

# After Religion and Death, The Third Greatest Threat To Happiness As The Highest Goal of Life

Post by “Cassius” of December 27, 2018 at 5:55 PM

Good to see you here Mike!

I was going to disagree with you as to what the objectivists argue, but after reading this link I think you are probably correct. I think Rand was circling around the same issue that Dewitt saw, that morality and goals are of relevance only to the living.

Quote:

An *ultimate* value is that final goal or end to which all lesser goals are the means—and it sets the standard by which all lesser goals are *evaluated*. An organism’s life is its *standard of value*: that which furthers its life is the *good*, that which threatens it is the *evil*.

Without an ultimate goal or end, there can be no lesser goals or means: a series of means going off into an infinite progression toward a nonexistent end is a metaphysical and epistemological impossibility. It is only an ultimate goal, an *end in itself*, that makes the existence of values possible. Metaphysically, *life* is the only phenomenon that is an end in itself: a value gained and kept by a constant process of action. Epistemologically, the concept of “value” is genetically dependent upon and derived from the antecedent concept of “life.” To speak of “value” as apart from “life” is worse than a contradiction in terms. “It is only the concept of ‘Life’ that makes the concept of ‘Value’ possible.”

[The Virtue of Selfishness](#)

“The Objectivist Ethics,”

[The Virtue of Selfishness](#), 17

[http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/ultimate\\_value.html](http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/ultimate_value.html)