

Perspectives On "Proving" That Pleasure is "The Good"

Post by "Joshua" of December 19, 2022 at 8:19 PM

What Todd says about pleasure is something I mentioned on the podcast, I think in the first episode of the Torquatus material or near it.

Since I'm certain I did a poor job of explaining it then, I'll summarize a variation of the same idea.

1. Epicurus uses the example of infants and newborn animals to demonstrate the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain descriptively.
2. He proceeds by noticing that the condition of the infant is one unburdened by culture, education, sophistication, bias, social expectation, rationalization and so on.
3. The unwritten premise: that infancy, free from all of those, and directed in its pursuits only by nature itself, is the best guide to uncovering the proper end of life.
4. The normative conclusion: that the proper end of life is the pursuit of pleasure, and the avoidance of pain.

The descriptive premise (that pleasure *is* pursued as the goal) and the normative conclusion (that pleasure *should* be pursued as the goal) are connected, and I think inextricably so.