

"most useless observation ever made by an ancient Greek philosopher"

Post by "Don" of June 10, 2022 at 9:28 AM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

I think his negative opening comment on Epicurus was because he might think that the fear of death will help motivate someone to enjoy the present moment.

I could see that, and maybe even appreciate it, if the prose wasn't so hamfisted. There might be a good article in there somewhere. I get the impression he's working under a deadline and thought "Live in the moment. Yeah, everybody loves that. I'll write a few hundred words with that."

One of my biggest annoyances with this article is that he completely misses Epicurus's intent. People live their lives fearing death and the afterlife and completely miss living their lives. We shouldn't worry about that but instead pay attention to what's happening now. "Living in the moment" is often construed to mean blocking out all else. People who really -really!- live in the present moment are miserable! The only people that *only* live in the present are those rare individuals who cannot form long-term memories and each moment is a new experience. They keep logs of their experiences in a diary, their only link to the past. I realize this isn't what is usually "meant" by "live in the present" but it comes off like that.

In its wider contextual meaning, "living in the moment" is exactly what Epicurus encouraged. Listen to your body. Pay attention to your feelings of pleasure and pain. Make choices and rejections now to live your fullest, most pleasurable live because this is all you have. Make plans and write wills, but don't always expect them to come to fruition or to be followed. But be prudent. You can't rely on chance or the gods.

That is a good quote, and even sounds a little Epicurean.