

If Death Is Nothing To Us, Then Life Is Everything to Us

Post by "Don" of October 7, 2023 at 8:55 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

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Life isn't the "greatest good", but...

Having stated that...

Life is everything to us because life

I think you and I will have to disagree on that one. When I say something is "everything" to me i pretty much mean to myself that it is the most important thing that I have, and I have no issues with thinking that the most important thing i have is my "greatest good."

I'm using "greatest good" in the strict literal sense of a translation of "summum bonum."

My take is that there is nothing apart from life.

I've been down this road before, ad nauseum, so apologies to those who have had to suffer through this polemic of mine previously.

As I understand it, in philosophical discourse, the summum bonum "the greatest good" is that to which everything points, that which answers "Why do you do what you do?" For Epicurus, that is pleasure. We do everything for the sake of pleasure, to move toward a more pleasurable existence. And I like Epicurus's expansive, all-encompassing definition of pleasure. But, one can't answer the question "Why do you do what you do?" by saying "Life" or "I do everything because I'm alive." Well, of course you do! You don't exist after you die! There's no alternative. Saying "life is the greatest good" doesn't really say anything to me ... as opposed to what? Death? [Death is nothing to us](#). "We do everything for the sake of life" doesn't seem to me to make any sense either. Yes, we protect our life, but, as Metrodorus says, when it's time to go, go out singing and celebrating. Dewitt's shot himself in the foot on this argument when he tries to make hay out of "Latin doesn't have a definite article." But more than that, calling living, existing, being alive, "the greatest good" doesn't get us anywhere. "Life is everything" in contrast gets at the fact that your life that you're living right here and right now is literally the totality of what you will experience ever in the expanse of the universe.