

Summum bonum (Atheist & Bishop podcast)

Post by "Don" of June 24, 2023 at 7:17 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I think DeWitt is asking, however, whether that was not the direction that Epicurus was going, and once one "thinks like an Epicurean" in equating life in the absence of pain to be pleasure, then equating "being alive" with "pleasurable experience" is a natural association, and a good way to think.

I think DeWitt is just mistaken, especially in light of his "Latin doesn't have a definite article" hobbyhorse in his summum bonum paper. I do not think this was the direction Epicurus was going. It's not "life in the absence of pain = pleasure", it is simply "the absence of the feeling of pain = pleasure" and conversely "the absence of the feeling of pleasure = pain." Adding "life" to the equation doesn't add anything. We have to be alive - we have to exist! - to feel pleasure or pain.