

# The Ethics of Epicurus and its Relation to Contemporary Doctrines by Jean-Marie Guyau. Edited by Testa and Ansell-Pearson, translated by Testa

Post by "Cassius" of May 3, 2023 at 1:48 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

If we were to do nothing but seek serenity and avoid pain, then this category would be nonsensical.

And if we were to imply that this category is to be frowned upon or minimized, then we would truly have a prescription for minimalism and asceticism that would totally contradict what we know about the facts of life and endeavors of every authentic ancient Epicurean who ever existed. There are literally zero examples of Epicureans who lived that way, and it is only the speculations and rumors surrounding ascetic interpretations of lines like we "could" compete with zeus for happiness with only bread and water and similar anecdotes that allow people to make these arguments. And this isn't just a "Roman Epicureans weren't good Epicureans" thing either - the will of Epicurus and his property holdings at death are only part of the evidence that he lived a normal life.

Again - presuming "serenity" means what most people interpret it to mean, as largely denoting mental and physical inactivity. No one generally says "I want to live a serene life" and expects the listener to understand a normal healthy active life.