

Guide of Life, Divine Pleasure - Doc Version

Post by "Cassius" of October 24, 2019 at 9:05 AM

Attached is a "doc" version of the collection of quotes in this graphic:



Post by "Cassius" of October 24, 2019 at 9:27 AM

Elayne posted:

Once a person has gotten a firm grip on this understanding, "how to live" tends to fall into place. Yes, there is some learning on the hedonic calculus-- how to make decisions for actions bringing more pleasure than pain. But I find that fairly intuitive for a person who has truly decided to enjoy life!

Watch out for anyone who gives you a list of activities, political positions, economic choices, etc, and says you should do them to have pleasure. People like that want to convince you to do things their way, for their own pleasure, and your may vary. Instead, pay attention to what brings you more enjoyment than pain and do those things. Day by day, you will gain skill!

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Another variation some say is "I don't need pleasure, all I want is to be happy," Or "happiness doesn't mean pleasure." -- Well exactly what do they think happiness is? Ask and you will find out that they have another agenda - THEIR definition of "virtue."

Thus Aristotle gives us his definition of happiness:

...the function of man is to live a certain kind of life, and this activity implies a rational principle, and the function of a good man is the good and noble performance of these, and if any action is well performed it is performed in accord with the appropriate excellence: if this is the case, then happiness turns out to be an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. (Nicomachean Ethics, 1098a13)

The Pursuit of Happiness as the Exercise of Virtue

In this last quote we can see another important feature of Aristotle's theory: the link between the concepts of happiness and virtue. Aristotle tells us that the most important factor in the effort to achieve happiness is to have a good moral character – what he calls "complete virtue." But being virtuous is not a passive state: one must act in accordance with virtue. Nor is it enough to have a few virtues; rather one must strive to possess all of them. As Aristotle writes,

He is happy who lives in accordance with complete virtue and is sufficiently equipped with external goods, not for some chance period but throughout a complete life. (Nicomachean Ethics, 1101a10)

Conclusion

In conclusion, according to Aristotle, what is happiness?

- Happiness is the ultimate end and purpose of human existence
- Happiness is not pleasure, nor is it virtue. It is the exercise of virtue.

Post by “Cassius” of October 24, 2019 at 10:34 AM

Epicurus said it for himself, and it applies to you and me as well - ****We Would Not Know What the Good Would Be If We Eliminate Pleasure**** - and that is exactly the way that Aristotle and Plato and the Stoics would have you be - ****blind and dumb**** as to what we should do with our lives.

Because then, blind and dumb, where could we turn but to THEM to tell us all about "virtue" and "appropriate excellence" and how to spend our lives! So if you are hesitant to embrace "pleasure" as the goal - and I too was, in the past - think about who it is who really profits from your hesitancy to name the name of "pleasure."

"For I at least do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form"