

Carl Sagan, the 4th dimension, episode 20 of Lucretius Today, physics

Post by “Mathitis Kipouros” of August 17, 2021 at 11:14 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

No, I don't think so. I should probably have written "Death would be the greatest evil" but even that may be overstating. But "life as the greatest good" per DeWitt doesn't strike me as helpful. It's not life per se. I think Epicurus would ask what's the kind of life you're living. Is it directed toward pleasure? Are you making choices based on moving your life in a pleasurable direction? Are you loving and practicing wisdom (ie, applying Epicurean philosophy) ?

I kindly wish too push my question again, as I believe you have the right intent in your answer, but I think you're still answering about the adjective "good" (comparing it to evil) and not "good" as a *thing* (which doesn't need comparison), which is how I understood DeWitt used it. From this point of view, life is not either good or bad, per se, but it's just something that *is*, and that we do *have* (semantically somebody would debate that you can't "have" life, but I hope is clear that I use it as in "we can take care of it, cherish it, keep it safe, and lose it"). I remember DeWitt saying "*life* is the greatest good" in contrast to "*pleasure* being the greatest good", and making the clarification that pleasure is not something you have, but that you experience, and thus, our objective/end/telos, is to experience pleasure.

As for the adjective "good", as in what is right or wrong, I think it's clear that good is pleasure and wrong is pain.

And as such, we could have a thing that is good (gives us pleasure) or bad (gives us pain), and thus, our greatest thing (life) could be a good one or a bad one.

Wow. From all the clarifications I'm going out of my way to provide, I see why [Cassius](#) says we may be falling into a logical or semantic trap, but I don't believe this is the case.