

All Pleasure Is Desirable, Because It Is Pleasing To Us, But Is All Pleasure *Equally* Desirable?

Post by "Pivot" of May 7, 2018 at 7:19 PM

Very interesting thoughts Cassius. I will do my best to try to understand them and offer an interpretation.

I understand what you are saying with the jelly bean analogy. It is a mistake to rank pleasures based on their capacity to achieve freedom from pain, because the definition of pain is suffering, and water and wine are both equally capable of removing thirst. However, conceding this another problem comes up:

That "pleasure reaches its maximum limit at freedom from pain." If this is the case, pleasures must be ranked based on their capacity to achieve freedom from pain. But as you have illustrated with the water-wine example, two pleasures which are equally capable of removing the pain of thirst differ in their ability to please. And still, other drinks may be more pleasurable than wine which are equally capable of removing pain, and so forth. So why is it that pleasure reaches its maximum limit at the removal of pain, unless one can claim that any increase in pleasure is simply an increase in freedom from pain (which seems untrue)?

A nuance I have found in our discussion is the difference between "perfect pleasure" and "perfect freedom from pain." It seems to me they are the same according to PD3; however, what of the man whose IV is injected with morphine, versus the man who is satisfied minimally in that all of his sources of pain are eliminated? One man is experiencing greater pleasure than the other.

Perhaps it is that, practically in one's life, it is a mistake to pursue pleasure beyond freedom from pain, because both the toil to achieve such pleasures and the anxieties accompanying them will render them, in the end, "un-free" from pain. Therefore we should let them come to us, but we should not seek them.

I would contest then the idea that the vessel of human life cannot be expanded. Or if it cannot, that perfect pleasure exists when it is full. If pleasure is simply dopamine, then the amount we experience can range anywhere from a drink of water to methamphetamine. If freedom from pain is when the vessel is full - and absent of pain - then the pleasure of methamphetamine would somehow overflow the vessel, which is not possible. Thus it must either need to be able to expand, or the vessel must be large enough to allow for the pleasures of even the most intense sort.

It seems to me the vessel is extremely large, and freedom from pain is when the only items in the vessel are pleasurable ones, and no painful ones remain. Although the vessel is not full, attempting to fill the vessel with excess pleasures would only result in pain in the long run, as

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the drug mentioned would. So it is not a problem that the vessel is not full, it is enough that it consists of no pain.