Symposium

Tracing of the story:

Glaucen          Friend (unnamed) now hearing it from A.
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|                   |
|__________________|
|                   |
Phoenix          Apollodorus
|                   |
|__________________|
|                   |
Aristodemus was present

Speeches on Love

Phaedrus

Love is unbegotten.
His worship is the oldest (Hesiod: first came Chaos, then Earth, then Love).
Source of greatest blessings.
Inspires the best citizenship.
Inspires greatest courage.

Pausanias

2 Aphrodites--2 Loves
Heavenly--temperate, male-oriented
Earthly--lewd, male or female-oriented
Heavenly Love creates order, earthly Love, disorder
Earthly lovers with their lewdness bring Love into disrepute.

Should boys submit to the advances of a would-be lover?

Laws on Love in Hellas

Elis/Boeotia      Athens       Ionia

Must submit          Complex--laws         Must not submit
encourage del-
iberation, custom says
boys must be sheltered
from these advances

We must be guided by the net result--a boy should submit only for
the sake of virtue.

Eryximachus
Medicine, as other arts, ruled by love.
It distinguishes healthy from unhealthy desire.
We must embrace heavenly, but beware earthly Love.

Aristophanes
A theory of love and sexual preference--we are seeking our other halves.

Agathon
What is Love?
Most blessed, because most lovely, because the youngest of the
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Gods.
Youngest because faster than time.
Not violent.
Delicate, for he inhabits soft hearts.
Righteous, for he only persuades.
Temperate, for as the strongest passion, he rules the others.
Courageous, for he captured Ares.
Genius, for inspires poetry and inspires creativity in all fields.
Author of loveliness, goodness, friendship.

Socrates' Speech

[Questioning Agathon:]

Love is love of something [I. e., love is a relative]

Love is love of a beloved.

Love longs for the beloved.

No one longs for what he possesses, but only for what he lacks.

(So if one longs for what one already possesses, then one is really longing to keep it.)

The beloved is the beautiful.

So Love must lack the beautiful (beauty).

So Love is not beautiful.
The beautiful = the good.

So Love lacks the good.

[Diotima:]

Love is not ugly, either, but rather intermediate between beautiful and ugly.

Since Love does not possess the good, he is not happy--therefore, he's not a god.

He's not mortal, either, but intermediate between mortal and immortal--i.e., a spirit.

Spirits are not only intermediate, but also intermediaries between gods and men.

The birth of Love: On the day Aphrodite was born, Need made love to Resource, conceiving Love.

Thus Love is both needy and resourceful.

He is intermediate between mortal and immortal, because he is always dying and being reborn.

He is intermediate between wise and ignorant, neither of whom seek wisdom.

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Love longs to make the beautiful and the good his own, and thus to be happy.

All people are lovers, although the word "love" is usually reserved for sexual longing, because all people long to be happy.

(Just as all craftsmen are poets, although the word is usually reserved for the composer of poems.)

Everyone longs not only for the good to be his/her own, but for it to be his/her own forever.

To love is to bring forth upon the beautiful, both in body and soul.

Love is not, therefore, a longing for the beautiful, but a longing
for the generation that the beautiful effects.

This is true because Love is a longing for immortality.

Everything temporal can be immortal only through repeated becoming--bodies, knowledge

A confirmation--the desire for fame.

Both those who procreate physically and those who bring forth virtue long for fame.

The final revelation

The scale of perfection--the heavenly ladder

One body
Many bodies
Laws and institutions
Knowledge--philosophy
Beauty Itself--the One

"The Clouds"

Plot: Strepsiades lives with his lazy son Pheidippides. Strepsiades is deeply in debt because of Pheidippides' love of horses. Nearby, in the Thinkery, Socrates and his band of slovenly and disreputable philosophers study things under the earth and in the sky. They are reputed to possess an Argument, Wrong, which can defeat any other argument, no matter how right. Strepsiades needs such an argument to evade his creditors, and tries to get Pheidippides to enroll in the Thinkery. When Pheidippides refuses, Strepsiades enrolls himself.

Now the Clouds appear, which Socrates worships as gods. They encourage Strepsiades to study hard, urge Socrates to rip him off while he has the chance, and berate the audience for not awarding the play first prize when it completed the first time.

Strepsiades, proving too stupid to make it in the Thinkery, finally persuades Pheidippides to enroll. He witnesses a debate between Right and Wrong, in which Right is traditional, hidebound, and a flaming fag, and Wrong is wholly without scruples or standards.
When Pheidippides returns, his morals have become so corrupted that he beats up his father, after which Strepsiades sets fire to the Thinkery and chases the philosophers away.

Question: what is the moral of this story?