sacrificing love.

The only way that we can display this kind of love in our lives is to accept the sacrificial love Jesus offers on the cross. Jesus told His disciples, “No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). The Trinity lives in a perfect loving relationship. This is God’s nature. The Father expressed this love to the Son in this passage. The Son expresses this love to mankind in the cross.

### **3. God’s Trinity is never isolated (v. 10 & 12)**

The Spirit of God is present at a time of celebration when Jesus is baptized. He descends upon Christ in the form of a dove and the Father expresses His pleasure. This moment marked the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry.

The Spirit of God is also present and leading the Son into a time of great temptation. Jesus is heading into the wilderness for a period of 40 days. He was to be tempted by Satan himself in every way that we might be tempted today. It was the Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness. The phrasing used here shows that the Spirit was with Jesus every step of the way.

Given the fact that it is God’s very nature to not live-in isolation, His children can rest in the fact that we will never experience isolation either. We learn from Deuteronomy 31:6 that God will go with us and He will never leave nor abandon us. He is with us in the good times as well as the trying times.

**Conclusion:** It is not possible for man’s finite mind to fully grasp the infinite nature of God. Man, however, can study the characteristics of the Godhead as found in Scripture and begin to understand His nature.

One of the greatest characteristics is that God fully expresses sacrificial love. The Father expressed this in the passage we are studying today. The Son expressed this to mankind on the cross. This love endured all circumstances then and sustains us now. If you personally know this love, thank God for this gift today. If you do not know this love, let today be the day you accept His sacrificial gift.

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