

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

Post by "Cassius" of May 11, 2018 at 5:55 AM

That is a very articulate post Pivot, thank you! I would first say that I think much of the importance of this question is what is "Unsaid" and thereby the possibility of confusion. I gather that you firmly equate in your mind "absence of pain" as a pleasurable experience, and, therefore, you have no issue considering the concepts to be largely interchangeable. You identify pleasure in absence of pain which therefore makes it desirable.

I do not believe that "most people" think in those terms, and because they do not the use of this phrasing is dangerous. It is my observation that "most people" today are so much under the influence of "virtue ethics" or the idea that "meaning" must come from something other than the feeling of pleasure, that they are unable to interpret "absence of pain" as anything other than a form of nihilism, which is a tremendous danger. Nihilism adds up to the negation of pleasure and the negation of life, and I believe Epicurus did or would have considered its modern form to be a major enemy.

So while I have no issue with discussing absence of pain if the premise is clear that we are talking about one of many forms of pleasure, I think that "many" people are not in fact doing that - those who do it intentionally are using deceptive wording to imply that there is something in life they believe is more desirable than pleasurable feeling that is separate and distinct from pleasure. And thus they reconcile Epicurus with stoicism or idealism or whatever is their favored form of "meaning."