

# Interpretation of pursuit of pleasure

**Post by “waterholic” of December 8, 2023 at 1:51 AM**

I sense that there is a fundamental difference in the Epicurean and stoic definitions of telos - the appropriate pursuit.

The former is an observation, not a normative statement. We cannot stop aiming for pleasure. It is built in. So the statement is not "People should pursue pleasure", but rather "People pursue pleasure". This is done.

The latter is a normative statement: "people should pursue virtue". To my knowledge there is no stoic argument that virtue is innate in people. It may be a form of a divine pursuit, but stoics would probably argue that there are people who are not virtuous. From the Epicurean perspective, there cannot be people who do not pursue pleasure.

So as an Epicurean then, one's advice should be "ignore whatever is imposed by false divine virtues and be yourself, follow your judgement". No need to "pursue pleasure", since you already do it.