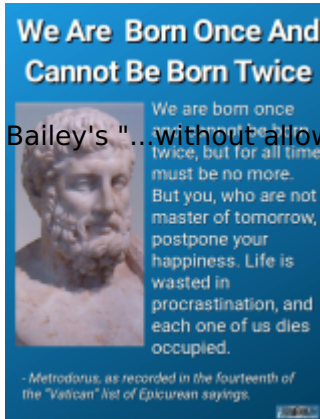


# VS14 - "Occupied" vs. "Without Allowing Himself Leisure."

Post by "Cassius" of September 9, 2019 at 9:29 AM



It appears to me that Elli's suggestion of "occupied" as the final word of this doctrine is more accurate than Bailey's "...without allowing himself leisure."

However the "leisure" reference is the translation we see everywhere.

This is a thread to discuss which is more accurate.

Bailey:

XIV. Γεγόναμεν ἅπασι, δις δὲ οὐκ ἔστι γενέσθαι· δεῖ δὲ τὸν αἰῶνα μηκέτ' εἶναι· σὺ δὲ οὐκ ἂν τῆς αἴριον (κύριος)

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ἀναβάλλῃ τὸ χαῖρον· ὁ δὲ βίος μελλησιμῶ παραπόλλεται καὶ εἰς ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ἀσχολούμενος ἀποθνήσκει.

Epicurus Wiki:

[http://wiki.epicurism.info/Vatican\\_Saying\\_14/](http://wiki.epicurism.info/Vatican_Saying_14/)

Πολλοὶ ἐπιπέθουσι τὸν αἰῶνα ὡς εἰς ἄλλο, καὶ οὐκ ἔστι γενέσθαι· δεῖ δὲ τὸν αἰῶνα μηκέτ' εἶναι· σὺ δὲ οὐκ ἂν τῆς αἴριον (κύριος) ἀναβάλλῃ τὸ χαῖρον· ὁ δὲ βίος μελλησιμῶ παραπόλλεται καὶ εἰς ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ἀσχολούμενος ἀποθνήσκει.

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Post by "Don" of September 4, 2020 at 4:01 PM

The pivotal word here is ἀσχολούμενος.

Here is the [entry for the root verb ἀσχολεω at Perseus Digital Library for two dictionaries.](#)

Two pertinent definitions seem to be "to be engaged in one's own business; performance of a public function." I would agree with Elli's "occupied." The word seems to imply that one is

engaged in their own business, focused on their work to the exclusion of other pursuits. Not necessarily that they're not taking time for leisure purposefully, but that they're "pre-occupied" with the daily grind.

For more, here's [the entry for ασχολος](#).

And for [ασχολία](#).

Take a look at those and please share your thoughts.

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## Post by “Kalosyni” of August 14, 2023 at 7:27 PM

### [Quote from Don](#)

Not necessarily that they're not taking time for leisure purposefully, but that they're "pre-occupied" with the daily grind.

Occupied by activities which pull one away from the fullness of enjoying life - these could be activities of the mind or actual activities which feel unfulfilling. If your mind is always processing all the little things you need to do next, in a subtle kind of "worry"... "I've got to do this, I've got to do that"...and these thoughts make it difficult to savor the present moment. It is almost as if joy is a very subtle experience and the complexities of civilization are so much more noisy and make it difficult to look for and see joy. If you combine this one with [Vatican Saying 11](#), then it fleshes it out a bit more (at least in my mind).

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## Post by “Kalosyni” of September 30, 2025 at 1:55 PM

Revisiting Vatican Saying 14 ...

...rushing around without considering that life has a finite length of time.

If what you do is always done with the thought that you have wisely chosen what you are doing and you know (and remember) that you only have a finite amount of time, then no matter what you do it will be more "meaningful".

And also adding in consideration of [VS11](#), which speaks about doing things either in a state of stagnation (sleepy) vs. a frenzied state. Stagnation could be like automatic pilot, and just

repeating the same slow actions.

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**Post by “Bryan” of September 30, 2025 at 2:10 PM**

Yes the take-away from VS 11 seems to be a reminder to always hold in mind the goal of tranquil activity -- that we want to be tranquil without becoming listless, and we want to be active without becoming agitated.

On the original topic, I wanted to point out the fun connection that the word for "school" is the same as "leisure" -- and the word in question is the negation of leisure -- i.e., occupation. This is why the translations diverge a bit at this point.

|                          |                |                                    |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| ἡ σχολή<br>αἱ σχολαί     | school         | ΣΧΟΛΗ<br><i>leisure</i>            |
| ἡ ἀσχολία<br>αἱ ἀσχολίαι | occupation     | ΑΣΧΟΛΙΑ<br><i>not leisure</i>      |
| ἀσχολούμενος<br>(η, ον)  | being occupied | ΑΣΧΟΛΟΥΜΕΝΟΣ<br><i>not leisure</i> |

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of September 30, 2025 at 2:49 PM**

[Quote from Bryan](#)

On the original topic, I wanted to point out the fun connection that the word for "school" is the same as "leisure" -- and the word in question is the negation of leisure -- i.e., occupation. This is why the translations diverge a bit at this point.

Is this perhaps coming up because of the differences in ancient Greek language vs modern Greek language?

Also, could it imply "being busy and therefore not getting around to studying the true nature of things" and then coming to one's death without really "understanding" life...but perhaps I am tweeking this a bit too far. ???

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**Post by “Kalosyni” of March 27, 2026 at 7:28 AM**

This very good article talks about "The 'Busy' Trap", written back in 2012, and perhaps relevant for some people still today. And this article helps shed some light on VS14, bringing a modern twist.

[The 'Busy' Trap](#)

The “crazy busy” existence so many of us complain about is almost entirely self-imposed.  
archive.nytimes.com