

# The Importance Of The Perfect Not Being Allowed To Be The Enemy Of The Good

Post by "Don" of May 18, 2023 at 11:46 PM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

And it may also be exactly the same point as with the "greatest good" which exists only in Platonic ideal status.

No. No, no, no.

"The greatest good" did not only exist in "Platonic ideal status." Epicurus was more than happy to discuss - to proclaim - "the greatest good" on the same terms as his rivals and predecessors but his declaration was rooted in the real world of experience, of feeling. Epicurus declared that The Good was not some ethereal ideal form. It was pleasure, the feeling of pleasure.

The word in ancient Greek that Aristotle uses, that they all use when talking about "The Good," is ταγαθον (tagathon). ταγαθον literally means "The Good Thing" or just "The Good." That is the *exact word* Epicurus uses when saying:

## Quote

[It is observed too that in his treatise *On the Ethical End* (Περὶ τέλους Peri telous/telos) he writes in these terms:] "I know not how to conceive **the good (τάγαθόν)**, apart from the pleasures of taste, sexual pleasures, the pleasures of sound and the pleasures of beautiful form."

"Οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγε ἔχω τί νοήσω **τάγαθόν**, ἀφαιρῶν μὲν τὰς διὰ χυλῶν ἡδονάς, ἀφαιρῶν δὲ τὰς δι' ἀφροδισίων καὶ τὰς δι' ἀκροαμάτων καὶ τὰς διὰ μορφῆς."

The "greatest good" is the reason - the final reason, the end reason, the goal, the limit, the telos - of why we do what we do. It is the reason left at the top of the heap after we answer every other question "Why do you do what you do?" The "greatest good" is that toward which every other good thing aims.

Epicurus also used the word in one of Cassius' favorite sayings:

*Like unto this is that of Epicurus, where he saith: **The very nature of The Good** (τὴν **τάγαθοῦ φύσιν**) arises from the escaping of bad, and a man's recollecting, considering, and rejoicing within himself that this hath befallen him. For what occasions transcending joy (he saith) is some great impending evil escaped; and in this lies the very nature and essence of*

"good" (ἀγαθοῦ), if a man attain unto it aright, and contain himself when he hath done, and not ramble and prate idly about "good" (ἀγαθοῦ). ([Source](#) with my edits)

τάγαθόν is also the word used by Philodemus and/or the later Epicureans in the Tetrapharmakos for "The Good (τάγαθόν) is easy to obtain."

#### [Quote from Cassius](#)

maybe that's exactly why Epicurus recommended against walking around obsessing over the meaning of "good."

He lampooned the Peripatetics (Aristotle's school who "strolled around") for the kind of circular arguments and hair-splitting about what "good" means like Aristotle displays in his *Nichomachean Ethics*. The Epicureans, starting from Epicurus himself, felt that they had answered the question "what is ταγαθον 'The Good'?" once and for all. They answered "What is the good thing at which all other good things and our actions aims?" Epicurus and the Epicureans all used that word ταγαθον deliberately and purposefully to drive the point home that they had answered that question decisively, finally, and there was no need - had never been a need! - to "stroll around endlessly prattling on" about what "good" meant. You can FEEL The Good. It's right here, now, in our bodies and our minds. All good things point to The Good Thing which is pleasure. Pleasure is the only thing good in and of itself. We do all our actions for it, at their root. Keep asking "Why?" and the final answer, the final good thing at the root of it all is pleasure.