

Why pursue unnecessary desires?

Post by "Cassius" of May 2, 2025 at 4:36 PM

[Quote from Rolf](#)

at the end of the day Epicurean ethics comes down to using prudence to maximise the ratio of pleasure to pain, with much of the rest being tools to help one do this. Would you agree with this evaluation (oversimplified as it may be)?

Yes I would agree that that is good summary of the situation. The conclusion is that it's not supernatural gods/ideas that tell us the best way to live, but the faculty of pleasure, and the rest is either the leadup to the conclusion (through study of nature / atomism) or the way to pursue pleasure practically. That's what all the virtue stuff is - virtue is the necessary tool for living plesurably, but it's a "tool" not a set of absolute standards.

[Quote from Rolf](#)

On that note, I'd probably say to such as a stoic that it is important to remember that boredom and regret, too, are pains. They must be factored in when deciding on which pleasures to pursue.

Yes boredom and regret are pains. But given that the Stoics don't consider pain to be important and that only virtue is important, I don't know that any argument on pleasure ever makes much headway with them.