

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 8:20 AM

Reading ahead, there is a lot of useful information about Epicurus, and by no means is all of it criticism. We'll take as much time as we need to go through it, because this is some of the most authoritative summary material that survives from the ancient world. It is simply ridiculous to summarize the ultimate goal of life as "tranquility" or "absence of pain" when over an over it is clear that Epicurus said that the calculation is that of comparing pleasure to pain, and that we will absolutely choose pains that lead to pleasure that is greater than that pain.

Quote

So that a wise man will always adopt such a system of counterbalancing as to do himself the justice to avoid pleasure, should pain ensue from it in too great a proportion ; and will submit to pain, provided the effects of it are to produce a greater pleasure: so that all pleasurable things, though the corporeal senses are the judges of them, are still to be referred to the mind, on which account the body rejoices, whilst it perceives a present pleasure; but that the mind not only perceives the present as well as the body, but foresees it, while it is coming, and even when it is past will not let it quite slip away. So that a wise man enjoys a continual series of pleasures, uniting the expectation of future pleasure to the recollection of what he has already tasted.