

Episode 316 - TD43 - "Happiness Is The Goal Of Life - A Life of Happiness Is A Life Of Pleasure" (Sixth Year Podcast Anniversary)

Post by "Cassius" of January 10, 2026 at 7:59 AM

This paragraph is important for many reasons, not the least of which is that (1) Epicurus held that there is "nothing good but pleasure," (2) that it was not Epicurus but Hieronymous who held the good to be "absence of pain," and (3) that the Stoics held nothing to be good but virtue / "moral worth." For that reason I've spliced together the English and the Latin from the King / Loeb edition as a supplement to the Yonge version from which we generally read.

It's interesting to see how the translations are all over the board over words like "finibus" (here "limits") and "honestum" (here "moral worth") but maybe the most important of all for us is that the single word chosen for Epicurus' goal is "voluptatem" which is clearly understandable as "pleasure" rather than anything indicating "tranquility" or "calmness."

And of course all through the list we have "bonum" for "good," and it seems to me that the way Cicero is speaking he is clearly tightly relating, or even equating, "good" and "finibus."

It's very interesting also to see what alternatives are suggested by Carneades, presumably representing the Academic Skeptics, and the Peripatetics/Aristotelians.

