

Christian World View

Revelation

EROS vs. AGAPÉ

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the definition: **EROS** = “love”

from Greek philosophy

the love that desires to possess

heavenly **EROS** → the world above
the upward attraction of the soul

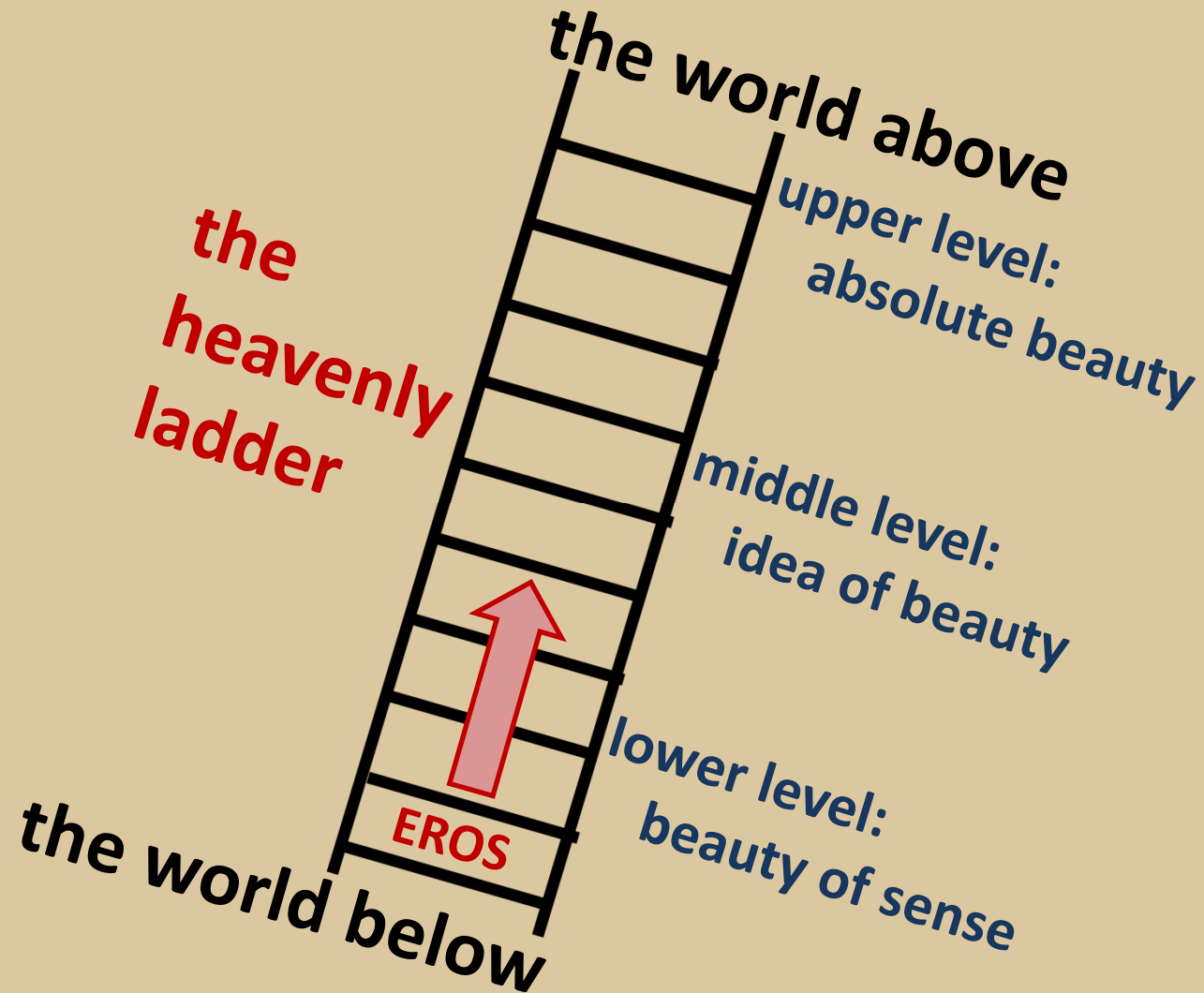
earthly **EROS** → the world below
the worldly attraction of the senses

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the distinctions: heavenly **EROS**
the love that desires to possess

- ① **acquisitive love** → the desire to acquire · to possess
longing and striving to obtain the valued object
- ② **ego-centric love** → to obtain for self
self-centered · self-seeking · self-satisfying
- ③ **religious love** → the human way to the divine
man → the starting point for man is human need ·
the final goal is satisfaction of human need
god → has no need to love · possess all that is wished ·
needs no fellowship with man

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**



Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the definition: **AGAPÉ** = “love”

from the Bible

the love that freely gives

AGAPÉ existed in Greek literature · rarely used · given its meaning in the Bible

AGAPÉ confronted the ERŌS view of love
· ERŌS never appears in the Bible

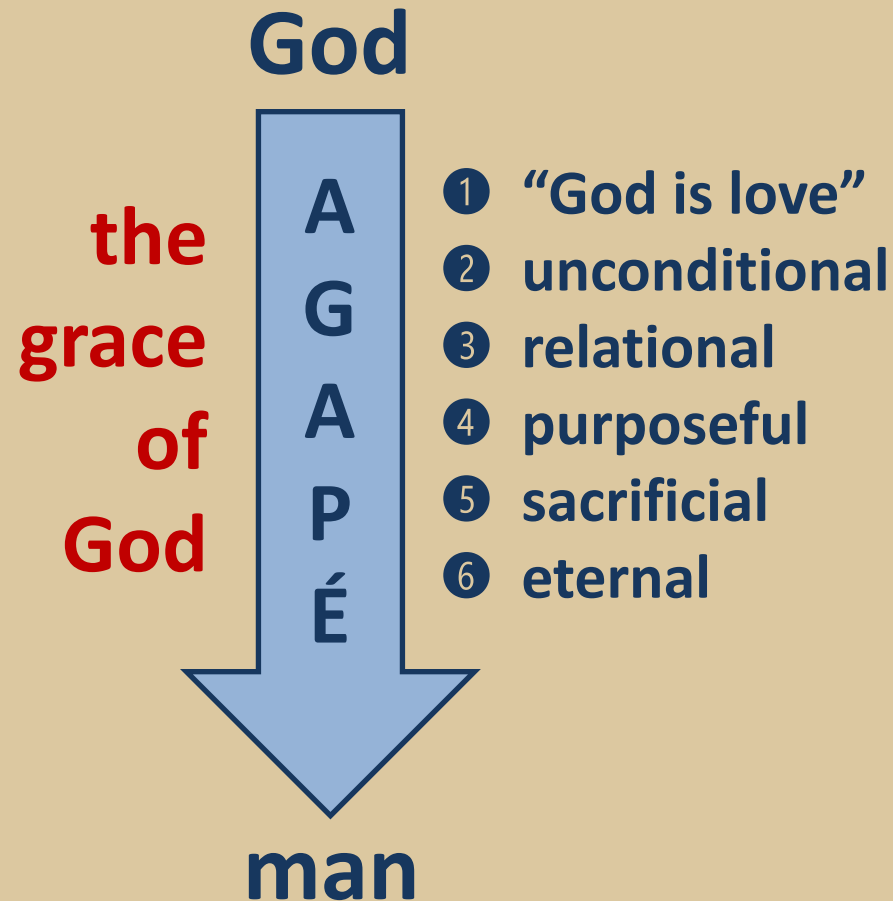
Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the distinctions: **AGAPÉ** = “love”
the love that freely gives

AGAPÉ → John 3:16

- ① **theological** → self-existing in God · “God is love”
- ② **unconditional** → spontaneous from God ·
unmotivated by anything in man
- ③ **relational** → personal with another
- ④ **purposeful** → seeking the greatest good / highest good
- ⑤ **sacrificial** → providing all / requiring nothing
- ⑥ **eternal** → forever / never ending

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**



Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the conflict in meaning:

EROS in Greek philosophy

love rising up out of man

love motivated by the object

love that desires to possess · acquire

love pursued by man · longing & striving

ego-centric love · self-seeking

climb up religion · from man

fellowship on god's level



AGAPÉ in the Bible

love self-existing in God

love unmotivated by the object

love that freely gives · grace

love received by man · faith

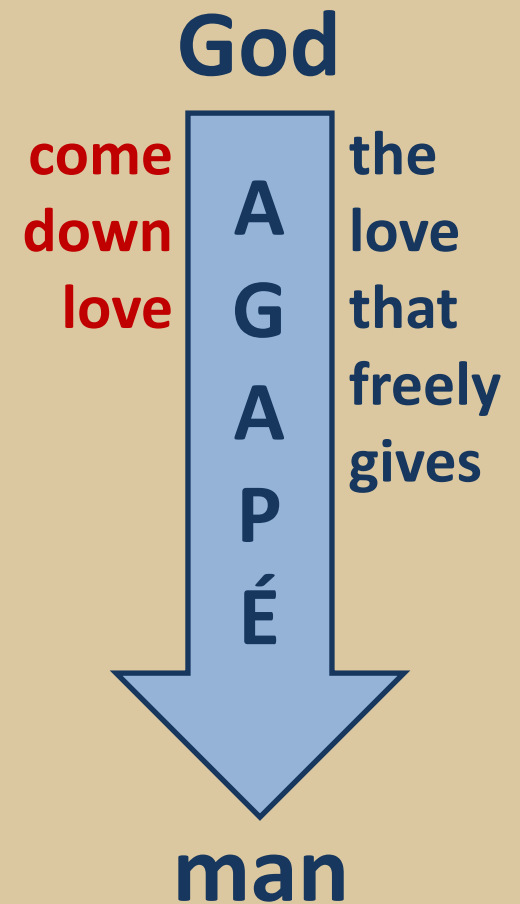
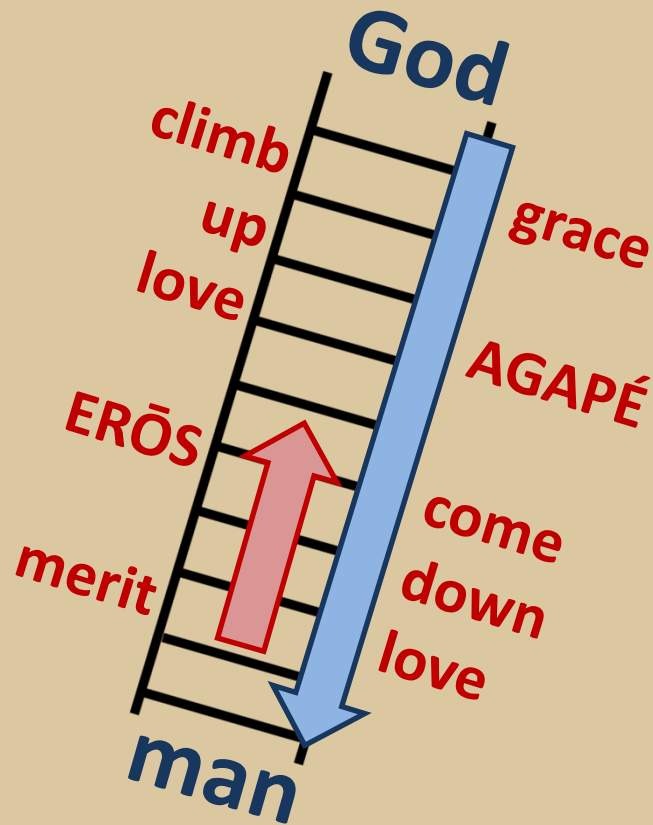
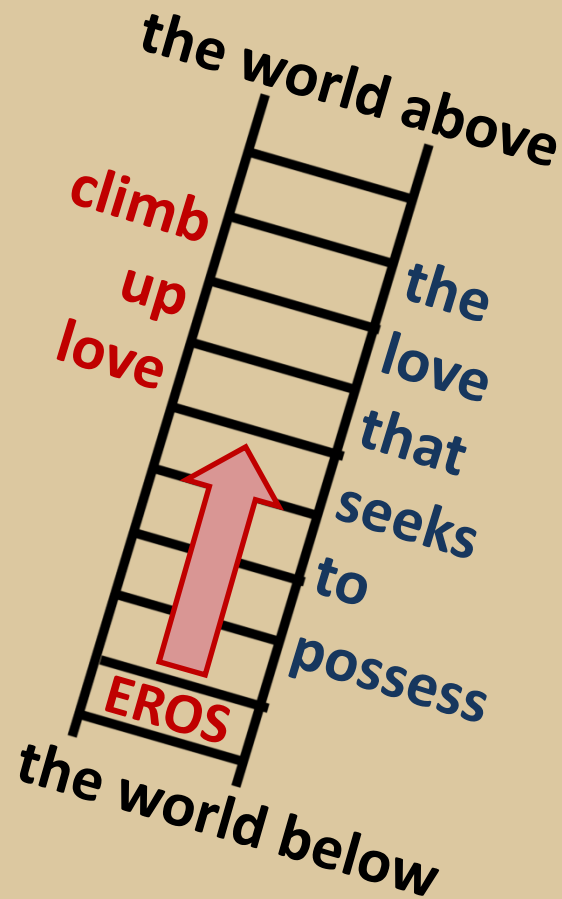
other-centric love · self-giving

come down religion · from God

fellowship on man's level

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the compromise in church history:



Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

AGAPÉ · was preserved and protected
by the church's stand for biblical truths

- ① **creation** · the come down God / the Creator
no demiurge / “artisan” / one with
special skills / a subordinate creator
- ② **incarnation** · the come down God / the Mediator
as Savior and King
- ③ **resurrection** · the significance of the body
not just the soul

Philosophy **EROS** & Theology **AGAPÉ**

the Greek words for “love”:

AGAPÉ = **ἀγάπη** = unconditional love that gives the greatest good
NT usage: AGAPÉ = 109x AGAPAŌ = 117x

PHILIA = **φιλία** = love of friendship · intimate personal affection · brotherly love
NT usage: PHILOS (adjective) 28x “friend” PHILEO = 24x
PHILEO + ADELPHOS = PHILADELPHOS = brotherly love = 6x

EROS = **ἔρος** = love that seeks to acquire for self
word not used in the New Testament
Septuagint LXX translation · Proverbs 7:18; 30:16

STORGÉ = **στοργή** = love of affection · familial love · parents for children
word not used in the New Testament
ASTORGÉ = “without natural affection” · Romans 1:31 · 2 Timothy 3:3
word association = stork