

What Are The Best Epicurean Alternatives to These Common Phrases?

Post by "Elayne" of July 10, 2019 at 1:50 PM

Here are some ideas. The atheist one bothers me somewhat, because the current meaning of this is absence of belief in supernatural gods. So here again I feel we are getting into issues of mistranslation into modern English because of attachment to older language. I would prefer that we use the modern meaning of atheist, a label I do apply to myself.

1. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "to all desires must be applied this question: What will be the result for me if the object of this desire is attained and what if it will not?"
2. Not "humanism", "individualism", "collectivism", "egoism" or "altruism", but "the tie of friendship knits itself through reciprocity of favors among those who have come to enjoy pleasures to the full."
3. Not "hard determinism" but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice." (see paper on Agency)
4. Not "short term hedonism" but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
5. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
6. Not "living unknown" as best way to organize one's life, but "friendship dances around the world summoning us all to awaken to the recognition of happiness."
7. Not "creation by a supernatural being", but matter which is uncreatable and indestructible. In modern physics, this takes the form of the First Law of Thermodynamics: energy is neither created nor destroyed but only changes form. One form of energy is matter. It seems unlikely Epicurus would disagree.
8. Not "faith" but "constant activity in the study of Nature"
9. Not "individualism" or "collectivism" but (I combined these in 2)
10. Not "egoism" or "altruism" but (combined in #2)
11. Not "idealism" based on reason, but "not even reason can refute the sensations, for reason depends wholly upon them."
12. Not "atheism" or "supernaturalism", but a fully material universe with the possibility of continuously happy beings, and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek

it, such men may truly live as gods.” My preference would be: Not belief in supernatural gods but... and the rest the same. Leave atheism out of it, and accept that living people who use that word are referring to supernatural gods only.