

Episode 214 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 21 - Cicero Argues For An Ideal View of Friendship and Happiness Which Epicureans Reject

Post by "DavidN" of February 8, 2024 at 5:31 AM

In reply to Cicero that we cultivate friendships with an eye to gains and benefits and advantages I would reply with VS39, that this is an oversimplification of a complicated subject and as stated is without merit. As he continues with can there really be any: doubt that we shall prefer our estates and our house-rents to our friends? I would reply with VS44-45 that a friend who is self sufficient is greater than property, as property managed unwisely is dependent on external circumstance, and to Cicero's final comment I'd continue with Philodemus comment on charity in his work on economics. That friendship is our insurance against fortune. In summary I would say that we do not seek friendship for its material advantage but for the pleasure it brings us, but that we should be able to count on a friend, especially a wise friend, to offer us comfort in difficult times. As Cicero himself found after the death of his daughter.

VS 39. Neither he who is always seeking material aid from his friends nor he who never considers such aid is a true friend; for one engages in petty trade, taking a favor instead of gratitude, and the other deprives himself of hope for the future.

VS 44. The wise man who has become accustomed to necessities knows better how to share with others than how to take from them, so great a treasure of self-sufficiency has he found.

VS 45. The study of nature does not create men who are fond of boasting and chattering or who show off the culture that impresses the many, but rather men who are strong and self-sufficient, and who take pride in their own personal qualities not in those that depend on external circumstances.

"To share all their wealth freely inspired by his confidence in the adequacy of few possessions and assisted by the discourses of the sage that the Wiseman administers these goods in such a manner is a consequence the fact that he has acquired and continues to acquire friends. Their needs and pleasure figure prominently in his calculations concerning his monthly and yearly expenses, the distribution of his income and the manner in which he provides for the future."
Philodemus