

Welcome Kungi!

Post by "Cassius" of July 23, 2022 at 6:51 AM

Thank you Kungi! I only have time for a few comments now but you have raised many deep issues and I am sure others will chime in too.

First it is interesting to observe where our new participants are located. As you probably observe we have several Germans here - probably a higher percentage than pure population statistics would predict - and it is interesting to consider why.

Second, Hiram's work reaches a lot of people and that's good to know about your background. I would say this regardless, but especially knowing that, that I highly recommend your going through the DeWitt book as soon as you can for the width of background that he provides for someone at an early stage of reading. I find that people who skip that will often take longer than they would otherwise to see "the forest" rather than just "the trees" which may have attracted them initially.

As to the basic issue of Stoicism, you of course hit the nail on the head by focusing on "virtue." If you have not read the Torquatus presentation of this issue in On Ends ([see our text section](#)) you will want to read that.

The "modern" stoics tend to discount the issue of virtue, but there are fundamentalist stoics even today who recognize that the philosophy makes no sense if you do do. But they de-emphasize it because once you do examine the Stoic foundations they melt away if you walk away from the virtue/religious aspects of it.

Epicurus is rigorously logical, and once identifying pleasure in a general and sweeping sense as the goal, all else (even virtue) is instrumental toward that goal, as Torquatus explains well.

There is much more to say and add but this is a start. If you will go through the DeWitt book and focus on understanding the "big picture" as soon as you can, I think that will help a lot in your seeing that each of the answers to your questions derives from that "big picture," rather than being a set of arbitrary rules as if out of a doctor's medicine bag. There are indeed many bits of practical advice, but until you see the big picture it's hard to understand how profoundly different the Epicurean view of the happy life is from that of Stoicism or the other larger Greek schools.