

The power of God's love holds us together as the body of Christ, the Church "...holding fast to the Head (Jesus Christ), from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God" (Col. 2:19).

Our responsibility is to "...put on love which is the bond [Gk. sundesmos, means "ligament", Strongs #4886] of perfection" (Col. 3:14), through an intentional choice to obey the truth through the Spirit in the rest of Colossians chapter 3.

This love is generated by the Holy Spirit empowering the soul [mind, will & emotions] to "...seek those things that are above...put to death your members on the earth...put off the old man and put on the new...tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do" (Col. 3:1-13).

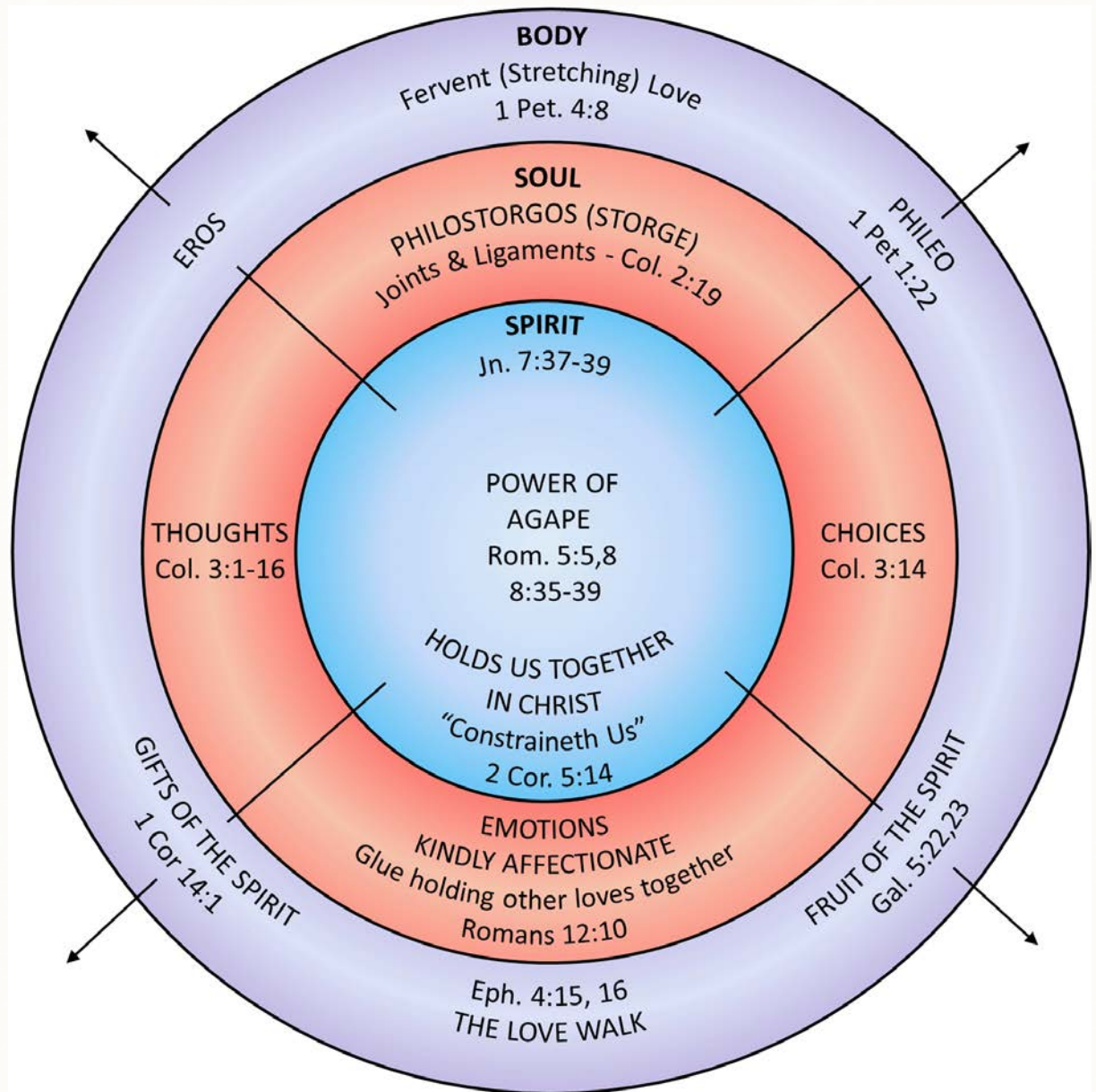
Most of us are familiar with 'brotherly love' (Gk. phileo) and 'erotic love' (Gk. eros), but not with family love 'kindly affectionate' (Gk. philostrogos or storge, Rom. 12:10), which is the glue holding other loves together. This kind of love is the operation medium for divine love (Gk. agape) to work with 'brotherly love' and 'erotic love', making them complete. Otherwise, one is "without natural affections" (Gk. astorge, Rom. 1:31), which grieves the Holy Spirit, quenching the experience of God's love.

Lastly, the apostle Peter wrote, "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently [stretching to the limit; strain] with a pure heart" (1 Pet. 1:22; 4:8). As we stretch and strain with one another, we cover a multitude of sins, allowing the fruit (Gal. 5:22, 23) and gifts (1 Cor. 14:1) of the Holy Spirit to flow forth like waves of agape love "... from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:16).

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance" (1 Cor. 13:4-7, NLT).



God's Divine Flow Four Kinds of Love



Four Kinds of Love

Divine 'love' (Gk. agape/agapao, Strongs #25/26) is used 155x in the New Testament, i.e. Rom. 5:5, 8; 1 Jn. 3:1,4, 7, 8, 16 & Jude 21. It is rarely used in Greek literature prior to the New Testament. When it was used, it denoted showing kindness to strangers, giving hospitality and being charitable. In the New Testament, it took on special meaning, designating a volitional love as opposed to the purely emotional kind. It is a self-sacrificial love, a kind naturally expressed by God, but not so easily by men and women. It is used for love all the time in the New Testament except where 'phileo' is noted below, i.e. in John, it's 'agape/agapao' except for John 15:19; 21:15, 16, 17 is 'phileo'.

'Charity' as 'agape' used 8x in 1 Cor. 13, used 27x in the New Testament (1 Cor. 8:1; 14:1; 16:14; Col. 3:14; 1 Thess. 3:6; 2 Thess. 1:3; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2:15; 4:12; 2 Tim. 2:22; 3:10; Tit. 2:2; 1 Pet. 4:8; 5:14; 2 Pet. 1:7; 3 Jn. 6; Jude 12; Rev. 2:19).

'Lovest' as 'agape' 2x by Jesus in John 21:15, 16. 'Loveth' as 'agape' 19x where it is not 'phileo' below. 'Loved' as 'agape' 38x where it is not 'phileo' below. 'Lovest' as 'agape' 1x in John 17:24.

"This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins" (1 John 4:10, NLT).

Brotherly 'love' (Gk. philadelphia/phileo as 'love', 'loved' & 'loveth', Strongs #5360/5368) Matt. 6:5; 10:37; 23:6; Lk 20:46; Jn. 5:20; 11:36; 12:25; 15:19; 16:27; 20:2; 21:15, 16, 17; Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 16:22; 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Tim. 6:10; Tit. 2:4; 3:4, 15; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 1:22; 3:8; 3 Jn. 9; Rev. 3:19; 22:15. 'Lovest' as 'phileo' used 2x by Peter in Jn. 21:17.

'Kindly Affectionate' (Gk. philostorgos/storge, Strongs #5387) is 1x in the New Testament, Rom. 12:10, family love, affection, the glue holding other loves together, the operation medium, humblest love, appreciation, thanksgiving, respect, serving, help, care for, and encouragement. 'Affection' (Gk. astorgos, Strongs #794) twice in the New Testament, Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3, without natural affection (hard-hearted toward kindred).

Erotic 'love' (Gk. eros) between man and wife, not in New Testament, but it is evident that procreation takes place only through this kind of love.

Loving One Another

"Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is born of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God—for God is love.

God showed how much he loved us by sending his only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love. It is not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love has been brought to full expression through us.

And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us. Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. All who proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in him.

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we are like Christ here in this world.

Such love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of judgment, and this shows that his love has not been perfected in us. We love each other as a result of his loving us first.

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? And God himself has commanded that we must love not only him but our Christian brothers and sisters, too." (1 John 4:7-21, NLT).

A Prayer For You...

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Ephesians 3:14-20).

GOD'S DIVINE FLOW

Four Kinds of Love

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16).

Today, Jesus' cry continues, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37, 38).* This flowing river is the blessing of God's love being "... poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom. 5:5, 8). God's love for us has been lavishly poured out to the point of overflowing within our hearts to others and to God, who first loved us (1 John 4:19).

Also, according to the old King James language, divine love (Gk. agape) "constraineth us" (Gk. sunecho, 2 Cor. 5:14) means "to hold together." God's love holds us together in Christ. Absolutely nothing "...shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

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