

# What Do You Think?

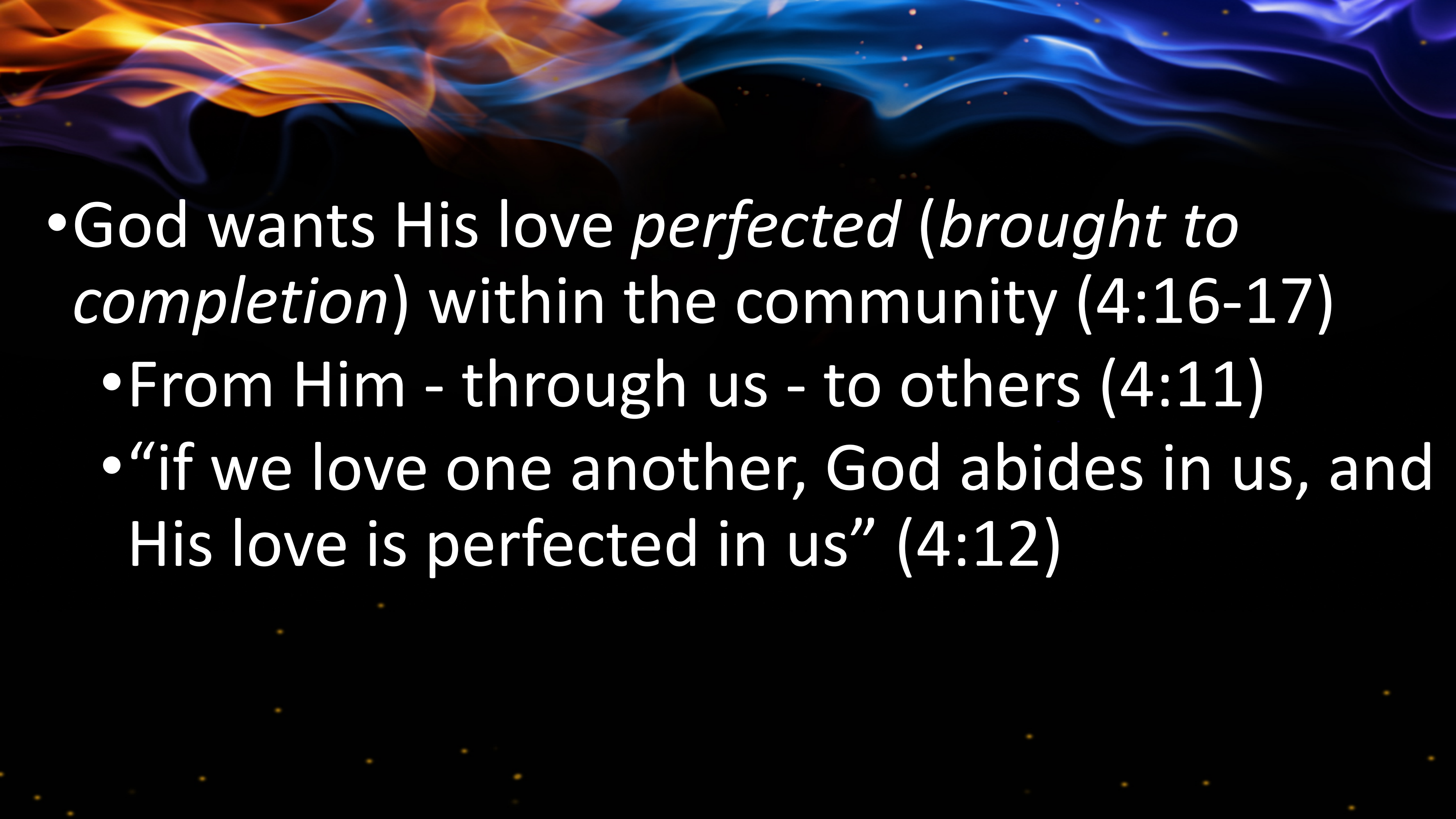
**“A community is only a community when the majority of its members are making the transition from ‘the community for myself’ to ‘myself for the community.’”**

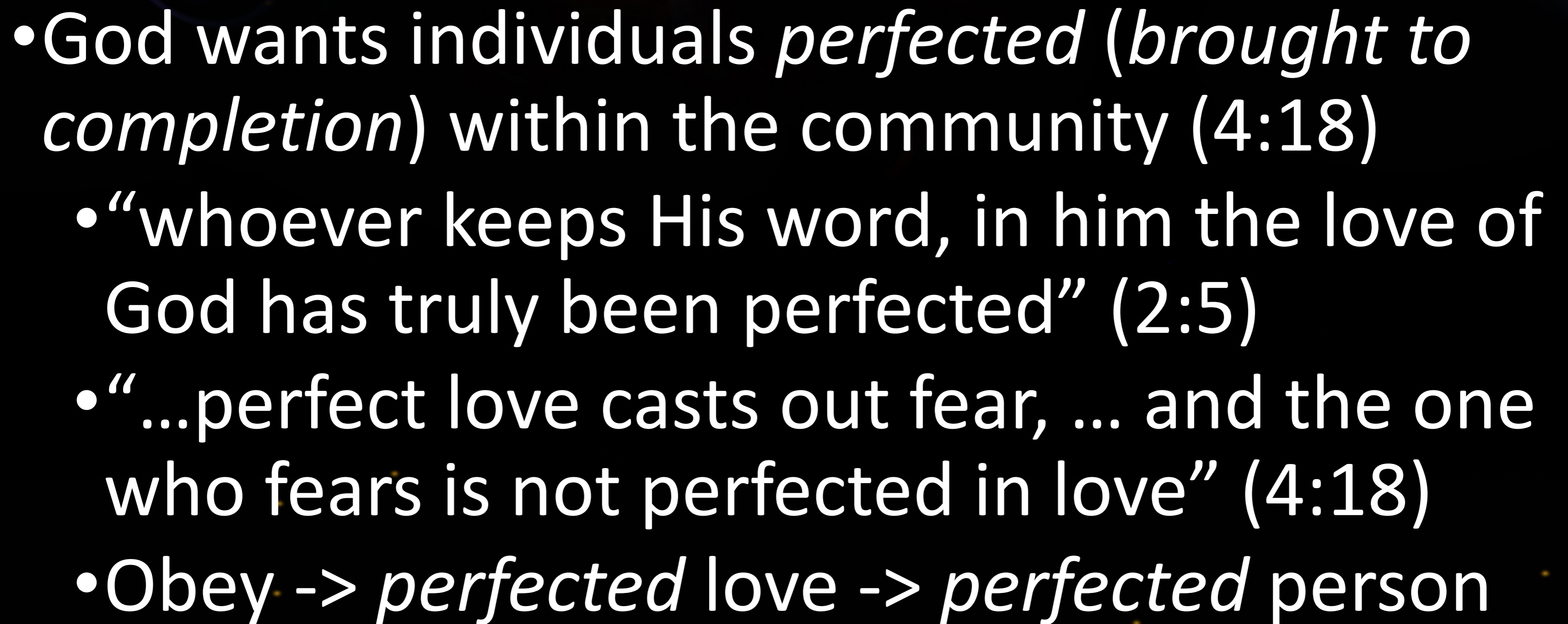
**(Jean Vanier)**



# *Eternal Life*

A Study of 1 John

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- God wants His love *perfected (brought to completion)* within the community (4:16-17)
    - From Him - through us - to others (4:11)
    - “if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us” (4:12)

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- God wants individuals *perfected (brought to completion)* within the community (4:18)
    - “whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected” (2:5)
    - “...perfect love casts out fear, ... and the one who fears is not perfected in love” (4:18)
  - Obey -> *perfected* love -> *perfected* person

- Doctrinal (*believe/faith*); Ethical (*observe/keep*); Social (*love*)

*ETHICAL*

*SOCIAL*

*DOCTRINAL*

# 1 John 4:19-5:4

- *Loving in Community*

1. Why We Love (4:19)
2. Who We Are to Love (4:20-5:1)
3. How We Know We Love (5:2-3)

# 1. Why We Love

- “We love, because He first loved us”
  - The reason we love anyone at all (besides ourselves) is because God loved us first
    - He demonstrated it to us (Rom. 5:8)
    - He manifested it in us (4:9-10)
    - He modeled it for us (3:16)
  - “if God so loved us...” (4:11)

## 2. Who We Are to Love

- We are to love God and His children
  - These are inseparable!
    - It is a lie to say you love God while hating His children (4:20)
      - *Hating = not actively loving* (no neutral, no indifference; no *tolerating*)



## 2. Who We Are to Love

- Why is this *lying*?

1. Loving one who is seen vs. not seen?

- a. Argument from the lesser to the greater

- It is easier to love people than God

- b. One offers tangible proof of the other

- It is easy to *say* you love God, but loving brothers *shows* it (3:18-19; cf. James 2:14)

## 2. Who We Are to Love

- Why is this *lying*?

2. It is commanded

- Deut. 6:4-5 & Lev. 19:18 -> Mark 12:30-31; John 13:34; 15:12, 17
- Not keeping His commandments means we are not loving God (5:3; cf. John 14:21, 24)
- *Saying it vs. living it*

## 2. Who We Are to Love

- Who is my brother? (cf. Luke 10:29)
  - “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” (5:1a)
    - A *brother* is anyone who agrees with the apostolic truth: Who *Jesus* is; what *Christ* means (cf. 2:23-24; 4:1-3)
    - Evidence of birth: believing sound doctrine

## 2. Who We Are to Love

- Who is my brother? (cf. Luke 10:29)
  - “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is **born of God**, and whoever loves the [**One having given birth**] loves the [**one having been born**] of Him.” (5:1)
    - If you really love your Father you will love His other children as well

## 2. Who We Are to Love

- Characteristics of being *born of God*:
  - Practice righteousness (2:29)
  - Do not practice sin (3:9)
  - Love (4:7)
  - Believe that Jesus is the Christ (5:1)
  - Overcome the world (5:4)
  - Do not *sin*\* (5:18)

### 3. How We Know We Love

- It is possible to help people without actually loving them (Matt. 6:1-6; 1 Cor. 13:3)
- It is possible to give without actually loving (cf. Luke 6:27-36)
- How do we know if we are really loving our brothers or not?

### 3. How We Know We Love

- “By this we **know** that we love the children of God...”

### 3. How We Know We Love

- “By this we **know** that we love the children of God, *whenever we love God and **actually do** His commandments* (cf. James 2:8-17)
  - *Observe – **to do*** (see 2:17; 3:22)
    - God wills for us to do what is pleasing to Him, and His commands express His will
  - How is that related to loving God and others?



### 3. How We Know We Love

- “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments” (5:3)
  - “but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me” (John 14:31)
- Selfless obedience demonstrates our love for God, with our brothers as the objects (5:2; cf. 4:20)

### 3. How We Know We Love

- “and His commandments are not **burdensome**”
  - *Burdensome* = heavy, weighty -> oppressive
  - Love is not oppressive! (cf. Gal. 5:13-15)
    - God’s commands teach us how to love
    - Don’t miss the forest for all the trees (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42)
    - The point is to love!

## Summary

- God, who is love (4:8), loves us and wants us to love as He does (4:10-11)
- God's commands teach us how to love like He loves (cf. Rom. 13:8-10)
- As we obey we are *perfected in love* (4:18)
- The objects of that love are the brothers (4:20)
- Thus, God's love is *brought to completion* (4:17)

## So What?

- Do you really love those around you?
  - According to God's will/pleasure/commands?
  - We need to know what God expects, and then choose to do it
- Loving God requires community
  - Loving God finds its fullest expression in community (4:12)