

PD01 - Gratitude and Weakness (Especially In Relation to the Gods)

Post by "Cassius" of May 9, 2023 at 10:14 AM

[Quote from Don](#)

Basically, [PD05](#) says, to me, you can't live pleasantly without living virtuously BUT virtue is not the end/goal. The virtues contribute to living pleasantly, and living pleasantly is a result of living virtuously. But one's eye should always be on the pleasant life lived.

Yes i think what you are saying is the correct statement of the Epicurean view, but I don't see PD5 saying that one's eye should be on pleasure than on virtue. It doesn't explicitly or even implicitly say that, does it? (I would think you have to go to Torquatus or to Diogenes of Oinoanda to hit that point home.) In the case of PD5 he seems to be equating the two phrases ("living virtuously" with "living pleasantly") and it seems to me that you have to understand something else which is not stated to make sense of the equivalence.

I agree that one unstated point is, as you say, that (1) the goal is pleasure rather than virtue.

But the other unstated presumption is that (2) virtue is not absolutely tied to a certain set of facts, just like pleasure is not tied to a certain set of facts. (Eating ice cream is sometimes pleasurable and sometimes not, right?)

Actually maybe I should ask, Don, do you agree with this sentence from the paper as written, or would you modify it?

"It is important to remember, in this context, that for Epicureans all virtues—like moderation and justice—are defined not absolutely, by an independent objective standard. They are instrumentally valuable because they contribute to a pleasurable life, and so what counts as virtuous in a case depends on what in fact produces happiness (Ep. Men. 132)."