

Episode Ninety-Three: Torquatus Leads Us Forward Into Conflict Over Epicurean Ethics

Post by "Don" of October 28, 2021 at 4:37 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Are we not left with the same question as to how to distinguish between which pleasures to choose

I don't think so.

Pleasure - encompassing the health of the body and "serenity" of the mind throughout one's life - is the standard by which to make choices of which desires to pursue or reject.

We choose those activities/things that bring pleasure now if they will not bring greater pain as a result, or we choose pains (my go-to example of exercise) *for now* only if they will bring greater pleasure in the future.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

So aren't we left with the clear conclusion that some pleasures are greater (and some are lesser) than others?

No. Some pleasures experienced in the moment will lead to more pain in the end (ex., drinking all night long when you have to be at work the following morning). That doesn't mean the pleasure of intoxication doesn't feel pleasurable in the moment. It's just maybe not a good choice. That doesn't mean the pleasure is greater or lesser. It means it's not choice-worthy judged by the standard.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

And if so, the question to "what is the highest pleasure?" is not answered simply by saying "pleasure"? Is it?

Yes, it is. But you're asking the wrong question.

It makes no sense to ask "what is the highest pleasure?" because, by definition according to Epicurus, all pleasures are good. The "highest pleasure" is never used to them best of my knowledge. Pleasure is the highest good thing.

Pleasure is the highest good thing when compared to virtue, wisdom, justice, etc., because all good things are judged by the standard of whether they bring pleasure.

What pleasure to pursue is judged by whether it will bring more pleasure or lead to pain.