

Best Way to Introduce Teachings?

Post by “Daniel Van Orman” of March 14, 2019 at 4:57 PM

[Godfrey](#)

I completely agree that process of learning. Also, when it comes to belief systems, I think it is essential to look at its criticisms and think through them yourself.

I have no outline. I was hoping to either get help with that or pursue another idea for introducing Epicureanism.

Perhaps a rough outline could be: Long-term Happiness (Hedonism), Physics (Atomism, Nature), Friendship, and Desires & Superstitions (Limit Desires, Remove Superstitions, Don't Fear Death).

Here are some quotes to help explain those groupings.

Long-term Happiness (Hedonism)

No pleasure is a bad thing in itself, but the things which produce certain pleasures entail disturbances many times greater than the pleasures themselves.

[Principal Doctrines](#), 8 ; Vatican Sayings, 50

Pleasure is our first and kindred good. It is the starting-point of every choice and of every aversion, and to it we come back, inasmuch as we make feeling the rule by which to judge of every good thing.

Letter to Menoecus

Beauty and virtue and such are worthy of honor, if they bring joy; but if not then bid them farewell!

Selected Fragments, 70

Physics

nothing is created out of that which does not exist: for if it were, everything would be created out of everything with no need of seeds. And again, if that which disappears were destroyed into that which did not exist, all things would have perished, since that into which they were dissolved would not exist.

Letter to Herodotus

Only superstition must be excluded, as it will, if one successfully follows the lead of seen phenomena [nature] to gain indications about the invisible.

Letter to Pythocles

Don't think it unnatural that when the body cries out, the soul cries also. The body says don't be hungry, don't be thirsty, don't be cold. It is difficult for the soul to prevent these cries, and dangerous for it to ignore the commands of nature because of attachment to its usual independence.

Selected Fragments, 200

Friendship

Every friendship in itself is to be desired; but the initial cause of friendship is from its advantages.

Vatican Sayings, 23

We do not so much need the help of our friends as we do the confidence of their help in need.

Vatican Sayings, 34

The man who best knows how to meet external threats makes into one family all the creatures he can; and those he can not, he at any rate does not treat as aliens; and where he finds even this impossible, he avoids all dealings, and, so far as is advantageous, excludes them from his life.

[Principal Doctrines](#), 39

We show our feeling for our friends' suffering, not with laments, but with thoughtful concern.

Sayings about the Wise Man, 41

Desires & Superstitions

All desires that do not lead to pain when they remain unsatisfied are unnecessary, but the desire is easily got rid of, when the thing desired is difficult to obtain or the desires seem likely to produce harm.

[Principal Doctrines](#), 26

The wealth required by nature is limited and is easy to procure; but the wealth required by vain ideals extends to infinity.

[Principal Doctrines](#), 15 ; Vatican Sayings, 8

It is impossible for someone to dispel his fears about the most important matters if he doesn't know the nature of the universe but still gives some credence to myths. So without the study of nature there is no enjoyment of pure pleasure.

[Principal Doctrines](#), 12 ; Vatican Sayings, 49

Dreams have neither a divine nature nor a prophetic power, but they are the result of images that impact on us.

Vatican Sayings, 24

These categories overlap greatly. Friendship could be a subsection of long-term happiness:

Of all the means to insure happiness throughout the whole life, by far the most important is the acquisition of friends. - [Principal Doctrines](#), 27

and superstitions could be a subsection of nature.

Also, the categories might need to be reorganized. When explaining nature, should we group it with physics or put it be in its own category?

Insofar as you forget nature, you will find yourself in trouble and create for yourself endless fears and desires. - Selected Fragments, 203

Are the categories missing anything or are there important subcategories missing?

[Cassius](#)

I am primarily utilitarian.

So far, I love everything about that philosophy - especially the principle of maximal utility ("greatest happiness for the greatest number") and consequentialism.

Because of how frequently utilitarian leaders quote Epicurus and how utilitarianism seems to be an extension of Epicureanism, I value Epicureanism teachings.

Here are my notes for utilitarianism:
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/0hj244htwnga...0Edit.docx?dl=0>

If a popup asks you to sign into Dropbox, close it using the X in the top-right corner.

The notes about LDS theology/Christianity are there because I live in a predominantly Mormon community. It helps to be prepared to explain "non-member" beliefs, in case people ask.