

# Is All Desire Painful? How Would Epicurus Answer?

Post by “Don” of May 9, 2025 at 7:17 AM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

And he who counsels the young man to live well, but the old man to make a good end, is foolish, not merely because of the desirability of life, but also because it is the same training which teaches to live well and to die well. Yet much worse still is the man who says it is good not to be born but 'once born make haste to pass the gates of Death'.

You're on to something, but don't overly rely on that translation to make your point. Here's my translation:

So, the one who exhorts, on the one hand, for the one who is young to live nobly; and, on the other hand, the one who is old to come to an end nobly is a good-hearted simpleton not only because *life is to be welcomed*\*\* but also because the practice of living well, nobly, and beautifully and the practice of dying well, nobly, and beautifully are the same. But far worse is the one who says, on the one hand, it is well not to be born; or, on the other hand, "failing this, to pass through the gates of Hades as soon as possible."

\*\*οὐ μόνον ἅ τὸ τῆς ζωῆς ἀσπαστόν,... "not uniquely or only because of the 'welcoming-ness' of living,..." Or maybe better "because life *is to be welcomed*,..."

ἀσπαστός = welcome (whose arrival is a cause of joy)