

# Episode One Hundred Four - More Torquatus and a Question: Was The Ancient Epicurean Movement A Cult?

Post by "Cassius" of January 7, 2022 at 8:29 AM

I just set up Episode 104. I included only two "paragraphs" because once again (and maybe even more) they appear to me almost like outlines or bullet points - rapid fire listings of main points of the philosophy. So probably no need to bite off more than two at most.

In fact I wrote this as a private message to the podcast team but I think it's better to post it publicly. [These paragraphs of Torquatus, starting with 55 and probably going all the way to the end of what we're covering, at 72](#), might be the greatest and most clear summary of Epicurean philosophy available anywhere.

It almost cries out to be separated into bullet points as an outline of its own as a "map" of the entire philosophy.

I picked up the word "Corollaries" because I see that used as the word that is translated from the text, but I am not sure that word conveys the right meaning. "Corollaries" to me implies some kind of subsidiary status. Maybe in fact all of these are subsidiary to "pleasure is the goal and virtue isn't" in this letter, but I think it's more accurate to separate these out and consider the importance of each of them, especially since they touch on physics and epistemology with which people often don't concern themselves today.

Another analogy comes to mind: I used to have more than a few friends (I still have a few) who are really into fundamentalist Christianity. One analogy I observed them making is that they liked to talk about the "[Romans Road to Salvation](#)." (I picked the first link that came up on google so not sure how good it is.)

The analogy of course is obvious: This section of Cicero's "On Ends" is almost like a "[Torquatus Road To Understanding Epicurus](#)."

And since the commentators seem to agree that Cicero was largely quoting from one of more Epicurean handbooks as he was writing this, it's altogether possible that this presentation didn't originate in Cicero's mind but was an approved Epicurean community text laying out an outline of the points the Epicureans of that age felt it most important to be understood. And if that is indeed the case, this is a summary that predates Diogenes Laertius by as much as a hundred years or more.